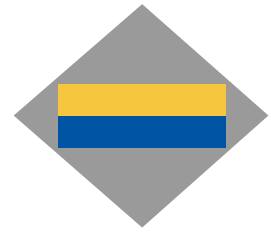


COMRADESHIP

www.2nd14battalion.org.au

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President's Report



The recent period has been both hectic and sad for the 2/14 family. We have lost some wonderful veterans but gained some great memories.

In May we celebrated 75 years since the formation of the Battalion, with a well attended family picnic at Puckapunyal Army Base.

The recent trip to Balikpapan to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the landings on 1 July 1945 was another fantastic achievement by Ian Hopley, ably assisted by Michael Ralston. Sadly, our great veteran Matt Power who was keen to make another pilgrimage to Borneo passed away before the trip. But we were absolutely blessed to have 2/14th veteran, Clarrie Cunningham, from Tottenham NSW, accompany us. He kept us

enthralled with bush stories, poetry and memories of the 2/14 Battalion in action in Borneo. Well done to Clarrie and his son and carer, Clarence who kept Clarrie in line most of the time.

The Queensland reunion lunch organised by Trevor Pryor was another great success as usual. A good crowd attended and 2/14 Vice President David Webb attended on my behalf.

Thanks again to all our representatives and members for your support and involvement, we rely on it and look forward to seeing some new and old members attending our functions and getting involved to lend a hand. We have a number of projects and ideas coming up to keep on honouring the wonderful legacy of the heroes of the 2/14 Battalion. We would appreciate your assistance, ideas and enthusiasm; everybody is welcome to provide input.

I hope to see many of you at the AGM or at the Annual Pilgrimage service at the Shrine on 27 September, see the website for details of all our events: www.2nd14battalion.org.au

We will remember them.

Craig Iskov
President

2015 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ~ FINAL REMINDER ~

(\$25 Single; \$40 Couple; \$50 Family)

These fell due on **30 April 2015** and whilst many have already been received, we wish to remind those who are still outstanding to please send them in. As we cannot include a remittance form with this issue, please contact Karen Brkic directly by phone (03 9318 5394) or email (Karen.Brkic@opsm.com.au). If you wish to pay directly by internet or bank transfer Karen, will provide banking details.

If you joined the Association between October and December 2014 your membership subscription will not be due until April 2016.

The very latest we can receive the 2015 subscription is the end of October 2015. If your subscription is not received by this date you are in danger of falling off the Membership list, which means you will no longer receive Comradeship. And we know you don't want that to happen.

Please note:

- *Payment for veteran membership is optional.*
- *Widows of 2/14 veterans are not required to pay the membership fee.*
- *Do keep us informed of changes of both street and email addresses.*

2/14 BATTALION ASSOCIATION INC

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the 2/14 Battalion Association Incorporated will be held on Sunday 27th September 2015 at 9.30 am at the Rats of Tobruk Hall, 44 Victoria Ave, Albert Park.

Business to be conducted:

1. To receive and adopt the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 28th September 2014
2. To receive the President's and Secretary's Reports.
3. To receive and adopt the Annual Financial Report.
4. To elect Office Bearers for 2015/2016
5. To consider nominations for Life Membership.

Nominations are called for the following vacancies:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Committee (25 positions)

Nominations are to be received by the Assistant Secretary, 17 Wendy Crt, Wheelers Hill, 3150 no later than Friday 18th September, 2015.

In the event that more nominations are received than there are vacancies, an election will be held.

An ordinary Committee Meeting will immediately follow the Annual General Meeting. Members and visitors are welcome.

This is your chance to become actively involved in the management of one of Australia's largest Associations of World War Two veterans, families and friends. Please get involved.

Committee meetings are scheduled quarterly on the first Sunday of the month at East Malvern RSL.

Battalion Formation 75th Anniversary Puckapunyal Picnic

On Sunday 17 May approximately 60 of us travelled to Puckapunyal to honour the formation of the 2/14 Battalion, 75 years earlier.

Sadly, no Veterans were able to attend, but the beautiful, sunny weather we enjoyed would have been a strong contrast to the cold, harsh conditions they would have endured in the winter of 1940. 2/14 Association President Craig Iskov gave us a brief history of the formation of the Battalion, noting the contrast between the solid buildings and green grass around us and the “acres of corrugated iron huts on red clay and gravel” that greeted the men when they arrived in 1940.

Peg Armstrong, the only 2/14 widow present, laid a wreath at the 2/14 Battalion commemorative plaque which occupies the central location in the Memorial Gardens, right next to the picnic area.



Peg Armstrong lays a wreath at the 2/14 Battalion memorial plaque in the grounds at Puckapunyal

We then enjoyed an informal reminiscence of times past – of Reunion picnics in the 1950’s and 60’s, of children who rekindled their friendships from year to year and of Dads who shared stories amongst themselves, but only away from their children’s ears.

While it was hoped that we would be able to spend some time in the excellent museum there, it was closed for renovations. However, the base intends to invite us back when it has reopened.



The Ralston family enjoying the sunshine with Tony Froude and Marion Mitchell

The picnic lunch that followed gave us plenty of opportunity to mingle, make new friends, learn more about each other’s stories and plan for the future. There was an earnest feeling that we have to keep on keeping in touch!

With this in mind, we are working on the idea of an overnight (1 or 2?) get-together, when the sunny weather is here to stay. We’re looking at venues which could provide golf for the golfers, walks for the walkers, wineries for wine lovers, scenery for scenery lovers ... and anything else you might like to enjoy. If you have any suggestions, or you think you might be interested, please contact one of us. The more, the merrier!

Marion Mitchell (mjm14@bigpond.com) or

Gavon Armstrong (gavnhel@bigpond.com)

Puckapunyal Memories from the Buckler Family

Our father, S H “Ben” Buckler was the Battalion’s first adjutant and had arrived at Puckapunyal by the 11 May 1940, soon to be joined by his brother, Hugh (later KIA). In a letter written from Puckapunyal and dated 26 August 1940, Hugh wrote to his family: “I arrived back in camp from Melbourne last night to find that a dust storm had swept through the huts that day leaving about an inch of fine grit in blankets, palliasses and kit bag. I set to and cleaned my part of the hut with my gas mask on and then slept the sleep of the just. Last Friday we had a big ceremonial parade before General Lavarack and Lord Gowrie, seven thousand men were marched past the saluting base. It took forty-five minutes to pass this point. My flaming arm was just about snapping by this time through holding the rifle, with bayonet attached, at the slope. It was pretty hot and several spectators amongst a couple of thousand passed out in a faint.”

Our mother told the story that most of the hills around Puckapunyal were named after well-known soldiers. When he was camp commandant in the early 1950’s Dad instigated a fitness routine whereby every soldier who climbed Buckler’s Hill had to take a few stones each up to the top, so a cairn could be built and a plaque inserted to be unveiled on June 2 1953 to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The cairn hasn’t lasted six decades but the family was delighted to find in the foreground of the “hill” a large rock with a plaque on it that included an engraving of the Coronation Stone.

Helen Canaway, Wendy Verplak, Jennifer Willis



The Coronation Stone on Buckler's Hill, photographed by Trevor Webb in 1966

Life Membership for Michael Ralston

Speech at the Reunion given by Rob Eden

Michael Ralston has been awarded with a Life Membership of the Association in recognition of his long standing commitment, leadership, and outstanding service as president of the Association for the past eight years.

Life membership is not something that this Association awards lightly. The list of those who have been so honoured is an impressive group of individuals. Each life member has made a significant contribution to the Association and to their fellow members. Our immediate past-President is no exception.

I have had the privilege of working closely with Michael for many years, as both his Vice President - for a good part of his considerable time in office, and for quite a bit longer, as one of his fellow welfare trustees.

During that time I have observed the enthusiasm, passion and commitment that Michael brings to all that he does for this Association. Michael was instrumental in transforming the association through what was a difficult period as our veterans passed the baton on to the next generation.



Furthering our links with Kingsbury Primary School

I fondly recall our first meeting in his city office following his appointment to lead the Association, with myself as his 2iC. He shuffled through some Association papers, looked at me, frowned, and said, "Oh @#%\$, what do we do now?"

Well, what he did is clearly evident in the healthy condition of the Association today.

If the challenge was to ensure that the Association was to remain relevant, vibrant, financially sound and inclusive toward our kinfolk, then Michael has certainly achieved his goal.

The turnout at Reunions, the ANZAC Day march, and the various ceremonies throughout the year has continued to grow. One only needs to read Comradship or look at the Web Site to see how much is happening.

Michael built solid friendships with many of our vets; he listened to them; he laughed with them; and when the time came, he honoured them with a respectful epitaph - thoughtful final words from someone who knew & understood our veterans.



Lending Cam Thompson a helping hand at the Ferntree Gully Memorial

More than a few of them told me how much they respected Michael.

He has built up a wide range of enduring relationships with government, schools, veteran associations, and related service units.

Now, Michael is a master at dealing with the bureaucracy. A couple of years ago the ANZAC Day March Committee rather unwisely suggested that units would no longer march behind their Battalion banners. In response, Michael did his usual ring around of the vets and then, with their blessing, he stormed ANZAC House and delivered a tactical strike that Phil Rhoden would have been proud of. Needless to say, that idea never saw the light of day again.

And when a firm hand was needed, Michael would tell you straight....and then take you to lunch at the Waiters Club.



Addressing the gathering at the plaque unveiling in Sydney

And woe-betide the ANZAC Day March Marshal who can't find the 2/14th's vehicles. I've seen Michael conjure up a Rolls Royce or two for the vets on a number of occasions.

Indeed Michael is something of a logistics Whizz, after the March several years ago we received an invitation to join the 2/16th Battalion for lunch and a few drinks at the Lord Palmerston Hotel in South Melbourne. The only problem was, we were stuck in the throng at the Shrine.

No transport! No problem!

Michael flagged down an Army truck that was headed back to the marshalling point in the city. I say "flagged down" but it was nearer to a hijacking. The banners were heaved aboard, together with a few stray members. Phil Kemp was hoisted up in the cab with the driver; the rest of us rolling around on the tray as we headed off.

The driver kept pointing towards the city but Michael skilfully directed him on a 'short cut' via the Palmerston, in the other direction. And that's how the 2/14th arrived for lunch that year... we literally fell off the back of a truck.

Michael, I am confident that I speak for all of us in saying that we greatly value the hard work and determination you have given to the Association. Congratulations and thank you for your outstanding contribution to the 2/14 Battalion Association over many years.

2015 Queensland Reunion

57 attended the 34th Queensland reunion held at New Farm at the end of July. As the Last Post sounded, we remembered in particular four great supporters lost during the past year: Frank Wust (PIB) and 2/14 members, Arthur Toombs, Matt Power and Dudley Warhurst. It was heart-warming to have Bertha Power and 5 members of the Toombs family, including Dot, attend.

It was an honour to welcome George Palmer (39th) and George Priestley, Don Thomas and Jack Thompson of the 2/14th. The day was spent renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. It was great to have Trish Dillon come from Sydney and join son Greg and daughter-in-law, Jaerapa.

Two other interstate visitors passed on lots of Battalion news. Vice president David Webb filled us in on various activities while "tour leader", Ian Hopley gave a detailed report on the recent trip to Balikpapan.

The final speaker was writer and war correspondent, Hugh Lunn, whose descriptions of his books and fascinating life were a hit.

Again many generous donations made the raffle an exciting time. It is always great to see the "personal" donations made.

My thanks to Fran Ralston, Kylie Grant and Ann Pryor for your help.



Veterans, George Palmer, George Priestley, Don Thomas and Jack Thompson

Anzac Day Parade – BRISBANE 2015

Brisbane turned on a beautiful April day for the centenary Anzac Day parade commemorating 100 years since the Anzac landings at Gallipoli.

The Association was strongly represented by a contingent of 18 kinfolk and supporters. Unfortunately veterans, Dudley Warhurst and George Priestly were last minute withdrawals. Along the way we gathered Lesley Ramsay, a veteran from a Motorised Ambulance Corps who had served in Borneo, but who had been having difficulty keeping up with his banner.

At the conclusion of the march several participants retired to St Vincent's in Bardon to lunch with Dudley Warhurst. Fran Ralston with the assistance of Elisa Nowak organised splendid refreshments that were enjoyed by Dudley who was pleased to host the gathering that included members of the Toombs family.

Elisa Nowak, who has been a keen supporter of the Association for a number of years, has departed for the UK to further her medical career and we wish her every success and thank her for her support. Our thanks to Stewart Ryan who acted as photographer for the day.



Forming up (L – R): Belinda Smith, Mark Oliver, Ron Smith, Michael Webster, Bruce Lees, John Hay, Ken Boyne, Kylie Toombs, Fran Ralston Elisa Nowak, David Butler, Greg Dillon, Warren Major

Back to Balikpapan - 70 YEARS ON

As the 92 year old 2/14 veteran, Clarrie Cunningham looked out over the sea where he landed at Balikpapan some 70 years ago, he took his hat off and paid a silent tribute to his mates who did not return.



Clarrie Cunningham and Michael Ralston at Yellow Beach, Balikpapan where the 2/14 Battalion landed 70 years ago

This set the mood for what turned out to be a very personal and emotional journey for 38 descendants from this final campaign. They had arrived from all over Australia on the weekend of the 27th June.

This trip was the fourth for The Association, and the group included relatives representing not only the 2/14th but also the 2/5 Commando Company, the 2/46 Australian Transport Company, the First Armoured Regiment, the 2/1 Ordinance Ammunition Company, and No 4 Squadron RAAF.

Kingsbury Primary School, named after Bruce Kingsbury VC has a close relationship with the Battalion in Victoria; they were represented in Balikpapan by 3 teachers from the school.

Also joining us, with great enthusiasm, was Professor Garth Pratten from ANU. Based in Jakarta, Garth is a researcher and is a senior lecturer in Strategic and Defence studies,

specialising in Australian Military History. Between Clarrie and Garth, the group got a well rounded summary of the Campaign.



The group at the roundabout Memorial site

Balikpapan is not on the Tourist Route, as you can't fly there direct from Australia. However, we did find, and partake from, some great sea food restaurants on the beach near our hotel.

The organisers provided a welcome mix of Military History and other interesting events during the week's activities. We visited the Bos Samboja National Park where Orang-utan Monkeys and Sun Bears are rehabilitated back into the Jungle.



Some of the children at the Orphanage

We also visited a small Orphanage where dedicated staff look after about 40 orphaned children. They do not receive any Government support, so through our own resources, we were able to organise for them to get a broken

sewerage system repaired. More future involvement is planned.

A trip across the water to Kampung Batu to see Japanese Coastal Guns at Petrosea, and Proboscis Monkeys in a Mangrove swamp area provided a pleasant break from following in the tracks of the 2/14 battalion



Visiting Petrosea processing plant

The local Balikpapan ANZAC Day Committee members put on a formal dinner at our hotel, and organised a special morning service inside the Chevron Oil Company, where relatives laid wreaths at a memorial made from Australian Matilda Tank parts, destroyed in 1945 by Japanese guns on Waite's Knoll.

Of course no tour (where Ex-Pats are involved), would be complete without a game of Footy and a Barbie. This enjoyable interlude was provided by the Mighty Borneo Bears AFL Football Club.

Thank you to all who attended, we know by your comments how much you enjoyed it. Special thanks go to Ian Hale and Russ Wood, Australians working in Balikpapan. Their work greatly assisted the smooth running of the tour. Our thanks go also to "J", our Mr Fix It, and the lovely "Dear".

Michael Ralston and Ian Hopley

Marking the 75th Anniversary of the PIB

by Greg Ivey



TPNG servicemen with dignitaries

On 20 June 2015, the 75th anniversary of the official formation of the **Papuan Infantry Battalion** was marked by the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association of Australia. Records show that the PIB paraded for the first time on 19 June 1940 at Murray Barracks, Port Moresby. Although many of these first recruits were experienced policemen from the Royal PNG Constabulary, some lacked experience like the 16 year old Ben Moide who volunteered from Hanuabada Village.

The PIB were soon at work in Port Moresby but a fortuitous patrol to Kokoda led by Lt. Harold Jesser (PIB) in January 1942 provided valuable information to Major General B. Morris, GOC New Guinea Force. (Several days later, General Morris issued instructions for Lt. Jesser and a PIB platoon to return across the Kokoda Track to northern Papua and this patrol began on 19 February 1942.) While some indigenous PIB soldiers were understandably overwhelmed by Japanese aerial bombing or mountain artillery, many became exceptional jungle fighters who participated in every PNG campaign except Milne Bay. (At the time of the Battle of Milne Bay, the PIB were occupied at Kokoda.)



Major General Jeffery gives the Keynote Address
Photo: Alan Fortunato

The 2015 Anniversary events began with a Commemoration Service at the Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall in Broadbeach, Qld, where the guest

speaker was the Honourable Michael Jeffery. Major General Jeffery is a former Governor General, a former CO of 2 PIR at Wewak and a former Company Commander at 1 PIR at Port Moresby. Wreaths were laid during the Service and a Wreath was laid by World War Two veteran, WO Jock Wilkinson, 94 years young, to honour PIB and NGIB servicemen who died from 1940 until 1947, when the NGIB was disbanded.



Lunch Guests (L to R) Col. R. Lange AM, Major General M. Jeffery & Mrs Jeffery, WO Keith Payne VC AM, Major D.D. Graham

The Commemoration Service was attended by 80 people, mainly PNG Ex-Servicemen and their wives. Surfers Paradise RSL Club was the venue afterwards for Lunch when Honourable Michael Jeffery proposed the Toast to the Papuan Infantry Battalion. During the Lunch, appreciation was paid to the Association's foundation Patron (Hon. M. Jeffery) and its current Patron, Lt. Col. Maurie Pears MC. Following the Lunch, the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Assn conducted its AGM to take advantage of the presence of many members at the event. Later that evening, an informal Dinner was attended by 30 Association members and partners.

To commemorate the 75th Anniversary, the Association also launched its new website dedicated to World War Two and post-War servicemen, www.soldierspng.com

2/16 BATTALION REUNION

2/14th Battalion Association members are cordially invited to attend the 2/16th Battalion Association Reunion Luncheon on Saturday 10th October 2015 at 11.30 am Old Hepburn Springs Hotel, Hepburn - Newsted Road, Hepburn Springs

RSVP Trevor Ingram 0419 333 347 Email: trevor.ingram@bigpond.com

EVENT CALENDAR 2015

Bruce Kingsbury Memorial Service

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

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,
Newsted 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

OBITUARIES

Q200696/QX52169 PRIVATE ARTHUR WILLIAM BECKETT

Army records in Canberra show that Arthur William Beckett, known as "Mike", was born in Brisbane on 25 January 1925 and was living there when he enlisted in the Militia on 18 June 1943.

The provisions of the Defence Act did not allow Australia's permanent Army, the Australian Military Forces (AMF) to serve outside Australia or its Territories. This provision also applied to the Army's part-time citizen force, the Militia.

This meant that, with the outbreak of war, a separate volunteer force, the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), had to be formed to meet Australia's commitment to Great Britain to serve overseas. Therefore, the Militia formed the backbone of Australia's home defence, particularly with Japan's entry into the war and its rapid advance towards Australia's north.

Whilst men could not enlist in the AIF without parental consent until they reached 20 years, they could enlist in the Militia at 18 years. In 1943, the Japanese threat to Australia was still very real and so Mike enlisted. Unfortunately 2/14 Battalion Association records do not indicate where or with which unit he served prior to marching into the 2/14 Battalion.

In 1944, the Battalion was back in Australia recuperating at Stathpine, following the Ramu-Markham Campaign, when Mike transferred his enlistment to the AIF and was posted to the Battalion as a reinforcement.

He marched into the Battalion on 1 August 1944 and was posted to the Signals Platoon in Headquarters Company where he was then attached to C Company as part of the Battalion's signals network.

Initially the Australian forces were earmarked to assist General MacArthur retake the Philippines and undertook amphibious landing practice in the Townsville area until MacArthur decided that the Australians were not to be involved. An alternative task had to be found and General Blamey selected Borneo as the objective for 7th and 9th Division.

The Division landed by sea at the large oil port of Balikpapan on 1 July 1945 with C Company taking the lead on the advance to Manggar Airfield. The signallers had an important role to ensure good communications were maintained between the Platoons and Company Headquarters and then to Battalion HQ. This entailed a combination of laying miles of telephone wire for the portable field telephone sets and manning the 108 radio sets. When all else failed they acted as "runners" carrying written or verbal messages between the various locations.

With Peace declared on 15 August 1945, the Battalion moved into a Peacekeeping role at Balikpapan, Morotai and then the Celebes (now Sulawesi in Indonesia). The longer serving soldiers were given an opportunity for early return to Australia so when the Battalion returned to Australia, Mike marched out on 14 January 1946

and transferred to another unit in Morotai.

Again, unfortunately, details of this later service are not known to the Association other than that Mike finally returned to Australia and was discharged from the Army on 29 November 1946.

Mike was proud of his service with the highly decorated 2/14 Australian Infantry Battalion, joining the Battalion Association and attending a number of Queensland reunions.



A. W. Beckett operating a 108 wireless telephony set (walkie talkie) during manoeuvres at Kairi, Qld

VX15317 SERGEANT DUDLEY ARTHUR WARHURST



Army records in Canberra show that Dudley Warhurst was born in Ballan on 22 August 1919 and was living and working in Benalla as a carpenter when he enlisted in the Militia. He joined the 59th Battalion which was known as the Hume Regiment and which was centred around central Victoria north of Melbourne.

Dudley was called up and training in camp at Seymour when he transferred his enlistment to the AIF on 13 May 1940. He moved to the Recruit Receiving Depot at Caulfield Racecourse where he was attested on 16 May 1940 and posted to the 2/14 Battalion at Puckapunyal on 20 May 1940.

As a tradesman he was immediately posted to the Pioneer Platoon who were the "Jacks of All Trades" and required to do all the physical work of a Battalion such as setting up camps, digging ditches and latrines, building and maintaining roads and tracks, selecting sites for and digging defensive positions and air-raid trenches. Tragically, the Platoon was also required to dig the graves of the Battalion soldiers killed in its various campaigns.

Being the Battalion's workmen was, of course, thirsty work and the Battalion history books record some of the many devious ways that the Pioneers brought their refreshments back to camp as they carried materials back and forth.

As an experienced soldier, "Duddles" as he became affectionately known, was quickly promoted to Corporal on 25 September 1940 and, despite a minor hiccup on board the Aquitania heading to the Middle East when he was reprimanded, was confirmed in the rank on 19 December 1940.

Whilst involved in preparing and maintaining the defences of the fortress at Mersa Matruh in Egypt in April 1941, Dudley was promoted to Sergeant. A little bit of fooling around with an Italian hand grenade saw Dudley slightly wounded by shrapnel when the grenade exploded.

Dudley was selected to attend a Middle East Tactical School where he learnt the elements of desert warfare and how to site and prepare defensive positions as well as provide support to offensive actions.

The platoon played an important role under Dudley in the Syrian Campaign, preparing crossing points on the Litani River, providing supplies to the various elements of the Battalion in attacks and standing watch on captured prisoners. After the Armistice was signed the Platoon managed a rest and recreation facility for the Battalion in Beirut.

On return to Australia the Battalion had time for some home leave but quickly moved to Queensland to acclimatise for the forthcoming jungle war against the Japanese invaders. Dudley attended an equipment repairers course during this period and then the Battalion embarked for Port Moresby to reinforce the militia forces there.

Moving rapidly up the Kokoda Track to reinforce the 39 Battalion at Isurava, the Pioneers had to work doubly hard preparing the various staging camps for the men of the 2/14 Battalion and carrying equipment and supplies as they moved forward in the steep jungle terrain. The Pioneers were also responsible for recovering supplies dropped by air.

They arrived at Isurava in the heat of a Japanese attack and immediately filled in as riflemen to support C Company. This was to become the norm for the next few weeks as the withdrawal back to Brigade Hill and then Iorabaiwa took place. The Platoon was split up and Dudley and four others were the only members able to stay with Battalion HQ. Whilst at Koitaki the other members who had been cut off in the withdrawal progressively rejoined.

After a few weeks of rest the very much under-strength Battalion was back in action at Gona which meant that the Pioneers primary task was to act as infantrymen again. However, the sad task of digging the graves was undertaken far too often. Dudley had the tragic task of assisting Hec Fyfe bury his brother, Alan Fyfe. It brought many men to tears to see Hec carrying Alan's body from the swamp to the grave on the Gona Beach.

Along with many other Battalion men in these unhealthy conditions, Dudley succumbed to malaria and was evacuated to hospital. On return to Australia the Battalion moved to the Atherton Tablelands for rest, recuperation and reinforcement. Unfortunately, Dudley spent much of this time in various medical centres being treated for malaria to the point he volunteered to assist scientists in their search for a treatment by being bitten by many mosquitos.



Mosquito cage in use at the malaria research unit

In mid-1943 the Battalion returned to New Guinea to take part in the Markham-Ramu Campaign. Here the Pioneers reverted to their primary role establishing and maintaining camps for the Battalion and building and maintaining vehicle tracks to assist movement of men and supplies. This was frustrating work as often the new bridges would be washed away when the rivers and creeks rose several feet in a matter of hours following the heavy tropical rain.

Again Dudley was evacuated suffering from malaria and back in Australia he spent time in and out of various hospitals. However, there was some mirth when in January of 1945, Dudley graduated as "Qualified" from a further training course at the F.A.A.R.T.S Pioneer Wing.

With the invasion of Borneo, the Battalion landed at Balikpapan and the Pioneers again performed a traditional engineering role clearing tank traps, detecting and destroying land and sea mines, setting booby-traps and demolishing unexploded mines.

Dudley was one of the "originals" and by the end of the War was one of only about 115 men who had seen service in every campaign with the Battalion. He returned to Australia on 4 September 1945 and was discharged on 4 October 1945 in Queensland, where he had chosen to live.

Dudley was proud of his war service and his membership of the 2/14 Battalion Association. He was awarded Life Membership for his service to the 2/14 Battalion Association.

Dudley was instrumental in establishing the Queensland Reunions where he was the life and soul of each event. He was everybody's friend and was never short of a story or kind word.

Trevor Pryor's Memories of Dudley

For me, Dudley's passing is a little different and just a little more personal as it breaks a final direct link to my own dad.

Both lived in Benalla when they enlisted, both were members of the 59th Militia Battalion and then posted to the 2/14th, and both were proud of that membership and actively promoted it.

Only three years ago I drove Dudley and Arthur Toombs to visit Stan Bisset. Somehow Dudley and Stan got onto the Gona battles and Arthur and I might just as well have been there so graphic were their descriptions. On our way home we called in at the Battalion memorial at Mt Nindery where Stan had put them through their training prior to their departure for PNG.

Dudley told us many tales of the wonderful reception the unit had received in the district and how he had been one of the 20 or so who had later married local girls. In no time flat we conceived the idea of offering a small bursary to the local state school to recognise the warmth the boys had been shown. Reference to the 2/14th is now part of the Yandina State School's curriculum and is a great legacy from Dudley and Arthur and their mates.

We have lost so many stories with Dudley's passing. Over the past 7 years I have been contacted on numerous occasions by people wanting to talk to a veteran, often in relation to the Kokoda campaign. My usual response was, "I'll meet you at Dudley's." He was always happy to talk to all and sundry because he appreciated the interest in the actions of the Battalion.

I have received comments from authors Patrick Lindsay, Peter Dorman, Brenda Inglis, all spoke of Dudley's willingness to help as they researched for their writing. Like all who knew him, they all revelled in his impressive memory, his eye for detail and his humour. Peter noted that when carrying out his research for "The Silent Men", Dudley was the first to put his hand up to help, and now he is one of the last to go.

"I'll meet you at Dudley's" was, I recall, the response I gave to John Leask when he wanted to know if there was a veteran who he could talk with about two of his uncles who were members of the Battalion. We met, chatted for a while and then John asked about his uncles. Dudley mused a while and then told a story about stumbling across one of them on a stretcher beside the Track at Isurava. Dudley removed his identification and then took a gold boomerang from his top pocket.

At this point I looked at John whose mouth and eyes were wide open. He explained that his grandmother had given each of her three sons a gold boomerang when they left as a reminder for them to come back. As the family lived close to Benalla, Dudley waited for the next opportunity for leave and went to the family to return the boomerang.

A few months after John's visit, Dudley recounted the story to a group who went to share lunch with him after the ANZAC Day March. This time he told more about his visit to the family and I can assure you, all of us were wiping our eyes. John asked me if it would be okay for him to attend Dudley's funeral even though he had met Dudley only once. As I explained, that's the effect Dudley has had on many. John attended and carried with him the gold boomerang his father had borne.

QX47956 PRIVATE KENNETH NEIL WATT

Army records in Canberra show that Kenneth Watt was born in Rockhampton on 19 January 1924 and enlisted in the Militia there on 11 August 1942. His early service would have been with the 42 Battalion or Capricornia Regiment as it was known.

The Militia was required to create defensive positions on mainland Australia as it could not serve outside of Australian Territory. This became even more important with Japan's entry into the War and the ever-increasing threat to our north. The Capricornia Regiment was responsible for

defending the north Queensland coastline around Townsville.

In May 1943 Ken transferred his enlistment to the AIF and on 30 May marched in to 2/14 Battalion whilst it was at Ravenshoe in Queensland recovering from the arduous battles on the Kokoda Track and at Gona. He was posted to the Mortar Platoon which was armed with eight 3 inch mortars.

In early August 1943 the battalion embarked for Port Moresby for the next phase of the war. After a month in Moresby preparing for the next campaign in the Markham and Ramu Valleys, the Battalion flew to Nadzab on 15 September. Ten days earlier Nadzab had been captured in an airborne attack by American paratroopers and an Australian artillery battery from the 2/4th Field Regiment which became the first artillery detachment to be parachuted into battle. An airfield was quickly constructed to enable the rapid reinforcement of the position.

This campaign offered scope for the mortars to be used effectively as there was no overhead jungle canopy such as was encountered on the Kokoda Track. However, the platoon was initially used in an infantry role to help secure the surrounding area and to support infantry sections in the advance up the valleys.

Eventually the Japanese made a stand at Shaggy Ridge and the mortars were able to be sited to give heavy fire support. Ken manned an observation post 800 metres forward of the gun position known as Mortar Ridge. Directions from this forward post enabled a Japanese 75 millimetre gun to be silenced. For several weeks the platoon continued to provide effective harassing fire against the Japanese.

In early January the mortarmen returned to Port Moresby and then to Australia. It was during this time that a number of the men, including Ken, were hospitalised with a variety of tropical illnesses.

The Battalion spent the next 18 months in Australia as the future role of the Australian Army in the Pacific War was debated and reviewed. The 7th Division was eventually given the task of invading eastern Borneo and securing the oil port of Balikpapan.

The seaborne landing took place on 1 July 1945 with 2/14 Battalion capturing Sepinggang and, later, Manggar airfields. The latter was guarded by large naval guns and the Mortar Platoon provided effective fire that covered the approach of the Australian attackers.

With the effective end of the War on 15 August 1945, the main tasks became peacekeeping and the repatriation of Japanese prisoners. The Battalion moved to the Celebes in the Netherlands East Indies (now Sulawesi, Indonesia) to prepare the islands for the return of the Dutch administration. The Mortar Platoon no longer required their guns and took up the routine patrolling required in this operation.

The Battalion finally boarded HMAS Kanimbla to return to Australia on 22 January 1946, however, Ken remained in the Celebes and marched out of the Battalion on that date. He eventually returned to Australia and was discharged from the Army on 26 June 1946.

CONTACTS

PRESIDENT - Craig Iskov
Mob 0438 737 788
ckiskov@bigpond.com

VICE PRESIDENT - David Webb
5 Radnor Crt, Mt Dandenong, 3767
Mob 0417 442 299

SECRETARY - TBA

ASST. SECRETARY - Margaret Briggs
Tel 9561 2247

TREASURER - Karen Brkic
18 Khartoum Street, West Footscray, 3012
Tel 9318 5394

EDITOR - Jill Bear
26 Merton St, Camberwell, 3124
Tel 9889 3466
jillebear@gmail.com

**WELFARE TRUSTEES - Robert Eden,
Ian Hopley, Michael Ralston**
MEMORABILIA OFFICER - Darryl Thomson
22-24 Jarrah Drive, Braeside, 3195
Tel 9588 1444

WEB MASTER - Jonnie Iskov
webmaster@2nd14battalion.org.au

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

Bill Vandenberg - Mallee
Tel 5026 4535

Gavon Armstrong - CNE & Riverina
gavnheIn@bigpond.com

Gary McCulloch - Gippsland
Tel 5144 4435

Darren Benson - Geelong
Mobile 0424 179 017

John Vandenberg - Tasmania, South
Tel (03) 6265 8071
jandpvandenberg@bigpond.com

Ian Hopley - South Australia
Mobile 0433 019 441

Trevor Pryor - Queensland
Tel (07) 3482 4768
teepee_au@yahoo.com

Jan Erskine - Mildura
berka@ncable.com.au

Ron Inglis - NSW
Tel (02) 9642 3563
inglisrw@gmail.com

AROUND THE TRAPS

When I returned from my overseas trip, there was a letter from **VX15628 R A 'Bob' Turnley**, of Tocumwal, waiting for me. Bob included the ANZAC Day report from his local newspaper, the Southern Riverina News, of 29 April this year. The speaker at the local ceremony was Bill Fuller, son **VX16126 E C 'Nugget' Fuller** who served with the 2/14th Battalion throughout the war. Bob noted that Bill's speech provided much favourable publicity for the Battalion.

Liz Bentley has let us know that her mother, Mrs Claire Ambler, widow of **VX68672 Leslie Albert Ambler**, passed away on May 7 at the grand old age of 104. A good innings for Claire, as they say.

NSW rep, Ron Inglis, was recently in touch with **NX144482 J H 'Jim' Hudson**, at Leura. Jim's wife passed away after a fall and a stroke earlier this year. She was 89 years of age. Ron reports he had a good chat with Jim, who seems to be coping well for a 92 year old.

In the Queen's Birthday Honours List, author **Patrick Lindsay**, was named a Member of the Order of Australia. Patrick was our guest speaker at the 70th

Anniversary of the Kokoda Campaign in September 2012, and more recently, at the Melbourne reunion this year. Patrick's involvement with the Battalion goes back to 1992 when he interviewed many of our veterans for the documentary **Kokoda ... the Bloody Track**. Patrick's award is for 'significant service to the media as a television presenter and journalist, to international relations, and to literature as an author'. Congratulations, Rick.



Patrick Lindsay AM

The following acrostic was one of a number of poems passed on by Ken Boyne, Harry's son. Given Dudley's contribution to malaria research and the development of Atebrin as a treatment, it seemed apt for inclusion.

ATEBRIN

Anopheles are enemies, you must remember that
This cunning little fellow can quickly lay you flat.
Early in the morning and when the sun has set,
Be sure of sleeves down, gaiters on, or underneath your net.
Remember we must beat him in everything we do;
Insist on all precautions, and my advice to you:
Never give him half a chance to see what he can do.

Burn all tins and rubbish and don't let water lay;
Eggs will be deposited, don't encourage him this way.
Ask any of your cobbers who've had this dread disease -
They'll tell you how a 'mossie' can bring you to your knees.
So play the game for your own sake and beat him, yes, with ease.

Many thousands have been bitten by this cunning little chap,
And sure enough they're casualties before they meet the Jap.
Let this be a lesson to every person on this isle
And see that in the long run your effort's been worthwhile.
Results have proved the benefit that can be yours or mine;
Infection is so easy, saps the strength of our front line.
Antagonist Anopheles you're on a steep decline.

WX13693 Sgt Harry Vincent BOYNE, 2/14 Battalion