



White over Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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24th YEAR OF CONTINUOUS PUBLICATION

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COMMITTEE: Cecil Chrystal, John Meehan, Athol Heath, Harry Wright, Peter Cook, Fred Searle.

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COLUMNIST: Jim "Cock" Robin, 20 Adderstone Avenue, North Sydney. 2060—Author of "Cock's" Column.

**Next Meetings: Friday, 2nd May, 1969
Friday, 6th June, 1969**

**at Royal Naval House, Grosvenor St., Sydney
at 8 p.m.**

ANZAC DAY, 1969

Because 1969 marks the thirtieth Anniversary of the formation of our Battalion your committee is hopeful of a special effort by members to attend this year's **ANZAC DAY CELEBRATIONS**. In particular it is hoped for a large attendance at the **Wreathlaying Ceremony**, held prior to the main Anzac Day March, as this is **THE** occasion in the year when we, as a Unit, pay homage to our fallen comrades.

Our Victoria Cross winner "**Nedda**" **Kenna** will be our guest for the day. "**Nedda**" with his wife and daughter will be met at Kingsford Smith Airport by **Committeeman Peter Cook**, who will escort them to their motel and then bring "**Nedda**" in for the March. **Sir Ivan** hopes to be able to spend more time with us this year. He will of course be with us for the Wreathlaying Ceremony and will be able to mingle and chat with members at our forming up place in Phillip Street before taking up his position at the head of 6th Division for the March. He will later join us at the **Reunion**. **Peter Cook** has contacted a number of "A" Company members who are anxious to see "**Nedda**". **Jimmy McBrown** has rounded up a gang from Newcastle and environs for the trip—others are coming from near and far.

Jack Noakes and **Harry Stafford** (4 Bn. '14-'18) have arrangements well in hand for their members to attend the Reunion at **Carlow Street, North Sydney**. We will be looking forward to renewing our friendship with them.

Arrangements for the day are:

Wreathlaying Ceremony—

0800: FALL IN at the corner of Erskine and York Streets, Sydney for the short march to the Cenotaph via Barrack Street, preceded by members of **4 Bn. A.I.F.** and led by the **Parramatta Pipe Band**. On arriving at the Cenotaph the marchers will halt, face

inwards and remain at attention while Wreaths are laid by our respective Association Presidents. The Bugler will sound the **LAST POST**. After this ceremony the March will continue to Phillip Street to our forming up place for the main March.

THE ANZAC MARCH

The Anzac Day March will commence at 0900 hours. Our Unit usually begins about 0945, but members are asked to be in readiness at the forming up place in Phillip Street (near King Street) at 0930 hours. Members taking part in the march are respectfully asked to assist the organisers by taking notice of the **HONORARY R.S.M.** We certainly don't want to over-organise you, but we feel that you too would wish the Unit to be at its best on the Anzac March.

The March will end at Hyde Park and specially chartered buses will be waiting to take members to **Carlow Street, North Sydney** for the Reunion. **Committeeman John Meehan** will advise members of the whereabouts of the special buses. Tickets for the Reunion will be available from committeemen.

PORT MACQUARIE IN OCTOBER, '69

Planes, trains and all roads lead to

PORT MACQUARIE IN OCTOBER, 1969
for our

Annual Country Reunion

Let your head go now and book with **Dick Bawden**—
or save it until the **Anzac Day Reunion**.
We'll have a Port Macquarie table from which Dick will operate.

**DICK BAWDEN, 36 PACIFIC DRIVE,
PORT MACQUARIE**

THE ANZAC DAY REUNION

The Reunion this year will be held at the **Drill Hall of 17 Bn. R.N.S.W. Regt., Carlow Street, North Sydney** (adjacent to Manresa Hall). The doors will be opened at **12 NOON** and refreshments will be available as soon as a keg can be tapped. For those of us who do not take alcohol there will be available plenty of iced drinks throughout the afternoon. For the "Old & Bold" there will be a drop of Scotch.

This year we have a change of catering—the food will be ample and varied. The full menu was published in last issue of "W.O.G." and will be served to each table. It includes three hot dishes. At \$3.00 per head for transport, food and drink you can be sure you'll get your money's worth.

The full **Brass Band of 4 R.N.S.W. Regt.** will be our guests for the afternoon as well as members of **Parra-matta Pipe Band**—you can be sure of a happy afternoon with food, drink, music and comradeship. **All you have to do is turn up.**

FOR THE FALLEN

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the daytime:
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are
known
As the stars are known to the night.

As the stars shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
to the end, to the end, they remain.

—Laurence Binyon.

THE LAST POST

4 Bn. A.I.F.: 2130 B. J. Conaty, 6982 J. P. Evans,
6002 A. Fryer, 1056 H. Matthews, 1299 D.
McGregor, 2870 W. H. Young, M.M.

2/4 Bn. A.I.F.: NX13222 W. C. Colley, NX2067
W. A. Mitchell, NX112670 O. P. Randall,
NX5591 P. B. Moss.

We regret to advise of the passing of two stalwarts of the Association in **Bill Colley** of Bathurst, and **Peter Moss** of Croydon. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to the relatives of these and other deceased members.

"We Will Remember Them."

FERRY TOUR AND PICNIC

SUNDAY, 11th MAY — WOY WOY

In response from many quarters a committee of Association members residing in the Woy Woy area—namely **Chas Adams, Bob Lane and Frank Frizell**—has arranged a **Picnic and Ferry Tour of Brisbane Waters** (Gosford - Woy Woy area) for 80 members of the Association for Sunday, 11th May next. Details are:

STARTING TIME AND PLACE: 10 A.M. SUNDAY, 11th MAY, 1969, at WOY WOY WHARF (rear of Bayview Hotel, Woy Woy). The party will leave by chartered ferry for a two hour tour of southern waters followed by a **Picnic Lunch at Empire Bay** at approximately 1 P.M. Members are asked to bring their own hamper and refreshments.

From Empire Bay the ferries will proceed on a tour of the northern waters returning to Woy Woy at approximately 3 P.M. Musicians will be on board for the full trip and a most enjoyable afternoon can be confidently anticipated.

At 3 P.M. the party will proceed to Kitchener Nature Park, Blackwall Mountain to enjoy the panoramic views of the Central Coast, Broken Bay and Palm Beach.

At 4 P.M. the party is invited to the home of **Chas and Phoebe Adams** for afternoon tea where they may freshen up for the return journey.

The charge for the day is only \$1.00 per adult with children free. Any surplus after the day's outing will be put to Association funds.

Woy Woy is a very pleasant and fast train journey taking only 43 minutes from Hornsby and costing \$1.04 for the return trip. On Sunday trains leave Hornsby at 8.02 A.M. and 9.01 A.M. and arrive at Woy Woy approximately 45 minutes later. The railway station is adjacent to the wharf.

On the return journey trains leave Woy Woy at 4.19 P.M., 5.19 P.M., 5.43 P.M., 6.27 P.M., 7.14 P.M., 8.30 P.M. and 8.59 P.M.

It is imperative that members wishing to attend send their money and advise the number of children attending by 4th May to:

CHAS ADAMS

6 Springwood Avenue, WOY WOY

Phone Woy Woy 41 2258 (after 6 P.M.)

COCK'S COLUMN

North British News: Met **Joe Rognini** with a friend **Mick Elliott** who was Joe's Sgt. in 53 Bn. 5th Div. 1914-'18. Joe had been to the South Coast recently but missed the boys. Mentioned his home town Gulgong which is celebrating its Centenary this year. Any of the Gulgong boys who are interested should contact **Alf Brigden**, the Gulgong Association, Parramatta. Glad to see you Joe and look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Harry Gjedsted and **Rusty McWilliams** called in after a day on the harbour with the Annual Brown Nurses' Charity Appeal—gluttons for punishment!

Eileen reports that **Bill "Tiger" Hayes** had called in. As he was leaving another chap asked her if he was a 2/4ther. It turned out to be **Jack Eastham**. Eileen mentioned that another 2/4er was there also—**Jack Heaney**. They had a "lemonade" together and a yarn. **Jack Eastham** included his signature in Eileen's "White Over Green" History. Jack was the Sgt. in "A" Coy. who used to play the mouth organ on the marches; now lives at Ryde. Hope to see you at our monthly meetings Jack.

Morrie Wilson called in and left a message with Eileen. Let's see you at a meeting Morrie.

Was having a drink with **Ken Webb** when I noticed big **Jack Davis** across the bar. Jack joined in the conversation.

Others to call in at the N.B. were **Chas Adams**, **Gordon Chrisp**, "**Fangs**" **Coughlan**, **Ted McCaffery**, "**Sailor**" **Harvey**, and "**Porky**" **Williams**.

Many thanks to **Bill "Snow" McLennan** who drove me home from the last meeting. Also to **Dick and Enid Latimer** for a similar service the previous time. I really do appreciate it.

At Haberfield recently I met a chap, **George Harris**, a fencing contractor. During conversation I mentioned we were holding our 1969 Country Reunion at **Port Macquarie** and that **Dick Bawden** was organising it. George said he and Dick used to shoot clay pigeons at Mudgee. Sends his regards Dick.

George Stack reports that **Peter Denver** was enquiring after my health. He and the family will be over in May for his eldest son's wedding—and again in September for the **Country Reunion** at **Port Macquarie**. Thanks Peter for your enquiry.

Fred Searle reports: "On our recent tour to the North Coast and back **Dorothy** and I were delighted to meet so many of our wonderful friends in the Association. At **Port Macquarie** we met **Dick and Ruth Bawden** and discussed the organisation of the 1969 Country Reunion at Port Macquarie.

Moved on to Kempsey staying with **Esca and Vera Riordan**. While there we met **Gordon and Marcia Campbell**. Saw **Noreen Dowling** but missed Harry who was unfortunately away.

At **Macksville** we stayed with "**Bush**" and **Billie Bennett**. Saw **Tom Clough**, **John Smith**, **Bub** and **Margaret Graham** at the R.S.L. Club. On to Grafton where we saw **Leo and Eileen Lynch** and **Mick Green**.

At Lismore we saw **Allan and Carma Kirk**, met **Vic and Vince Slade**. Was sorry to hear **Doug Grove** was in Lismore Base Hospital—we visited Doug and conveyed to him the best wishes of the Association.

Allan and Carma escorted us all round Lismore for which our grateful thanks. At Ballina we met "**Raggsey**" **Butler**; also saw **Reg Andrews**.

At Kyogle we stayed with **Ian and Edna Wallwork**. Met **Jack Chaseling** and later that night (at the Chaselings) the gathering included **Jack and Joan**, **Ian and Edna**, **Bob Gardiner** and **Charlie Grove**—an excellent night. Ian took us out to see **Hugh and Eileen Whittleton**, **Jack and Joyce Lister**, **Reg and Carol Murphy**; also met **Mel McInnes**. Back at Lismore saw **Doug and Gwen Stebbings**. On to Dorroughby where we were very pleased to stay with **Tom and Freda Clarke** and really enjoyed ourselves. Tom took us to see **Bill and Una Sheaffe**.

At Evans Head saw **Royce McDonald** and then proceeded to Myleston to see **Harry and Emmeline Russell** with whom we stayed for four days. Harry drove us to Raleigh, Hungry Head and Urunga. We also went to Ebor through Bellingen and Dorriggo Mountains. At Ebor we pulled into the pub (burned down a year ago it is now known as "the beer with no pub"! **Tim Ellis** was away at Tyringham and on the way back to the car I was discussing with Harry what the "I.C." stood for (Tim's initials). A woman sitting in a car nearby said, "**Ignatius Cuthbert**" is the name. It is Tim Ellis you are discussing?" So for fame!

We had a look at the Falls then went on to the New England National Park—about 12 miles from Ebor to the Lookout (5250 feet above sea level). Back to the beach at North Beach—miles and miles of glorious sand.

Harry and Emmeline have a most comprehensive business at Myleston—General Store, Taxi Service, Newsagency, Holiday Cottages, Post Office and Commonwealth Bank Agency.

We visited **Shirley Vaughan** widow of Association member **Fred Vaughan**. **Bill Hyde**, Shirley's father, also one of our mob, was ill in Coffs Harbour hospital.

On the way home we looked up **Keith and Joan McCaffery** at Taree. Also saw **Max Coy** who lives next door. Had a most enjoyable evening—went with Keith to the Manning River Co-op Factory where he is Works Engineer. He introduced us to the Production Manager, **Jack Neal**, who took us for a very interesting tour of the factory. Spent a nice evening with **Harry and Yvonne Pearse** at Stockton R.S.L. Club. Saw **Marge Carpenter** at Warner's Bay but missed **Alf**. From there we took off for home.

"I REMEMBER"

The clock rolled back over a quarter of a century that weekend in Cowra when the 2/4th Bn. held its 1968 Country Reunion.

The absolute highlight was the meeting, after so many years, with blokes like **John Copland**, **Les Fox**, **Athol Heath**, **Charlie Grove**, **Peter Cook**, **Bruce Cork**, **Peter Denver**, **Harry Whitman**, and so many others.

The last time John Copland and I parted company was that bleak and tragic Easter Sunday morning back in 1941. He headed for a Jerry hospital with wounds he will carry to the grave—me to four agonising, soul-destroying years. No one can ever understand the hopes, the dreams, the prospects, the lives, so utterly

destroyed that day. John, together with **Tom Hopper**, were shining lights to me. Father, master guide and friend all in one.

"Foxie" and I shared all those years of happiness and bitterness. Together, in 8 Platoon, in the desert and in Greece, we were again together through all the four long years in Hitler's Germany, including the last three years in that dreadful 383 punishment factory. "Foxie" and I would have represented in the very top echelons of athletics—but 25 years ago is not today.

"Foxie" and I have shared so much. I like to think we both came through with honour.

Only God was witness that day in April '41, when **Athol Heath** and I stood high on that Greek mountain and surveyed the whole battle scheme on the floor of the valley far below. On one hand lay our own troops with freedom and safety, while stretched before us on the other was the terrible might of the Adolf Hitler Division S.S. and one struggling doomed A.I.F. Platoon.

Silently and independently we met our conscience and made our decision. Even today only God remembers the icy fingers which clutched at the hearts of two lads as they turned without a word and hurried back to join **John Copland** and their mates for the final rendezvous with cruel fate.

I often wonder if our beloved "**Doc**" ever remembers the two boys he met in that Greek dusk, who told him "we won't get out, but we are going back".

I remember **Bruce Cork**, **Peter Cook** and **Peter Denver**, as three clean cut very young, very likeable boys—younger even than we. The **Grove brothers**, **Charlie** and **Doug** were the last additions to our section and I was glad they survived.

Harry Whitman was one of that band of corporals so busily engaged in keeping the wheels turning. All ranks have their own particular affinity and corporals in the 2/4th were no exception.

It was wonderful to share the bonds of comradeship which seem to grow as the years go by. Only those who share it can know it. Probably to only those who have finished the most virile of their allotted portion does the memory of the teeming brain, the sinewy arm, the loved voice mean so much.

(The above article was posted to me anonymously for inclusion in "Cock's Column"—Jim Robin.)

FLIGHT FROM GERMANY

Continuing the account by the late Bill Irvine, M.M., of his escape from a P.O.W. camp in Germany in 1944.

In the daytime we used to go up into the mountains exploring and getting to know our way around. There were big look-outs built on trestles with three platforms about 50 feet apart, and after we had a good scout around we would climb up to the top where we could get a good view for miles. We had gone about half a mile in the forest one morning when we heard someone whistling as though he was trying to contact someone, and presently an old man came along towards us. We had hidden behind a fallen pine and he was almost on top of us before we jumped up. He got a big surprise to see us and when we found out

that he was friendly, we asked him who he was whistling and he said it was a friend that had been with him gathering mushrooms. We had been on our way to the lookout and he asked us to keep a look out for his mate. We started off again and had gone another half mile before we met up with him. He was a very fine old chap and most friendly. He had some bread with him and offered to us. He asked where we were hiding out and when we told him he said he would come and see us and bring us some food. There were hundreds of mushrooms about, but we were scared we would get hold of the wrong kind and make ourselves sick as there were dozens that were no good and they all looked the same to us. We had to be careful that we did not make tracks around where we were camped and we tried to approach it from a different angle each time we came back. For coffee we got some wheat, put it in an emergency chocolate ration tin and cooked it on the fire till it was nearly black, then we crushed it all up with stones. It was excellent coffee we thought. There were plenty of potatoes, peas and fruit around, and in the mountains we could always get a feed of raspberries or strawberries. The forest was devoid of almost any bird life and the silence was uncanny. We seemed so far away from any war to be mixed up in it but, nevertheless, we were always on our toes and keyed up. We never seemed to relax even though at times we were almost dead beat.

During this period the Scotsman and N.Zedder were mucking in together and we two Aussies had been together from Italian P.O.W. days so we knew all about one another. We quarrelled one day and decided to split up and go our separate ways. However, when it came down to tin tacks we thought it was rather silly so we still remained a team. We met a few Czechoslovaks around here and they were very good to us. One fellow who had been an engineer had cleared out from some Nazi controlled factory and was a fugitive. His brother had a small farm close handy and he used to visit him but he had to be very careful. He told us about a small arms factory where there were come thousands of conscripted slaves from German occupied countries. When we made the trip back to **TONY MACHAN'S** we usually left it till late in the evening so we would stand less chance of being seen. We had to cross a railway line and one day when we were right against the line a troop train passed filled with German soldiers. It would have been just too bad for us had we been recognised. One day the old man whom we had met up with in the forest gathering mushrooms paid us a visit and brought us something to eat and said he would come back the following day with something better. He said he would whistle and when we answered he would show up. He kept his promise for the next day and turned up with his daughter. She was wheeling a pram but it was only a blind. To anyone they passed on the road it looked as though it contained an infant, but it had a good supply of food. They also brought some home cured tobacco. We thought this was one of the kindest acts we had been shown as the penalty would have been death or worse had they been caught.

(To be continued.)