



White Cedar Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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NEXT MEETING: The April meeting will be opened and closed at the re-union on Anzac Day and no business will be conducted.

The May monthly meeting will be held on Friday, 27th May at the Gallipoli Memorial Club at 8 p.m.

THE MARCH MEETING

Attendance was from twenty to thirty members. The Anzac Day arrangements had already been finalised in Committee (see elsewhere in this issue). One item that was mentioned was that in travelling to the Southport Re-union by bus, some people may wish to go up on the bus on Thursday night and rest up on the Friday.

This is fine. The timetable for Thursday is the same as for Friday. See March W.O.G. Let Laurie know your requirements when you notify. Please remember that our using this bus service is not on a charter basis. They are regular services and the idea of Laurie doing the bookings, of course, is to see that we are all together as much as possible.

Also from the meeting was the announcement that the 1984 Country re-union will be held in Gosford. Details much later.

It was also decided that the deadline for the termination of the battalion medal will be deferred to a date to be announced. This decision was in response to a letter from Harry Gjedsted, Chairman of the Battalion Medal sub-committee, who pointed out the benefits of carrying it on a little further, not the least of which was that constant trickle of applications coming in for the medal, and the interest that it has aroused amongst collectors who are charged considerably more than members for a "Specimen Copy".

It is gratifying to the committee and the battalion medal sub-committee also, that this project inspired such interest in the Association activities

by old battalion members. Indeed, one ex-battalion member wrote that he didn't even know that the Association existed! After forty years?? Woodwork must be very very insulating!

ANZAC DAY

Arrangements are the same as for last year.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY: F.U.P. is the corner of York and Erskine Streets at 0745 hours. We will move off promptly at 0800 hours for the Cenotaph preceded by the Parramatta Caledonian Pipe Band.

ANZAC DAY MARCH: F.U.P. in the vicinity of the corner of King and Phillip Streets. Just look for the Association ties.

THE REUNION: At the Gallipoli Memorial Club, 12 Loftus Street after the march.

THE LADIES: During the march our ladies can be found in George Street on the eastern side outside Lowes between Market and Park Streets. After the march the ladies will be going to a luncheon which will most surely be at Cahill's Dutch Village, 27 Park Street. Anyway give Hilda Wright a ring on 871-5312 and let her know you will be there.

SECRETARY'S MAIL BAG

Things have been very quiet as regards to mail. Don't know whether the fact that Joy and I have been away in Victoria has had anything to do with the lack of people writing in or whether they are saving themselves for the "big bash" on Anzac Day. Whatever has been the influence on members, I have had very few letters so my task this month will be lighter.

Before I touch the letters to answer, let me write a paragraph on my trip down to Warrnambool and on to Port Fairy in Victoria. Seeing that we are thinking of making use of the V.I.P. Bus service which runs to Brisbane, through the Gold Coast for our Re-union at Southport, my wife and I thought we would try the service out to Melbourne, which we did, leaving Sutherland Post Office 6 pm Thursday and arriving at their depot in Melbourne 7.30 am Friday morning. The bus, a modern, air-conditioned with toilet facilities, vehicle, was very comfortable, with reclining seats and for the price of \$50.00 per head return, I thought it very good indeed, because I could not run my car to Melbourne and back for that. I hired a new car in Melbourne and used it to go to Port Fairy and around up to Ararat. Whilst on the way to Warrnambool, we called in to see Pat O'Keefe at Allansford, a 2/4 member, still working at the local butter factory. Just got there when he arrived for lunch, found him looking very fit and well and he was surprised to think I had called in. He wanted to be remembered to Doug Stebbings and Doug Grove, also wanted news of "Boong" Fensom and "Slim" McNeil. Can anyone oblige with information. Whilst at Allansford I went to look up Keith Taylor, but his next door neighbour informed me he was over in New Zealand - so left a message with the neighbour Keith had written to me before I had left Sydney which you will read about further on in this column. Might mention we travelled through a place called Garvoc where the fires went through and saw the aftermath of the tragedy. Whole farms wiped out, mile after mile of fencing burnt, and just a heap of ashes and a skeleton of a chimney here and there to remind one that there had once been a lovely well-cared for farm use. Whilst at

Warrnambool, I drove around and found where Ted Dalton lived. Ted, another 2/4 member, was in "C" Company and showed me three or four photos that I think he said Doug Grove had sent him, taken on the Tablelands in Queensland. Ted is a widower, his wife having died a couple of years ago and his three sons have all left home, so there he is on his own. He is retired, retired early due to a heart ailment. Said he had not been getting his W.O.G. and wondered why. Told him I would sort it out for him, when I returned. I left him saying we would keep in touch, because I wanted to get to Port Fairy before it was too late. The following day after much running around saying "hello" to various people I knew (the wife came from there) Joy and I set out to Portland with the intention of finding another 2/4 member, Ern Saunders. He has a lovely property and a lovely old home (130 years old) called "Bellevue", right on the road to Portland, past a little village called Tyrendarra. I had rung him the day before, and his good wife had made some beautiful scones for afternoon tea. We stayed as long as we could, it was a bit of a drive back and we had a dinner date to keep. Ern is a very busy man both on the farm and in the town of Portland. He is President of the Hospital Board and on various other committees. It was with regret that we had to leave him. Said he knew of a few chaps who were in 2/4 living in Portland, so told him to get on to them. Anyone travelling down that way any time wants to call in and see Ern Saunders. He will make you very welcome and have a yarn with you. Drove back through Dunkeld, Ararat on to Ballarat and thence to Sunshine, staying the night with some friends whilst there. I took the opportunity of ringing Claude Raymond who wanted me to pop out there and then to see him, but time was against me, so just had to talk to him over the 'phone. He sends his good wishes to one and all and said to keep up the good work. Next time we go down to Port Fairy, we are going to be very busy if we take up the invitations to us to drop in. Who knows, might dig up some more 2/4th blokes hidden away down there.

Now to the letters we have received over the past four or five weeks.

A first one out of the bag is a letter from Jack Huston of Canberra. Jack wanted a new tie, apparently Joan has put her foot down, no Anzac Day celebrations without a new tie. Got to keep the good lady happy Jack. You should have one by the time you read this, in time for Anzac Day. Jack was also making his usual annual contribution to Treasurer Allen. Many thanks Jack for remembering Allen and for your great message to the "bestest" Association. There was also another letter from Jack, written later, before I went to Victoria, giving me information received from a Mrs. Trethewey also of Canberra. Mrs. Trethewey is the daughter of the late Don Healey, and she wanted information re her late father's medals. Jack, I have followed up your information and have written to Mrs. Trethewey and have had a reply from her. Once again Jack, thank you. Good wishes to you and Joan.

Next letter, one from Dr. Gordon Brodie of Picton. Just a short note with a donation and a message to those of us here at H.Q. to wish us well and keep up the good work. Shall inform all who attend our meeting on the 25th March. Thank you and good wishes and good health to you Doctor.

Another letter, this time from Artie White of Carcoar N.S.W. with a donation to W.O.G. and a message of appreciation to the Welfare teams who

visited him whilst in hospital at Concord. Said he could not remember names now. Shall pass on your message Artie. We here hope all goes well with you healthwise. Good wishes to you and yours.

Our next letter comes from Harry Russell up at Repton, sending down sub for the year. Thanks Harry, hope all is well up there on the river and your health. Lovely spot where you are, we were up there once when the kids were young. They had a ball. Good luck to you all.

This time we pick up a letter from Woy Woy from Roy Lane who used to live at Ettalong. He is sending a cheque to Allen to keep on the good side of him. Nice work, and we look forward to seeing you on Anzac Day. Allen as you know is away on a long trip at the moment, retirement bonus. Thank you Ray and good luck, look forward to seeing you.

Our last letter comes from Keith Taylor of Allansford, Victoria. His letter is a very pathetic letter to read, because he has seen a lifetime of work, devotion and care wiped away by the savage bushfires in February this year. Keith sold his farm to his next door neighbour and retired to live in Allansford, he lost his wife 3 or 4 years ago and is going it alone now. His farm, along with many others in the area, most of the owners are all ex-servicemen, were wiped out with severe loss of stock and in some instances human lives. One had only to view the ruins (as I did) to realise how tragic and soul-searing this loss must be to the ones affected. Men whose ages range from 60-70 years have seen their life's work shattered and are now wondering if it is worth while starting all over again. If you are back at Allansford and reading this issue, our thoughts and sympathy go out to those around you who have endured so much tragic suffering. Next time Keith I hope you will be home to have a beer with me, it is a nice drop there at the local.

Late arrival, just in time to catch the column, one Doug "Blue" Milne from Hamilton. Doug wanted a new tie and a Greek translation for his scroll. I have obliged him on these items. Apparently Doug has been on a Safari to South Africa, Europe and the British Isles in a Bedford Campervan and has had a marvellous time. Look out you chaps up Newcastle way if you run into Doug, he will have some tales to belt you with if you have the time to listen. Thanks Doug for the very interesting letter and good luck, hope we see you Anzac Day.

Thats all for this month, will be looking forward to seeing and meeting you all I hope on Anzac Day. In the meantime good health to you all.

LAURIE WATERHOUSE

WELFARE REPORT

NX39890, Jack Maloney, M.V.H., Narrabeen. Jack is not feeling too well at the moment. Having trouble with the left thigh and will be going into Concord soon.

NX13305, Dick Fenton, W.V.H. Called to see Dick and he looks OK. He is taking things quietly these days. Sees Dick Chamberlain and Brian Waring and sends regards to all.

NX7601, Dick Chamberlain. W.V.H. Dick is in good health, a big improvement since he was transferred to the L. Hospital at the War

Veterans'. Likes to hear news of the battalion and sends regards to all.

NX2054, Doug Ellicott (Darkie). Saw Doug yesterday at his home and am glad to be able to say that he looks very well. Having therapy at the local centre and its remarkable the change for the better. Left arm still not working properly but moving slowly with the aid of a walking stick.

NX5294, Henry Roberts, in Concord, Ward 3. Henry is in for blood tests also a bit of bladder trouble. Sends regards to all.

NX68511, Richard Chappelow was in Concord for tests. He has subsequently been discharged and now at home at 6/32 Gordon Crescent, Marrickville. Any member that lives around that part of town would be a welcome visitor. Dick lives on his own and cannot move around much.

NX13262, Harry Nichols. Harry was in Concord for chest problem and a cataract. He said hullo to all the boys. He has since been discharged. No further news.

NX5162, Tom Dawson in Ward 12, Concord. Second visit to Tom found him already in the operating theatre for operation on the right hip, just prior to this report.

NX62025, K.C.C. Tanko, Lady Davidson. Keria is still at Lady Davidson and having a bit of trouble with the left leg. He can still crack a joke. Sends regards to all.

NX5911, Stan Bowen, Queen Victoria Hospital, Leura. Received a phone call from Bob Lever to let me know that Stan is OK and that our old mate sends regards to all. Thanks Bob for looking after Stan. Let him know that we all wish him well.

4th. Ban. '14-'18

George Pearson is in for eye tests at Concord in Ward 110. He also has stomach troubles. George is 94 years of age and a wonderful old Anzac and never complains. To you George, our best wishes.

6234, J.M. Brunton. Met Jim at the Lady Davidson Hospital. He saw my white over green tie. He joined the old Fourth in France. He lives in Bega. Name and address given to Ken for posting of W.O.G.

LAST POST:

NX3955, J.P. Mann. Admitted to Macksville Hospital seriously ill. John's condition was the subject of many telephone calls between Sydney and the mid coast area. Unfortunately we don't have the date of his death. The Association was represented at his funeral by Bub and Margaret Graham, Esca Riordan, Bill Sherwin, Jack Smith and others.

NX55430, Joseph Millar, Ward 2, Concord. Was in for ulcers and when visited the second time he was not allowed visitors. Joe died 22nd. March.

NX32214, Les Saxby. Died suddenly on 21st March. Cec Powers, Dick and Doug Pinson, H. Wright, J. Robin and G. Saxby attended the funeral.

Lest we forget.

BILL PARRY

EDITORIAL NOTE: It would be appreciated that when people have welfare information they send it to Bill Parry direct. Matters relating to Welfare are sometimes directed to the Secretary, the Editor and even the President and this makes a cross communication that should not be necessary.

Bill is the Welfare Officer, so please all welfare matters to him direct.

BATTALION MEDAL

Non-delivery of Battalion Medals to those members who have applications in and waiting for them. The reason for the hold up is that the firm doing them has run out of ribbon. The ribbon has been on order for some months now and has to come from England. This is not the fault of the Association and we ask members to bear with us. As soon as they come to hand they will be in the post with all haste, rest assured.

L. WATERHOUSE

BATTLE OF CRETE PORT

A specially bottled Port to help defray expenses of the Battle of Crete Functions - May 21st to 29th, will be on sale at our Anzac Day Function at the Gallipoli Memorial Club.

SITREPS

Gordon Bladen has sent down a photo and the negative of a group taken in Julis in 1940. The men are mainly of the Mortar Platoon and Gordon has identified all but four. He names Emmett Holzagal, Jim Oakes Gordon Bladen, Welfare Officer Hosier, Roy MacIntyre, Ray Smedley, G. Sellars, Stan Graham, Bill Loy, Ralph Richards and Joe MacMeneman. Thanks Gordon. The photo and negative are currently with the Secretary and will eventually be passed on to Ron Barber the curator of the photographic collection. Meanwhile anybody that wants a copy please write to Laurie.

INVERELL ENLISTMENTS

Some time ago an article appeared in W.O.G. re enlistments from Inverell and it stated that 85 men enlisted and all returned safely. The figure of 85 is approximately correct but this was only the first enlistment.

Friday, 13th October, 1939, the Inverell Courthouse was opened at 9 am and men were lined up on the lawn and slowly we went through the procedure. As it became my turn to go in Ross Smith and Gus Kyle walked up and asked me if I had my parents' consent. I said I had but it was required in writing so I just became a year older and was 21 when I went in. Both Ross and Gus lived in the town and it was not long before they were back on the end of the line. Quite a few were given the big "A" for age and medical reasons.

At this stage I may state that enlistments credited to Inverell cover surrounding districts such as Warialda, Delungra, Tingha, Gilgai, Ashford, Bingara and a few more smaller settlements as Inverell was the only recruiting office in the area.

We were called into camp in two drafts, those who had no previous military training went in first and those who were in the local C.M.F. went in about 2 weeks later.

All ended up at Ingleburn eventually but not all stayed with the 2/4 Bn. Some were transferred to 2/1 M.G. Bn. A few more were culled out on the final medical, including a chap who walked like a camel, left leg and left arm going forward at the same time. (Impossible to march correctly behind him).

Apparently Inverell was issued a block of Regimental Numbers starting with NX2000 (W.G.A. Crockett). Numbers were given out in alphabetical order and stopped at the end of those with no training and restarted again with the C.M.F. boys, NX2019, A.D. Bevin taking the honours this time and finished with NX2085.

It stated in the article that all returned safely. This is not so, NX2084, J. Kirkup, was killed in Greece, 13-4-41, a few were wounded and others taken prisoner.

At the time of the first enlistment, the local company of the C.M.F. was in camp doing two weeks training and on returning to Inverell they enlisted practically to a man and were divided between 2/13 and 2/18 Bn's. Strange as it may seem the first man killed was Lt. Adams, who was killed in an air crash when on his way up to Benghazi relieving the 6th Div.

Later on a permanent recruiting office was set up and men came in their small groups, joining the Navy, Army or R.A.A.F. according to their choice.

I have been told but cannot verify the fact and it was supposed to have been printed in Reveille that Inverell and district was credited with the highest percentage of enlistments per head of population in the two world wars.

Fred Staggs.

(Without checking with Fred. it is almost certain there must have been other Inverell enlistments K.I.A. or D.O.W. and that Jim Kirkup was the only one in 2/4 Bn. This observation is made knowing that some went to Malaya and death in a Japanese prison camp which was not a rare occurrence / any means. Incidentally we have the history of the Staggs family enlistments in two World Wars for publication some time. A remarkable effort: and I thought the Cade family did pretty well. With his relatives making steady progress up from the ranks, your scribe remained a Private for five and a half years without being busted once! As the song says, "they can't take that away from me." Thanks Fred. Editor).

SOUTHPORT COUNTRY REUNION

THE REUNION WILL NOW BE HELD ON 8TH AND 9TH OCTOBER, 1983.

The important thing is to get your booking into Laurie McCosker, 60 Hilsdon Road, Taringa, Queensland, 4068. Phone: 07 370-1395. Tell him all the details such as when you are arriving, how many in the party, type of accommodation required (Hotel/Motel) and any other details required for your comfort, even baby sitters.

Secondly, if you intend to use the bus service contact Laurie Waterhouse and make it definite so that he knows how to book. It is not a charter service, it is a regular service on which Laurie will make block bookings for Thursday or Friday to keep us as a group in the bus.

COCK'S COLUMN

Visiting my sister Catherine in Auburn Hospital, Cath. told me that the lady in the next bed had had a brother in the 2/4th Inf. Bn. Speaking to the lady, a Mrs. McTarrigle, told me that her brother NX5939, Roy Edward Percy (Tex), was a 2/4er, came from Mosman, enlisted at Victoria Barracks, was on the Strathaver, served in the desert, and was taken prisoner in Kokinea Hospital in Greece, was four years in a German prison camp. Roy now lives at Crams Road, Nowra. Pleased to hear about you Roy. Your sister was writing to you and I gave her a W.O.G. to give you. I also took in our War History and showed her your name in the nominal roll of the Prisoners of War Roll. Bill Parry, our Welfare Officer, rang me, and I told him of you. He remembered you, enlisted at the same time. Please write Roy, my address end of Column.

In the Mailbox a nice letter from Maurie Porter of Hardies Bay. Checking on how I was coping. Maurice was up at the Gold Coast recently and spent a happy few hours with Bruce and Angela Cork beside their lovely pool at Urima Beach, had a good old yarn about the Battalion personalities. Thanks Maurice, hope you got my letter, call in when passing this way.

Letter No. 2 from Esca Riordan, West Kempsey. Esca passed on the sad news that NX9355 Jack Mann passed away in Macksville Nursing Home about the 9/3/83. There were five of the boys in attendance at the Chapel Service. Mrs. Mann was thankful for the representation. Billie Bennett also expressed her thanks to those members who attended John "Bushy" Bennett's Funeral. Last week Esca and Beb. had a pleasant meeting with Harold and Noni Bowman. They were holidaying at South West Rocks. Chas. Hoad doesn't enjoy the best of health but the other local boys are O.K. Esca ends up with "Hoping my health keeps improving." Wishing me and all the Association boys the best. Our best wishes also to you Beb, Esca.

On Thursday, 24th March, attended the Funeral of NX33214 Les. Saxby. After the service held at the Metropolitan Funerals at Burwood, we proceeded to the Rookwood Crematorium. The following Association Members were present, Harry Wright, Dick Pinson, Slim Powers and myself. Also present was George Saxby (brother of Les) who also served with the 2/4th Bn. George lives only 200 yards from Reg (Pommie) Cole and sees him quite often. He says "Reg" is keeping O.K. at present. George hopes to make the Anzac Day March.

At Concord met Tom Dawson again, a Lancer Barrack boy, one of my mob.

Then met Henry Roberts "B" Coy. NX5294, another of my mob, Lancer Barracks and Strathnaver. Henry lives at Wentworthville. Enlisted same day as I did.

Also at Concord met NX13262 Harry Nichols. We have not seen each other for years but Harry knew both "Slim" and I. Harry enlisted at the Engineers Drill Hall, Moore Park. With him was Vic Gibson, Reg Morgan, Doug Barry and "Dolly" McColl, sorry to relate the latter four have passed on. Harry lives at North Sydney. Hopes to make Anzac Day.

"Cock" Robin

J. Robin,
20 Adderstone Avenue,
NORTH SYDNEY. 2060.