



# White over Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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Patron: Major-General Sir Ivan Dougherty, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D., B.Ec.

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**Next Meetings: Friday, 1st Nov., 1968**

**Friday, 6th Dec., 1968**

**Combined Smoko**

**Annual Ladies' Night**

**Royal Naval House,**

**Grosvenor St., Sydney**



AT THE 1968 COUNTRY REUNION, COWRA

Our Patron MAJOR GENERAL SIR IVAN DOUGHERTY, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D., and our President, HARRY GJEDSTED, lead Association members at a Wreathlaying Ceremony at the Cowra District War Memorial, marking the beginning of the Annual Country Reunion.



### THE COWRA REUNION

Approximately 130 members and their ladies assembled at Cowra for the 1968 Country Reunion. It was the unanimous view that the function was an outstanding success.

Members began arriving in Cowra from Thursday, being met at the Services Club by **Ted Harris** and informed, where necessary, of their accommodation particulars.

The proceedings commenced with a march to the War Memorial under the direction of **Jack Ormiston**. After **President Harry Gjedsted** placed a wreath on the Memorial the bugler played "Last Post" and "Reveille" and **Tim West** recited "The Ode to the Fallen". The Mayor of Cowra, **Alderman Ab. Oliver**, then extended a Civic Welcome to members of our Association.

The Reunion dinner was held in the main hall of the Services Club and was greatly enjoyed by all present. Under the **Chairmanship** of **Tim West** the proceedings went along very smoothly. After the Loyal Toast by Chairman **Tim**, **General Sir Ivan** proposed the Toast "Fallen Comrades". Speaking with deep feeling **Sir Ivan** recalled some of the stirring days in the Battalion's history, mentioning also the Fallen Comrades of other units and arms of the Services with whom we had come in contact, particularly the Navy.

The Mayor of Cowra, **Alderman Ab. Oliver**, himself a member of an A.I.F. Infantry Battalion, proposed the toast "2/4 Battalion" (coupling with it all 4th Battalions). **Ab.** gave a very accurate resume of the Battalion history and impressed us all by his evident sincerity.

Association **President, Harry Gjedsted**, in responding extended our thanks to the Mayor and people of Cowra for their hospitality and to the **President and Secretary Manager** of the Cowra and District Services Club for consenting to have us once again. **Harry** paid tribute to the local committee who organised the function, namely **Ted Harris, Jack Ormiston** and **Tim West**.

**Jack Ormiston** proposed the toast "Our Visitors", which was responded to by the **President** of the Cowra and District Services Club, **Mr. W. Petersen**.

At the conclusion of the official business members rejoined their ladies and friends at a Social in the hall, and in the club rooms. The evening was indeed most enjoyable and a fitting end to the first day of the Annual Country Reunion for 1968.

Apologies were received from **Sir Jack Stevens, Jim Brown, Ken (Dasher) Deacon, Bush Bennett, Bub & Margaret Graham, Bob & Margaret Roach, George Sugden, John Robertson, Bill Colley, Jerry Coughlan, George Stack, Frank Frizell, "Cock" Robin, Frank Sadler, Dolph McColl, Dick Morris, Tom Provians, Queensland Vice-president.**

**The Barbecue:** On Sunday more than 100 members and their ladies journeyed 17 miles to "Yarrabunda" **Wild Life Refuge** and the property of **Tim West**, and enjoyed an excellent barbecue. The very good rains in the district ensured the property was looking at its best, providing an ideal setting for such a gathering.

Our very sincere thanks is extended to **Jim and Edna West, Jack and Phyl Ormiston, and Ted Harris**, for the tremendous amount of work they put in to making the barbecue such an enjoyable occasion. To **Fred Searle**

and **Phil Smith** also for "cheffing" the chops and snags. Many thanks also to **Bill "Snow" McLennan** for bringing along his consignment of Burgundy, etc., which helped so much to ensure such a convivial afternoon. **Peter Denver** also brought along a contribution from the Barossa Valley which was equally well received.

**The Smorgasbord:** On Sunday evening members and their ladies repaired to the Festival Room of "Jock" **McDiarmid's Lachlan Valley Motel** to partake of a smorgasbord supper, kindly provided by "The Friendly Scot". **Jock** also arranged the attendance of a pianist who entertained us with all the old favourites and provided a background for some spirited community singing.

### ROLL CALL AT THE REUNION

Those present at the Cowra Country Reunion were: **Sir Ivan and Lady Dougherty, Harry & Marjorie Gjedsted, Esca & Vera Riordan, Fred & Dorothy Searle, Peter Denver & son Brian, Phil & Glen Smith, Brick & Elsie Bradford, Rex & Norma Everson, E. Wood, Rex Gilliland, George & Jean Moore, Jack & Eunice Dubber, Stan Bowen, Wally Lambourne, Jack & Phyl. Ormiston, Harry & Ada Whitman, Ted McCaffery, Charlie Grove, Max Nerney, Roy Andrews, Jack Lister, Bill Wall, Les Fox, Bill & Gwen McLennan, Tom & Joan Erskine, Fred Driscoll, Peter & Betty Cook, Hilton & Mrs. Batchelder, Cec. Chrystal, John Copland, Jack & Joan Huston, Frank & Moira Gattenhof, Peter & Margaret Cade, Perc. & Bet Dalla, Alex. Maxwell, Trevor Richardson, Dick Pinson, Mrs. Molly Irvine, John "Bookie" & Margaret Rae, Dave & Mrs. McGillivray, Joe Wells, Mat Bristol, Harry & Yvonne Pearce, Jack & Mavis Humphries, Roy & Beverley Moores, Hugh Whittleton, Keith "Sailor" & Thora Harvey, Ted de Satge, Athol Heath, John Meehan, Bruce Cork, Wally & Nona Taylor, Cec (Slim) Powers, John & Doris Jordan, Ted (Swado) Swadling, Alan & Gloria Lindsay, Mrs. Marj. McCarty, Stan Blacksley, Alf & Marjorie Carpenter, Leo Carter, Harry & Joan Coombes, Peter Foster, Frank Crutchett, Harry & Hilda Wright, Arthur & Muriel Kleem, John & Mrs. Pead, Ollie & Gladys Twist, Ted & Mrs. Fox, Bill Whitehead, Arthur Parker, Les Adams, John Hyles, Ted Harris, Mike & Mrs. Richardson, Russ & Barbara McWilliam; Bow & Arrow Boys, Harry & Blanche Stafford, Hubie & Mrs. Brien, Perc Wicks.**

### THE LADIES' VIEW

Forty-five ladies, wives of members of 2/4 Battalion Association, were present at dinner at the Cowra and District Services Club, and it was a great pleasure to have with us **Lady Dougherty** who accompanied **Sir Ivan** on his trip to Cowra to take part in the Reunion, which would not be the same without his presence.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of the barbecue at the property of **Tim and Edna West**. Followed by further "relaxing" at the Lachlan Valley Motel hosted by a "man after the hearts" of 2/4-ers—"Jock" **McDiarmid**.

On behalf of all the wives, an A-ONE-plus weekend!



## PRESENTATION OF COLOURS — 4 R.N.S.W.R.

On Sunday, 29th September, 4th Battalion Royal New South Wales Regiment paraded at Victoria Barracks before his Excellency, The Governor of N.S.W., Sir Roden Cutler, V.C., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., on the occasion of the Presentation of the Queen's and Regimental Colours to the Battalion.

It was indeed a most impressive occasion made more so by the tremendous display of marching by the battalion and the excellent performance of the Regimental Band. Our congratulations are extended to **Lt. Col. Roy Sharp** and **all ranks**.

After the official ceremonies were concluded visitors partook of afternoon tea in the drill hall adjoining the parade ground—the same drill hall, incidentally, in which many of us were attested in the early days of the War. During the afternoon tea our President, **Harry Gjedsted** and **Marjorie**, were presented to **Sir Roden** who, in the course of conversation, remarked favourably on the formation earlier in the year of the Association of **4th Infantry Battalions**. Sir Roden said all who were associated with the project should be congratulated. He intended to recommend that all units be encouraged to take similar action.

## THE ASSOCIATION OF FOURTH INFANTRY BATTALIONS

## FIRST ANNUAL MARCH AND REUNION

Sunday, 10th November, 1968

The Association of Fourth Infantry Battalions will Assemble at 3 p.m., Cnr. Martin Place and Phillip St. to hold their first Annual March to the Cenotaph and Reunion on Sunday, 10th NOVEMBER, 1968 (nearest Sunday to Armistice Day).

All members and ex-members of any **Fourth Australian Infantry Battalion** are welcome to attend—indeed, it is hoped that everyone will do his utmost to be present on this historic occasion. Marchers will assemble at the corner of Martin Place and Phillip Street, at 3 p.m. for the short march to the Cenotaph where a wreath will be placed. The marchers will then proceed via George Street to the break-off point in Wynyard Park. Medals and decorations will be worn.

The Reunion will commence at 4 p.m. in the Ball Room at Royal Naval House, Grosvenor Street. Food will be buffet style, refreshments, plentiful and total cost only \$2.

SEE YOU ON SUNDAY, 10th NOVEMBER

MEMBERS — RESERVE THIS DATE . . .

FRIDAY, 6th DECEMBER

for

ANNUAL LADIES' NIGHT

at

ROYAL NAVAL HOUSE

(Full details next issue)

## COCK'S COLUMN

I regret very much I was unable to attend the Cowra Reunion. My very great thanks to **"Brick" Bradford**, **Ted McCaffery** and **Peter Cook** who kindly deputised for me and secured some copy for the column. My thanks, too, to all my friends who were kind enough to send messages and good wishes. News from some:

**Cec. "Slim" Powers**, Kogarah, sends regards to all.

**Ted Swadling**, Griffith, will see his friends at the North British in due course.

**Arthur Webb** would like to have seen **"Slim" Venn** and **Sid Zartman**.

**Roy Moores**, Adelong, said it was wonderful to be able to get to the Reunion again and bring his new wife **Beverley**; more especially as he was a student at the old Cowra Experiment Farm in June, 1924.

**Hilton Batcheldor**, Cowra, regretted he was unable to attend the Reunion Dinner because of the illness of **Mrs. Batcheldor**. Our sincere sympathy, Hilton, and we do hope Mrs. Batcheldor soon returns to the best of health.

**Arthur & Muriel Kleem**, Young, report **Bill Colley** is on the mend and hopes to be with us again, soon. Thanks, Arthur! All the best to you and Mrs. Kleem, and to you, too, Bill.

**Max Nerney**, Kyogle, made the trip at the last minute. Travelled down with the Kyogle boys.

**Matt Bristol**, Junee, was very pleased to be able to get to a Country Reunion again.

**"Soccer" Coomber**, who was accompanied by his wife, **Joan**, attended his first Country Reunion. "Soccer" said they were sorry they had missed all the others, and hope they can attend every future one.

**Frank & Moira Gattenhof**, Paddington, with their daughter, enjoyed the Reunion immensely. Frank says it was wonderful to see so many of his old mates still "in the pink" and enjoying themselves.

The **Kyogle Clan** had a long trip but they reckon it was worth it. In the car were **Chas. Grove**, **Hugh Whittleton**, **Ron Andrews**, **Max Nerney** and **Jack Lister**. A very good effort indeed, men.

**Alec Maxwell** and **Trevor Richardson** attended their first Country Reunion and offered their sincere congratulations to the organisers for a splendid weekend. They were very pleased to meet so many old mates.

## FROM THE TREASURER

I will **not** be standing for the Treasurership at the Annual General Meeting owing to illhealth, and the possibility that I will be leaving West Ryde.

Will members please send their subs. to **George Stack**, 40 O'Keefe Crescent, Eastwood, until a new Treasurer is appointed in February, 1969. Would **G. Bush**, **G. Sugden** and **F. Crutchett** please note and **DO NOT** make the usual bank remittance of subs. for 1969, as the bank at West Ryde may not be used by the new Treasurer.

I'm sorry I have to make this decision. I've had a good innings and I've enjoyed working for you, but for the benefit of the Association I think this is the right thing to do. Cheerio, **FRED**.

Subs. are acknowledged from **Bruce Stewart**, **Perc. Dalla**, **Wall Taylor** (all \$4) and **Jack Pead**, **Dick Pinson**, **Roy Andrews**, **Dave McGillivray**, **Bill Whitehead** (\$2).



## FLIGHT FROM GERMANY

FOREWORD: We are indebted to **Mrs. Margaret Goudy** and **Mr. Jack Irvine**, sister and brother of our late comrade **Bill Irvine**, M.M., for this account of Bill's adventures in his escape from Germany. The details were written to Bill's friend, **Bill Coulton**, Malton, Yorkshire, England, and a copy of the original was discovered in his personal belongings after his death. We shall continue the chronicle each month as we know all will be very interested in the story of one of our comrade's triumph over adversity.

The story begins:

W.R.I.

## FLIGHT FROM GERMANY

May, 1944

STALAG 344—9 a.m.—Start out for working party, searched outside camp and marched to station with all our gear. Lost hacksaw blade in search. Entrained at Annahof where we saw Russian P.O.W. like starving animals. Arrived at **Kunau** after changing trains at three different places, **Neisen**, **Jagendorf** and **Milkendorf**. Working Kommando No. 768F. This Kommando is a flax factory worked by the slave labour of Polish and Ukrainian girls. The majority of these girls were taken away from school and put to work by the Germans. We were billeted in an old building that appeared to be a stable or a barn on a big holding. This barrack had accommodation for 28 men in double tiered hospital beds. There was a coke heater in the barrack and we always had plenty of coke; if it was not issued we "pinched" it from the boiler room at the factory. Our quarters consisted of sleeping dormitory, wash room, dining room and Red Cross room for the storage of R.C. parcels, and a locker room where we stored our own parcels in big steel wardrobes. These were about 6 feet high by 2 feet by 18 feet—and there were about 5 or 6 in the room. We were split up into different groups, some working in the factory and others doing outside work. One of the first jobs was the construction of an air raid shelter in the exercise yard at the back of the barracks. Three of us were detailed for the job and we proceeded to make the slit trench as close as we could to the barbed wire so we could continue it under the fence in the future, but Jerry had other ideas, and we had to fill part of it in.

Our party consisted of 4 Australians, 6 Scotties and 1 New Zealander, and the balance English and Welsh. The German guard and some Ukrainian girls shared one end of the building—the guards being between us and the girls. We were much happier out on the working party than we were in the Stalag, although it was an N.C.O. party, and we had to volunteer to go out to work. The majority of us were Stalag Promotions and at first we took stripes to avoid going out on a working party as there were rumours flying that the Jerrys were looking for labour for the coal mines and we did not fancy grovelling in the 'grubies'; however, it became very boring in the Stalag after the winter was over, and it was then that we decided to go out on a working party with the idea of escape

fairly fixed in our minds. The Jerrys must have thought we were a lazy lot of no hopers for we just did not feel like working for the Fuhrer. It must have been maddening for them to watch the way we did things always in slow motion. One job that 8 men were detailed to do had previously been done by 3 Ukrainian girls, and then it was not done nearly so fast or as well. One of these girls **Natasha**, used to drive 2 bullocks in a lorry to the railway station to pick up the bales of hemp and flax and she was very fond of the animals—**Natasha** proved a very good friend to us later. We had quite a lot of time on our hands which gave us the opportunity of hatching out some scheme to make a break. We had a very good interpreter—an Englishman who had been taken at Dunkirk. He seemed to have no fear of the Jerry and anything that we were entitled to he made every effort to see we did obtain—however, he was a very bad neurosis case and had only been with us a few days when he complained about terrific pains in the head and said he thought he was going mad. One night he asked for someone to knock him out so he could get some sleep, but although one chap tried to, it was not a success and the guard came along and took him for a walk outside. He came back to the barrack sometime during the night and the following day he was taken back to the Stalag where he was put in the hospital, but he gradually grew worse and eventually took his own life. He was very sadly missed, and he could have been a great help to us later on.

We had not been in the Kommando over a week before we found a way to get out. This was by taking a panel out of the door leading into the sleeping quarters and then picking the lock on the door leading into the exercise yard at the back of the barrack. The barbed wire was easy enough to crawl under. We had only used it for a few nights when Jerry became suspicious and put a steel door on the back of the barrack with a bar on the outside so it was pretty nearly fool proof, so we had to find another way out. The lavatory consisted of a big pit with the construction on the top of it, and it was situated just outside one of the windows, and we never forgot it was there. We were continually striving to get Jerry to have it moved, but it was hopeless; however, it became very useful later. We at first tried to cut the bars on the windows with a hacksaw blade but it was too slow and also hard to cover up. We decided our best bet was to make a hole in the wall where our parcels were kept. Jerry was rather strict when we first arrived at the Kommando but let up on us when he thought he knew we were resigned to our fate. At first the parcel room was locked up and we were only allowed to go in there at meal times to get something for the meal, but he soon broke this down and we were allowed to go in there anytime (officially). The parcel and Red Cross rooms were partitioned off but the walls were only part way to the ceilings and by dragging up a table we were able to crawl over the tops, so it was not much of a concession leaving the door open. We had everything but the Red Cross room wide open during the daytime, or until we were locked in the dormitory.

(To be continued)