



# White and Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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**Next Meeting: Friday, 7th October, 8 p.m., Royal Naval House, Sydney**

JUST A MATTER OF DAYS  
FOR THE ANNUAL COUNTRY REUNION

## KEMPSEY

6 HOUR WEEK-END — 1st - 3rd OCTOBER

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND AND HAVE NOT YET BOOKED  
TELEGRAPH OR RING: ESCA RIORDAN, 63 Cameron Street, West Kempsey. Phone: 3671  
**BUT DO SO RIGHT NOW!**

### KEMPSEY SITREP

Esca reports that all systems are set to "go" for the long weekend. Additional bookings received indicate more than a hundred members will be there, plus the ladies. Bookings not published last month include:— Jack and Mrs. Dubber, Bruce Cork, "Massa" Brooks, Ted Gamble, Peter Armstrong, Chris Geelan, John Graham, Wal Potts, Steve Blanch and Sam Hughes. Staunch Queensland member Tom Provians will have a contingent of 10 from Brisbane, while Jack Reynolds is coming from Milla Milla, North Queensland. Victoria will be represented, too, but the M.I.A. is not yet in evidence. We are hoping to see some representation from our friends in Griffith and environs.

Stan Blacksley of Humula, has room for two passengers for Kempsey. Stan will be leaving Humula to arrive in Sydney on Thursday, 9th September. He may be contacted c/o Post Office, Humula—or at the North British Hotel, Sydney, on the Thursday.

Jim Brown, speaking with Harry Gjedsted, advised that a motor trip has been arranged for the Sunday to take in places of interest in the district. Mrs. Isobel Nelson-Slee is supervising the luncheon, to be provided by the local branch of the C.W.A. at the historic old gaol, near Trial Bay, South West Rocks. A barbecue tea has been arranged at the Country Club, at Crescent Heads and all facilities of the magnificent club will be at our disposal.

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting at Royal Naval House went off smoothly with eighteen "bods" in attendance. Apologies were received from Cec Chrystal, George Stack, Peter Cade, "Slim" Pollock, Peter Armstrong and Bill Luck. President Harry Gjedsted reported he had received a note from Major Garry Baker of the Officers' Training Unit, Scheyville, enclosing snaps of the bronze name plaque of the Kenna Club and the Citation. The snaps will be added to the Association's collection.

Vice-President Johnnie Jordan advised that members of the Parramatta Pipe Band would be joining with members of the Taree Pipe Band for the Kempsey Reunion.

It was decided that the Combined Smoko (with the 4th Bn. Association) will be held as usual at Royal Naval House on the first Friday in November. At this function the "boys" of the old 4th will be our guests for the evening.

Fred Searle, our hard-working treasurer—he's been on the job without a break for the past eight years—pointed out that we need an honorary auditor who must not be a voting member of the Association. Suggestions will be welcome!

The meeting was informed that Bill Watts, the genial Supervisor of Royal Naval House plans to open a Buttery shortly where light meals, snacks, etc., will be available. Bill said also that "our" Pipe Band is



welcome to play at Royal Naval House at its loudest and longest whenever we want it.

At the conclusion of the meeting Ron "Porky" Williams made known that Kenny Webb was 50 years old that day. Led by President Harry, the gathering gave a very vociferous rendition of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow".

#### 4th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT

Last month we mentioned having received a letter from Lt. Col. David Thomson, M.C., thanking us for our donation to the Regimental Funds. We feel that you would be interested to read the correspondence in full and we set it out hereunder:—

4th Battalion,  
The Royal Australian Regiment  
BFPO 628  
G.P.O. KUCHING  
2nd July, 1966.

Dear Mr. Stack,

On behalf of all ranks of the Battalion I would like to thank your Association for your generous cheque for \$50 which was received a few days ago.

Your cheque came at a very good time. For the last month or so we have been engaged on very extensive operations. Because of the nature of the operations they have not been much publicised and the unit was beginning to speak of "the forgotten men". Everyone has been working very hard. One of the platoons had been out on operations for 28 days. Yesterday I brought them into base for a short spell.

Your cheque acted as a tonic and made us all realise that we are not forgotten by many of those who have served Australia in the past.

We have not decided how to spend your generous gift. I would like to buy something of lasting value, so that our young soldiers could say: "That was given to us by the old Diggers of the 2/4th Bn."

When 4RAR was raised you sent us a copy of your Battalion History. At the time I said that we would do our best to live up to the splendid traditions of the 4th Bns. of the 1st and 2nd A.I.F. Now that we have been in action, I am sure you would not be ashamed of us. The Battalion has done very well.

Your interest in us is an inspiration. Please thank all your members who made the gift possible.

Yours sincerely,  
David Thomson

#### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

2/25 Mona Road  
Darling Point  
16th August, 1966

Dear Colonel Thomson,

We were extremely pleased to receive your letter, and on behalf of the committee and members of this Association I would like to thank you for your very kind comments.

I am sure that we all know that feeling of being "forgotten men", and the effect that it can have on morale, and I would like to reassure you that this Association has followed your progress since the Regiment was originally raised in South Australia, and we are very proud of the high standard that you have attained on active service.

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We are interested to see that the Regiment is being withdrawn from direct confrontation with Indonesian Forces in Northern Borneo, and that you will be returning to your base at Terendak, in Malaya.

Whilst we realise that you still have to complete your tour of duty, we do hope that this is the first step towards a return home in the near future.

When that day eventuates, we also hope that we will have the opportunity of seeing and meeting the Regiment and so further cement the ties of our mutual, traditional interest.

You will be hearing from us again, but in the interim, our sincere best wishes and blessings to you all.

Yours sincerely,  
H. E. C. Gjedsted

#### COLONEL THOMSON'S REPLY

23rd August, 1966

Dear Sir,

We were delighted to receive your letter. I did say that I would let you know how we used the cheque which you so kindly sent us.

After the first few weeks over here, I decided to set up a small rest camp, to spell a platoon at a time. The idea was to take them away from the border areas, into a secure spot, where they could relax, fill themselves up with good food and of course, like all soldiers, drink away if they felt like it.

As it was by the sea, and suitable for fishing and water-ski-ing we put the money towards a small speed boat. Engine was no problem, as we have outboards on issue from Engineer resources. In due course we will send you a photograph of it, at full speed with a soldier in tow.

Next week we return to Terendak Garrison. What the future holds for us, I do not know. One thing is certain however, that we will pop up again somewhere in South East Asia. I hope you will follow our progress, with the interest you have shown in the past.

Best wishes and many thanks,

Yours sincerely,  
David Thomson

#### ODE TO THE FALLEN

By Laurence Binyon

An Interpretation

With acknowledgement to "THE MACLEAY"—official News Bulletin of the Macleay Sub-branch R.S.S. & A.I.L.A.

The ODE TO THE FALLEN is a tribute to those who paid the Supreme Sacrifice in the service of their country.

From time to time there have been various opinions as to the intent conveyed but it is generally agreed that the words do kindle a feeling of reverence within the hearts of ex-Service personnel.

The "Macleay" correspondent gives his version of the ODE'S significance to him:—

"They shall grow not old,

As we that are left grow old."

(When we ageing ones think of them, we remember them only as they were in their youth.)

"Age shall not weary them"

(Life's trials can no longer affect them—they have passed into a realm of contentment).



**"Nor the years condemn."**

(As time passes there will be no lessening of the strength of their cause; their deeds will be immortal in the history of their country).

**"At the going down of the Sun, and in the morning****We will remember them."**

(A gallant band goes marching on, and each minute, each hour, in the years that are, and those to come, their sacrifices will be remembered as a shining example to the nation).

**"THE COSTA RICA"**

Extract from War History

On 23rd April, 1941, the Costa Rica, a Dutch merchantman, sailed from Alexandria in convoy with Dilwara, Salween, Slammat, Khedive, Ismail, City of London and a large escort of cruisers and destroyers bound for Greece to assist in the rescue of the beleaguered Anzac Force.

Among the personnel on board under the command of Lieut. "Johnno" Johnstone were Sgt. Rose, Ken Moses, Joe Galvin and Bill Leonard of the 2/4th Bn. They were attached to the ship as Ack-Ack gunners, their equipment, 1914 Hotchkiss strip feed guns.

On 24th April, Costa Rica was attacked by 12 Italian bombers from 15,000 feet but suffered no material damage. Next day—Anzac Day—she withstood 6 intensive Stuka raids, again without mishap. Next night she stood off Kalamata. As she lay at anchor in the still night destroyers came gently alongside and slowly up the sides of the Costa Rica clambered 2500 battle weary troops including quite a few of the 2/4th Bn. They flopped on the decks where they landed and slept clutching their arms and ammunition.

Before first light Costa Rica, with City of London and Dilwara, and their escorts, pulled away from the beaches and headed for Alexandria. Came the dawn and the first Stuka raid. The four Hotchkiss guns joined with the Naval anti-aircraft defence in holding off the attack. The din awakened the rescued soldiers who were asked for any spare ammunition. No further hint was necessary. When another wave of hostile aircraft approached 20 minutes later the troops on the Costa Rica were ready.

Sixty-eight machine guns mounted on the decks blazed away at the marauding aircraft. Nine more raids were experienced that day, but an increased amount of small arms seemed to go up from the three transports each time. They were credited with bringing down 7 aircraft but many more must have been hit because, as the day drew on, the attacking aircraft showed a lot more respect for the machine-gun-crowded ships.

At 2.40 p.m. Costa Rica was still in convoy and already two hours sailing past Crete on its way to Egypt.

A lone Stuka came out of the sun, too late to be observed, penetrated the defences and planted a near miss seven feet from the ship's stern. Its plates were sprung and the engines stopped immediately. It was the last raid of the day and the rest of the convoy sailed past the already listing ship.

The destroyer "Defender" came alongside to starboard while "Hero" picked up men already in the water as she made for the port side. As the Costa Rica rose

and fell with the swell, men swung down on ropes or jumped to the decks of the rescuing vessels. "Hero" replaced "Defender" and finally when the ship was listing badly "Hero" came alongside and the ship's officers, and the men who were manning the guns, stepped straight from the upper decks on to the destroyer.

The transfer of the 2500 troops plus ship's officers and crew took only forty-five minutes and there was only one casualty. He was buried with full naval honours as the flotilla raced back to Suda Bay with the survivors.

The Costa Rica sank in ninety minutes but that night she had played a major part in the rescue of 19,000 fighting men from the mainland of Greece. Many an ex 2/4th Battalion man today owes his life to the gallant little merchantman.

**SICK REPORT**

John Morrison and Fred Searle visit "Yaralla" regularly and dispense smokes, etc., to 4th and 2/4th Bn. patients.

**R.G.H. YARALLA:** Mrs. Parkinson, Ward 30; Bill Keogh 230; Barry Herwig 17; "Happy" Davis 3; J. McGregor 10; Len Hadlow (4th Bn.) 510; Bede Keary (4th Bn.) 230.

**R.G.H. HEIDELBERG:** Bill Irvine.

**HOME FROM HOSPITAL:** "Snowy" Foster; Gus Boardman; Beau Rowbotham; C. Powers.

**STOP PRESS:** Cec Chrystal, our immediate Past-President has suffered a most oppressive attack of Asian 'flu and is not feeling at all well. Our sympathy Cec. However, Kempsey will be a bright spot to convalesce. "Medicine" will be on tap at all times.

**OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Our meetings take place on the **FIRST FRIDAY** of every month at Royal Naval House, Grosvenor Street, Sydney at 8 p.m. Everyone is welcome—particularly country visitors. Business generally is disposed of within the hour and the facilities of Royal Naval House are at our disposal for what always turns out to be a convivial yarn-swapping get-together.

For those who have not been to Royal Naval House before, Grosvenor Street is the third street on the left off George Street, from Wynward Station towards Circular Quay. Any bus going to the Quay, via George Street, will set you down nearby.

**"COCK ROBIN"**

The Association is very fortunate to have such a staunch supporter as Jim "Cock" Robin, who over the years has spent a tremendous amount of time and effort in keeping us abreast of the doings of so many of our members and their families, via "Cock's Column". Jim is also the custodian of the Association's collection of photographs which he never fails to lug along to the monthly meetings and other gatherings. (They will be on show at Kempsey.)

Jim's address is:— 20 ADDERSTONE AVENUE, NEUTRAL BAY. He would be happy to hear from anyone with news of interest for "Cock's Column" or snapshots for the collection.



"COCK'S" COLUMN

NORTH BRITISH NEWS:

Strolled in and was pleased to see Ted Swadling from Griffith there, but I am sorry to relate was down to attend his brother's funeral. Ted is doing a trip up North and will post news of 2/4th-ers he meets. He has recently seen Fred Driscoll, still a ramrod 6 ft. 3 in.; Fred Apthorp; Tom "Nedda" Erskine, Arthur Webb, and Clem Killeen.

Frank Cooney came into the 2/4th corner and asked for Barry Herwig; they had arranged to meet there. Frank also knew Johnny Hawkins and Ken Richardson. Just as he was leaving Barry strolled in. He had recently seen Ron Schwartz, who is now at Castle Hill R.S.L. Club.

In the corner two chaps saw my 2/4th badge. They were Bill Rose and Jack Vindin (117 A.G.T.). Asked if I'd known Tommy Metcalf had passed on. Tom was R.S.M. of the 117 A.G.T., after he left the 2/4th Bn.

Jack "Cheeky Charlie" Keating frequently meets Jack Maloney of Maroubra. Has not seen Maurie Broome for some time, but heard he is O.K.

Peter Armstrong called in, told us he had sent his quid to Esca, and is definitely going to the Kempsey Reunion, his first, even if he has to hitch-hike.

Jack Maloney, Bowraville, paid us a visit. See you at Kempsey, Jack. I also heard that "Bluey" Pinder called in, hope to see you at Kempsey, too, "Blue".

Frank Frizell boarding a bus met Con Short alighting. No time for a yarn.

Jack Gaffney called in. Jack had recently seen Harry "Killer" Nicholls, at Victoria Cross, North Sydney; Ron "Porky" Williams met Nap Alavoine. He gave Ron his subs. Pleased to hear of you, Nap.

At the September meeting I saw Harry Gjedsted, Harry Wright, Fred Searle, Rusty McWilliam, John Jordan, John Morrison, John Copland, Athol Heath, John Meehan, Bill Stewart, Frank Frizell, Dick Pinson, Ken Webb, "Porky" Williams, "Sailor" Harvey, Dick Morris and Morrie Wilson.

News from some of the boys: Athol Heath would like to hear from Len Ackerman, or news of him, and Ken Northrop.

Bill Stewart (Don) reports that Alex "Biscuits" Arnott wished to be remembered to all. "Biscuits" is now over in Cyprus with the United Nations Police Force.

Having a yarn to Harry Wright was sorry to learn that Hilda has been very sick with hepatitis, but am now pleased to report is well on the way to recovery and will definitely be at Kempsey with Harry. See you there, Pal.

Had a yarn to John Meehan, was pleased to hear that John is fully recovered and is now back at work—has recently seen Bruce Cork who is O.K.

Morrie Wilson, Lane Cove, would like to hear from, or news of Sid Croaker.

"Massa" Brooks is going to rustle-up Ted Gamble for the Country Reunion. They have a long-standing arrangement for a joint-attack on Kempsey.

Colin Campbell hopes to be able to stretch his holidays to include the Kempsey Reunion.

Our popular Hon. Secretary, George Stack and his good wife Marge, went off on annual leave on 29th August. Our best wishes for a happy and restful holiday, George and Marge. The Association is very grateful for the wonderful work done by Marge in typing the W.O.G. copy each month.

Staff Cadets Allan Stewart and Ian McWilliam of the Corps of Staff Cadets, Royal Military College, Duntroon, have been on their first home leave since entering the College in January. Allan is the son of Association Member Bill Stewart and Ian the son of "Rusty" McWilliam. Ian brought home two Kiwi friends from the College—Staff Cadets Pete Hickey of Auckland and Greg Bennetts of Masterton.

Dick Morris hopes Joyce will be well enough to travel to Kempsey at the end of the month. Jim Brown was kind enough to arrange a caravan for the Morris family. We sincerely hope Dick and Joyce can make it.

Lady Dorothy Mackay passes on the information that Hal Hovendene of the 4th Bn. ('14-'18) is looking for the music of the march "Little Cupids in the Briny" and would appreciate any help in locating it. Perhaps Jerry "Fang" Coghlan might be able to assist.

Dick Morris reports calling on "Slim" Desmond recently. "Slim" was busy putting down a new concrete drive. "Slim" sends his regards to all.

Teddy Hopkins sends greetings to all his old mate and will try and get along to a meeting soon.

Esca Riordan had a letter from Bill Irvine saying he was back from Heidelberg, after having been a patient for ten weeks, and mentioning that, because of the state of his health, he would be unable to attend the Reunion. Since writing Esca telephoned to say he had been advised that Bill had been re-admitted to Heidelberg. Bill was with Esca on the "Hereward" when she went down. They were picked up by an Italian M.T. boat and taken to Scarpanto.

Was unable to fit all the August meeting news in last issue. Members at the meeting and not mentioned this month included Les "Lizard" Leech, Sid Young, Peter Armstrong and Bill Luck. Bill mentioned meeting Stan "Bull" Wilkinson and John Lowe. Both send their best wishes to all.

See you all at Kempsey.

"COCK" ROBIN