



White War Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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Next Meeting: Friday, 6th December, 1968
Friday, 7th February, 1969

Ladies' Night

Annual General Meeting

Royal Naval House,
Grosvenor St., Sydney

MEMBERS REMEMBER

LADIES' NIGHT

Friday, 6th December, 1968, at 8 p.m.

IN THE BALLROOM, AT ROYAL NAVAL HOUSE, GROSVENOR STREET, SYDNEY

Members are earnestly requested to join the party on Ladies' Night for a pre-Christmas get-together. This is the night of the year we pay tribute to our Ladies, so show your appreciation by your presence.

MEMBERS, THEIR LADIES AND FRIENDS WELCOME

Tickets: \$3.00 Double, \$2.00 Single

PORT MACQUARIE FOR 1969

Dick Bawden is well ahead in his preparations for the 30th Anniversary Country Reunion in Port Macquarie next year.

To be held as usual on the October holiday weekend Dick is busy making provisional arrangements for accommodation and possible group transport by plane, train and/or coach. All we have to do is remember the date—**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4th TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 6th, 1969.**

Dick reminds us all that \$1.00 a week set aside from now will cover our costs for the 30th Anniversary Country Reunion. Let's organise ourselves early this time and make our 30th Anniversary year a bumper occasion at the Country Reunion at **PORT MACQUARIE.**

THE ASSOCIATION OF FOURTH INFANTRY BATTALIONS

On Sunday, 10th November (Armistice Sunday), the Association of Fourth Infantry Battalions held their first Annual March to the Cenotaph followed by a Reunion at Royal Naval House. It was a most impressive occasion indeed as, led by the Regimental Band of 4 R.N.S.W. Regt., the parade of more than 150 members and ex-members of 4th Infantry Battalions swung down Martin Place. Particularly impressive was the uniformed party of 30 members of 4 R.N.S.W.R.

After a wreath was placed on the Cenotaph by **President Harry Gjedsted** and the bugler had sounded "Last Post" and "Reveille" the marchers moved to Wynyard Park for "Break Off" before proceeding individually to Royal Naval House for the Reunion.

The Reunion itself was a memorable occasion — a gathering of "4th Infanteers" from 4th 1914-18 A.I.F., 2/4th A.I.F., 4th 1939-45 A.I.F., 4th Riverina Rifles, 4 R.A.R., and 4 R.N.S.W.R. The Brass Band of 4 R.N.S.W.R. enlivened the proceedings with spirited renditions of favourite marches, from 1914-18 to now. Individual members also contributed much appreciated musical items.

General Sir Ivan, after attending several other engagements during the day was able to get along to the Reunion. Before leaving he mentioned how very much in favour he was of the new Association especially as it provided such an excellent opportunity for the generations to meet on common ground.

A fuller description of the proceedings will be seen in "Fourth Infanteer", the journal of the Association of Fourth Infantry Battalions.

O.T.U. SCHEYVILLE

A most enjoyable evening was experienced by **John Meehan, Peter Cooke, Reg Angel** and your editor as the guests of the **Kenna Club** at the Officers' Training Unit, Scheyville, on the evening of Friday, 8th November.

The function was organised by the President and members of the **Kenna Club** as an occasion for the presentation to the club of the portrait of "**Nedda**" **Kenna, V.C.**, which our Association commissioned. In the unavoidable absence of **President Harry Gjedsted** your **Senior Vice-President** made the presentation.

A feature of the evening was the tremendous spread — of banquet proportions — wholly provided by the Unit Chef and Staff. It was indeed a sumptuous repast thoroughly enjoyed by all. An invitation was extended to members of the Kenna Club to visit us at a monthly meeting on any first Friday.

COCK'S COLUMN

John Copland reports having met **Jack Rogan** (ex 2/1st En.) who was a P.O.W. in Germany. Sends his best regards to **Athol Heath, Joe Rognini** and all his other P.O.W. friends. Jack is still soldiering on in the Regular Army. Is stationed at Victoria Barracks and will come along to a meeting to see some old friends.

"B" Company 4 R.N.S.W.R. Regt. did their bit to help in the recent bushfires on the South Coast. Many of the Company, which is stationed at Wollongong, fought the fires and afterwards provided emergency accommodation to many who lost their homes. Congratulations, men, on a job well done!

Leo Lynch, Grafton, sends a message to **Dick Morris** to say he was sorry he missed you on your way through, Dick, but will catch up some other time.

Tom Provians, Brisbane, sent a message with "**Sailor**" **Harvey** to wish everyone good luck. Thanks, Tom, I appreciate your note and wish you and your family all the best.

Charlie Adams, Woy Woy, mentioned that he had put a notice in his shop window asking for reading matter for the boys in Vietnam. The response was very good and Charlie has brought down four cartons of books in the last month. Good work, Charlie. Charlie has just taken a job driving a taxi in Ettalong, while his good wife looks after their Gift Shop. We wish you well in both ventures, mate.

The **Annual Combined Smoko** which is held on the first Friday in November every year was again a most enjoyable occasion particularly as so many of our old friends from 4 Bn. ('14-'18) were able to attend together with a representation from 4 Bn. R.N.S.W.R. Regt. The "Bow and Arrow Boys" included **President Jack Noakes, Sec.-Treas. Harry Stafford, Pat O'Keefe, John Braid, Reg Barton, Jim Gorman, Bill Thornton, Les Walkom, Len Mawson and Len Hadlow**. Members and ex-members of 4 R.N.S.W.R. included **Lt.-Col. Gordon Maitland, Lt.-Col. Ray Sharpe, Major Tom Hall, Major Tom Chambers, Lt. Ray Hirst, W.O. Norm Harries, S/Sgt. Bray, Sgt. Marshall and Sgt. Barlow**.

Harry Stafford brought along some excellent photographs he had taken at the Cowra Reunion. Reported also having seen **Ron Barber** who is well and happy and sends his regards.

Who is the member who lost his tie at the "Smoko" to one of the **Old and Bold**? Won't mention any names but never mind **Johnny J.**

Bill Luck mentioned that **George Johnson**, Lismore, had called at Bill's home and sends his regards to all the mates.

Charlie Adams, Woy Woy, reported having visited **Doug Barry** in Woy Woy Private Hospital. Doug has been very ill for the past few weeks but we are happy to report is much better now. Chas. also visited **Bill Flannagan** of 4 Bn. in Ocean Beach Hospital. Sorry to hear you have been so ill, Doug. Our best wishes mate. Thanks, Charlie, for your good work.

Brian Morris, son of member **Dick Morris** is out of hospital and on the road to recovery again reports **Bill Luck**. Very pleased to hear this, Brian, and wish you all the best in the future—and to you, too, Father Morris.

IN THE MAIL BAG

From "**Sailor**" **Harvey**, Bondi—Most of the news of the Reunion has been covered by others of the Battalion and published in the "WOG" of October issue which was good going.

After the Reunion, which Thora and I thoroughly enjoyed, we returned to Sydney by car on Tuesday, 8th October, had a day at home to clean up and then left for Brisbane via Taree, Grafton and Murwillumbah. Went to Coolangatta from Brisbane, back to Brisbane then to Coffs Harbour, arriving home Friday, 25th October. Taree is a good spot for a holiday—very nice R.S.L. Club (which was officially opened by Sir Ivan). A happy day and evening for **Sailor's** wife who hit two jackpots.

At Grafton was made very welcome by **Leo Lynch**. Although I had written to Leo he had not received my

letter—nevertheless out to Leo's home where **Eileen** treated us to a lovely dinner—son **Chris** being a very capable "wine steward" during dinner. Thora and I were amazed to see how Leo's daughters had grown in a couple of years, all lovely girls, too. Thanks Eileen and family for your hospitality.

Tom Provians and wife **Vera** were pleased to see us and Tom's son **John** called in at our pub and took us back to said pub when our very nice visit had finished. Tom has been on the sick list—quite ill—and was in hospital for a period and is still off work—however, he is recovering well and came into Brisbane where we had a couple of 4X ambers before leaving.

Don't know whether you will call this a "plug" but should anyone in the Btn. need a nice quiet holiday at Coolangatta contact "Sailor"—a block of modern all-electric self-contained flats built last May, each two bedrooms, few minutes from Coolangatta, stone's throw from **Terrific Tweed Head's Twin Town R.S.L.** situated at Rainbow Bay—really a nice place!

NORTH BRITISH NEWS

Many thanks **Eileen** of the North British staff for her efforts in taking notes from Association visitors. Now that the old regular **Ted McCaffery** has retired we rely on Eileen to keep us informed. I call in almost every Wednesday and Friday about 5 p.m.

Among notes left for me were those from:

John Copland who mentioned how very much he enjoyed the Cowra Reunion.

John "Bookie" Rae, Newcastle, had called—was in town on business and popped in on the off chance of seeing some of the boys.

Ted Glendenning, Parkes, was sorry to miss everyone. Sends his best wishes to all his old mates.

Morrie Wilson has sold his business at Gordon and is very rarely in town these days. Will get to a meeting soon though. Will be pleased to see you, Morrie.

Athol Heath called in prior to leaving for Cowra Reunion but had to leave before I got there. Thank you **Pat** and **Julie** for your message which I reciprocate and thanks Athol for your note.

Barry Herwig called in and will try and make it one Friday. Barry's new address is 86 Lang Road, Centennial Park — Phone 31-5727.

Norm Ribbons called in and met "Sailor" **Harvey**. Norm left the following note for me: "Last Sunday (20-10-68) was the 30th anniversary of our first meeting at Liverpool. Can you remember that far back? Do you recall the orchestra of you with two spoons and a tin plate and someone with two sandshoes and a suitcase for the drum? Also can you remember me taking over the camp and issuing one roll of roast beef to every sober man? **Gus Kyle** and **Ross Smith** as orderly room clerks and yours truly as Private-cum C.O., 2 i/c, C.S.M. and what have you? All the best to the mob. Norm Ribbons (one time Carriers)."

A pleasant surprise to meet **Bruce Stewart** from the "Town of the Crows". Bruce was in the pink. Reported having seen **Stan Blacksley**, Humula, **William Alexander "Snow" Wells**, Junee, **Joe Crawford** and **Jack Cummins**, Wagga; also sees **Jim Crowe** at the races. Bruce paid me \$4.00 for subs.

"Sailor" **Harvey** reported that our Queensland Vice-President **Tom Provians** had been on the sick list but was recovering. We were all very sorry to hear this

Tom and hope you have a complete and speedy recovery mate. Everyone here sends their best wishes.

Mick Owers, Moree, called in. Mick was down to finalise arrangements for his daughter's wedding on 9th November. Barbara was to be married in Sydney on that date. On behalf of the Association, Mick, we offer our sincere good wishes. Mick was pleased to see the 2/4th members who included **Bruce Hastings**, "Cheeky **Charlie**" **Keating**, **Ron "Porky" Williams**, **Ken Webb**, **Ted McCaffery** and **Jack Heaney**.

Tom Clough, Macksville, when down for the R.S.L. Congress reported having also met **Bert Hudson** (D Coy.) of Wyalong who came up with **Mrs. Hudson** for the Congress. Best wishes, Bert and Mrs. Hudson.

I ran into "Gentleman **Jim**" **Graham** at the Quay recently. Jim had seen **Dick Morris** at Canterbury — also **Ted Fox**.

At the Cowra Reunion—A note from **Wal Lambourne**: "Very sorry you could not be with us this year, Cock. However, we do not forget you and wish you all the best." Thanks Wal — it was the first Country Reunion I have missed and I will certainly be at Port Macquarie next year with **Dick Bawden**.

Dick Pinson enjoyed the show thoroughly and expresses his thanks to **Tim West**, **Ted Harris and Co.**

Jock Parker, Dora Creek, sends best wishes to all members.

Jack and Eunice Dubber had a most enjoyable time at Cowra and hope to attend many more such happy gatherings.

Perc and Bet Dalla with their son were happy to meet so many of Perc's old comrades.

Jack and Joan Huston, Canberra, were sparking on all fours. We hope Jack didn't knock that bottle of Barossa product off before he got home.

"Snow" and **Gwen McLennan**, Castlecove, attended their first Country Reunion and hope they can repeat the performance at every opportunity. "Snow" as usual provided a decent contribution in the refreshment line.

Bill Whitehead, Cudal, was pleased for the opportunity of seeing **Tom "Nedda" Erskine**, Griffith, again, as well as the other members.

Esca and Vera Riordan, Kempsey, reported having seen **John Smith** recently at Macksville. Was also speaking to **Billie Bennett** who, with **John "Bush" Bennett** is very busy with their properties at Berrigerra and Macksville.

Fred and Dorothy Searle were on deck as usual. A note from Dorothy said: "Everyone I have spoken to has had a wonderful time at Cowra. Forty-five ladies had a most enjoyable dinner together (should be more often), I bet the men feel the same way. Sorry you could not get here, Jim." Thank you, Fred and Dorothy.

ENGAGEMENT

Once again the 2/4th Bn. demonstrates its "togetherness" — the amalgamation of the **Morris-Kesteven** household. **Lyn**, only daughter of **Fi** and **Ken Kesteven** has become engaged to **Rick**, eldest son of **Dick Morris** and the late **Joyce Morris**. **Fi**, **Ken** and **Dick** all think they have made a good deal!

Dick Bawden is very active with preparations for the **Port Macquarie Country Reunion** in October, 1969. In a note to me during the month, Dick said he was looking forward to making the next Country Reunion the biggest and brightest ever, to mark the 30th anni-

versary of the formation of the Battalion. Thanks for your note, Dick. I'm looking forward very much to Port Macquarie for '69.

FLIGHT FROM GERMANY May, 1944

We were not working more than 8½ hours per day so we had plenty of time after working for the fuhrer to do something for ourselves. We had some of the boys working in the engineers' shop of the factory, and they managed to scrounge pieces of steel, old files and hacksaw blades, etc., so we could attack the wall. We decided the parcel room was the logical place to start on so we moved the steel cupboards away from the wall, placed a ground sheet on the floor and got cracking on the wall further away from the guard room. We always had a cockatoo at the door or window of the barrack watching the guard, and it was very tedious work for we could not make much noise without giving the show away. We were never very long on the job and when we finished for the day we put all the rubble into the latrine, so we were able to get rid of any evidence that would be obvious to the guards. While this was going on we were still working at the factory and doing odd jobs outside. There were nearly 50 Polish and Ukrainian girls working in the factory. Some of them had been taken away from school and put to work. There were also some German girls. We had one job planting cabbages and onions, but they were not likely to be a very successful crop for we used to pinch the roots off the plants before we put them in the ground. They also gave us a job weeding some beans, but we were so stupid that we could not distinguish between the weeds and the bean plants, so we did not last long at that. We had to clock on and off at least half a dozen times a day. We had one job cleaning out a big boiler with an electric buzzer but we could not do much good at that so they put in a German civilian to do the job with us; however, he was susceptible to a bribe, and by kidding to him and giving him a few cigarettes we managed to get out of most of the hard work. Early in the piece at the Kommando we had an Austrian guard who was rather good to us. He was sent back to an army fighting unit.

The work on the "hole in the wall" was continued at every opportunity until we reached a stage where there was only a thin coating of plaster on the outer wall, so we called a halt until we had completed our plans for the escape. Each night before we were locked up in the dormitory we had to deposit our boots and trousers in the dining room and it was also locked in two places. With the aid of one of the Polish girls we were able to obtain a key that would fit one of these locks after it had been filed. The other lock was attached to the bolt and we had a spanner made in the engineers' shop so we could take off the nuts and so open up the way to the dining room. We had been hoarding up our foodstuff right from the commencement of the working party and we planned our kits in the hole in the wall. We had studied the routine of the guards on their different shifts and they would walk around the barracks a few times and then sit down on a seat just outside the guard house where we could see the guard just outside one of the windows. When we originally planned the escape eight of us were

to make the break but four of them decided it was not worth the risk as they thought the end was not very far distant (but it was just short of a year before it terminated). The fellows who were with the party staying behind gave us every assistance possible. We were not very far from another working Kommando—Ebersdorf—only 5 kilos along the road and we often visited this party on the weekends making the excuse that we needed some boot repairs or to have our hair cut. One Aussie (Dick Plantase) in the party proved to be of great assistance to us in acquiring a railway map from a waiting room at a station where the party was doing some maintenance work to the railway line. He was also instrumental in building up our rations by giving us some extra bread. The breaks at this time or the year were often called "The Spring Handicap" and they also had an entry from their party. One group of our working party had the job of loading and unloading at the railway station and we had an idea that we could leave room enough for all of us to hide in a truck that was being despatched to Yugoslavia. The door of the truck was to be left so we could open it after we got out of the barracks, but after waiting for some time for a consignment to be despatched to Yugoslavia we gave the idea away as being too risky in more ways than one. It would have meant being shut up in the truck in a confined space without any chance of getting out in a hurry if the R.A.A.F. came over, then the problem of getting off after the train reached its destination. We would have had to carry a fair quantity of water as the weather was getting rather warmer and then the Jerrys were almost sure to search the train after they discovered we had broken out of the billet. We thrashed it out and decided we would be better to stick to the pine forests and travel under our own steam. The first night we tried to break out we got stuck on the second door and had to give it away, so we tried again the next night and again we got nowhere.

The way seemed to be alright in the daytime when we could see what we were doing, but whether it was the darkness or nervousness that upset us we could not say; however, we did not pack up, but decided to give it another go; so, on the third night, after the lights had been turned off, the boys started a sing-song while others of the party watched the guard, and with the aid of a long piece of string, which was held by the fellow at the window watching the guard and one of us making the break, he was able to signal the movements of the guard by a series of tugs on the string and we were able to continue on our way without making any unnecessary noise.

One of the fellows left behind was to lock the door after us when we got into the messroom where we picked up our trousers and boots, climbed over the partition into the locker room, pulled back the steel locker, gathered our gear, gave the thin sheet of plaster on the outside of the hole a shove—and it was wide open. We had to go out head first and did not know what to expect. It was a very anxious moment! The whole operation only took us a few minutes and we were on the loose. Nearly all the plaster on the outside of the building crashed to the ground with a noise that would have attracted the guard had the fellows in the hut been quiet.

(To be continued)