



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. & Bar, E.D., B.Ec., LL.D (Hon.)

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PRESIDENT: Harry Gjedsted, B.E.M., 2/25 Mona Road, Darling Point, N.S.W. 2027.

Phones: 27-6350 (Bus.); 32-3977 (A.H.)

VICE-PRESIDENTS—Senior: Bill MacLennan, 2 Amaroo Ave., Castle Cove 2069. Phone: 407-3320.

Northern N.S.W.: Esca Riordan, 36 Cameron Street, West Kempsey, N.S.W. 2440. Phone: Kempsey 62-4671.

Newcastle: Alf Carpenter, 66 Chatham Road, Georgetown, N.S.W. 2298. Phone: 049-67-1969.

Southern N.S.W.: Tim West, "Yarrabundah", Cowra, N.S.W. 2794. Phone: Chiverton 42-9240.

Queensland: Tom Provians, 65 Foxton Street, Morningside, Qld. 4170. Phone: Brisbane 399-5181

South Australia: Peter Denver, "Wyndgate", Hindmarsh Island. Box 51, Goolwa, S.A. Phone: Goolwa 55-2252.

Victoria: Claude Raymond, 92 Rose Street, West Coburg, Vic. 3058. Phone: Melbourne 35-1145.

COMMITTEE: H. Bowman, C.Chrysal, E. Fox, M. Gray, K. Kesteven, G. Stack, H. Wright, L. Waterhouse

SECRETARY: Athol Heath, 5 Akora Street, Frenchs Forest 2086. Phone: 451-4466.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY: J. Meehan.

TREASURER: Allen Lindsay, 21A Mirral Road, Caringbah 2229. Phone: 524-1937.

WELFARE OFFICERS: John Copland, 117 Charles Street, Ryde 2112. Phone: 80-3771.

Bill Parry, 5 Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest 2086. Phone: 451-2790.

EDITOR: Bill MacLennan, 2 Amaroo Avenue, Castle Cove 2069. Phone: 407-3320.

MONTHLY MEETINGS: Fourth Friday in each month at 8 p.m. at the Gallipoli Memorial Club.

NEXT MEETING: FIRDAY, October 27th, 1978

LISMORE REUNION — 1978

Another wonderful Country re-union has come and gone, and as expected, this year's gathering turned out to be once again 'one of the best yet'....

In fact, from an attendance point of view, it was indeed 'the best yet' — a most gratifying result for Allan Kirk and his team. Threatened petrol shortages, heavily booked public transport, nor unseasonably patchy weather could dampen the spirits nor stem the flow of 2/4thers into Lismore for the long week-end, and we can only say another big 'thank you' to Allan and Carma and all of the Lismore boys and their good ladies for the magnificent organisation put in to ensuring such a happy and successful occasion.

In the absence of the expected report on the week-end from our northern scribe — who appears to have had to go on a month's holiday to recover fully — we repeat here— under the article which appeared in the 'Nothern Star' newspaper on Monday, October 2nd, under the heading of:— **BATTALION SURVIVORS GATHER FOR REUNION.**

'Battle campaigns in North Africa, Greece, the Middle East and the South West Pacific were relived by more than 120 former members of the 2/4 Australian Infantry Battalion at the battalion's annual reunion in Lismore at the weekend.

'The reunion celebrations began on Saturday afternoon with a march past from the Lismore R.S.L. Club to the Cenotaph at the Lismore Memorial Baths. The march was led by a band from the Woodlawn College.

'At the Cenotaph, a short memorial service was presented by the Rev. Harry Graves and wreaths were laid in remembrance of fallen comrades by the battalion's commanding officer in the Middle East campaigns, Major General Sir Ivan Dougherty, CBE, DSO and Bar, the Mayor of Lismore Ald. W.G.Blair, and the President of the Lismore R.S.L. Club, Mr. Bob Wighton. After the service, the last post was sounded and the marchers stood for one minute's silence.

'Among the former battalion members who took part in march past was Victoria Cross winner, Edward 'Ned' Kenn. The Victoria Cross was awarded to Private Kenna for valour in the attack on the Wirui Mission in Papua New Guinea in 1945.

'On Saturday night more than 270 people, including wives, friends and families of the former battalion members, attended the annual reunion dinner in the Northcott Auditorium at the Lismore R.S.L.Club. The dinner and other reunion celebrations were organised by a group of local members of the 2/4th Australian Infantry Battalion Association.

'The dinner was addressed by a number of speakers, including Sir Ivan, Ald. Blair, the member for Lismore Mr. Bruce Duncan, and Mr. Bob Wighton. Ald. Blair offered a civic welcome to the visitors who had come from as far as South Australia, Victoria and Queensland for the reunion.

'On behalf of the people of Lismore, Ald. Blair said that the city was proud to be chosen as host for the 2/4th reunion. Ald. Blair was presented with a copy of a book containing the 2/4th Infantry Battalion's history, White over Green.

'After dinner came the time for renewing old friendships and remembering the campaigns the battalion had taken part in during World War II.'

Following this Article was a photograph taken near the cenotaph of Sir Ivan, 'Ned' Kenna, and S.V.P. Bill MacLennan.

Amongst the few disappointments of the week-end was the fact that Harry and Marge Gjedsted were unable to attend. Harry had patiently endeavoured for months to get himself fit enough to make the trip, but on Doctor's advice decided to remain at home.

We were also most unhappy to hear that Cec and Phil Chrystal, having travelled as far as Taree, had to return to Sydney due to the sudden recurrence of Cec's old illness. We wish both Harry and Cec speedy and complete recovery, and look forward to their presence at Newcastle next year, together with their lovely ladies.

2/4th AUST. INF. Bn. MEDAL WITH CLASPS

The new medal was officially launched by our President at the monthly meeting of the Association in September, when he presented Sir Ivan Dougherty with his medal. Its general acceptance by our Battalion members became most evident with the prompt return of many Stat. Decs. included in August W.O.G., and the tremendous interest displayed in it at Lismore, where it was first worn by all who had purchased it. There were one or two 'knockers' of the medal idea, but then there always are to any good idea put out by your Committee. However, I have mine and I wore it with pride after my wife Gwen had diligently put my five clasps in place.

Now to the new recipients of the medal — a word of warning on the fitting of the clasps. Make VERY sure that you place your clasps correctly in the first instance before bending the pins to secure the clasp to the ribbon, as it is most unlikely they will survive straightening and rebending without snapping off, which is what happened to my Palestine clasp.

As I advised during my speech at the Lismore reunion, this medal is most definitely available to all widows who wish to apply for it on behalf of their deceased husbands. Already in excess of 80 of the initial order of 200 placed by the Committee have been applied for, so send your Stat. Dec. to Athol Heath without delay and the medal should be in your hands by Christmas.

Bill MacLennan.

NEWCASTLE NEWS

The September get together of our Newcastle members was held at the Hamilton R.S.L. Club on the night of the 27th. A large roll-up made for quite an enjoyable evening.

Our old mate, Bill (Bully) Hayes, just released from the Mater Hospital after a serious operation to the back of his neck, stayed for a couple of hours and enjoyed every minute of it. Bill has lost a fair bit of weight and is still pretty shaky on the legs; however, he is now making fair progress.

Most of the local Association members indicated that they would be going to Lismore and were looking forward to a great week-end.

Alf Carpenter while at Lismore will present some ideas to the Committee regarding the possible 1979 Reunion at Newcastle.

Our October get together is to be held at the Stewart & Lloyds Recreation Club on the 28th in conjunction with the 2/1st Field Regt. Annual Dinner, to which all 2/4th members have been invited.

Kindest regards

.....Jim Sherritt.

WELFARE REPORT as at 22nd September 1978.

We and the old Fourth have had a very healthy month. Our only 'customer' was —

NX 11220 McCAFFERY, E. who was mentioned last month and was discharged in the first couple of days of September.

Keep up the good work, and good health to all.

For the teams.....John Copland.

LAST POST Reported in Sept.—Oct. 'Reveille'.

NX 72688 GREENE, R.W.
NX 15407 GUNN, M.C.
NX 23061 MEEK, J.G.
NX 6000 LIEBICK, D.E.R.
NX 8610 STAPLES, J.

QX 6157 RUSSELL, Duncan McPherson, died at home in Brisbane on Sept. 10th after a long illness. He was Transport Officer, 19th Bde. through Libya, Greece and Crete, and was a very dear friend to us all. We send his wife, May, and all his family our deepest sympathy.

NX 4028 WIDDOP, Richard P.
A letter from Mrs. Gwenyth E. Widdop, ex WAAAF of 49 Sussex Inlet Road, Sussex Inlet to Athol Heath, dated 24th August, 1978, informed us of her husband's death, as follows

'I am writing to let you know that my husband passed away in his sleep in the early morning of August 23rd, and his funeral was held at the Wollongong Crematorium on Friday the 25th at 11.30 a.m.

'As you probably never knew; he was a very sick person and his death was due to War disabilities.

'I would like a copy of your next journal with these details in it.'

We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Widdop, and as is our practice with Association widows, will continue to send W.O.G. to her until instructed otherwise.

A THANK YOU MESSAGE On a happier note, we are very pleased to publish the following letter written to Athol Heath on August 26th by our old mate Larry Dooley:

'At last I am home and feel well enough to write after 7 weeks in hospital, six of them without food. There was a time when I thought I would be included in your reading of the roll next Anzac Day.

'However Athol, that is all a thing of the past, and I would now like to thank and express my appreciation to the Association and members. It is times like that when one fully understands what friendship within the battalion is all about.

'I would like to publicly thank all involved, particularly those who visited me – men like John and Bill, our Welfare team, George Stack called several times, also Harry, Laurie, Slim, Dave, our Vice Pres. Bill, and of course Vera. I also had phone calls from mates in the Battalion. Even President Harry was kind enough to ring several times. Thank you also for the lovely card from members at the monthly meeting.

'Athol, I would appreciate it if you could express my sincere gratitude and thanks to all. I feel so humble that so many cared.

'I am afraid I won't be well enough to attend until the September meeting. However, I most certainly will be there as doctors tell me I will be fit for light duties late September.

*Sincerely,
Larry Dooley.'*

CAN YOU HELP?

Sir Ivan has received a request from Kim Lindsay, who is the son of our battalion adjutant in Greece and Crete, John Lindsay requesting photographs and/or other information about his late father. Kim married a German girl some time ago, and has been living in West Germany. He has been in touch with Athol Heath, also a number of other people, as well as organisations such as the Australian War Memorial, the Imperial War Museum (U.K.) and the Pentagon (U.S.A.) His name and address is as follows:—

Kimberley Lindsay,
Tegernseestraße 39,
7000 Stuttgart 50,
WEST GERMANY

We feel sure Kim would appreciate any help in this direction which could be offered.

ANNUAL LISMORE CHRISTMAS DINNER

Far North Coasters and travellers are advised that this year's function will be held at the Lismore R.S.L. on Saturday December 2nd.

All 2/4thers are welcome at this function, so if you are able to attend, please be in touch with Allan Kirk at 179 Dibbs Street, Lismore, 2480, or ring him on 066 214464, at the earliest possible date and let him know your intentions.

This is always a very popular event, so don't miss it if you can manage to be there.

A WORD FROM OVERSEAS

Since announcing the details of our medal, we have received much correspondence, but I thought this one would be of interest to you.....Harry Gjedsted.

'Dear Harry,

Read the article in W.O.G. re the Battalion Medal with interest, and think as you and your committee thought.

Must it end there? What about a 'wet canteen and A.W.L. pendant' to hang around the neck for those who qualify? I include myself in this.

Joking apart, think the idea a splendid one and enclose 20 (sterling) which will cover the cost, and the balance to welfare please.

Best wishes to yourself and family and all Old Comrades, Yours,

Monty Siems,
26 Penfold Road,
Clacton On Sea,
Essex, England.

AN ITEM OF INTEREST

We are indebted to Bill Andrews for having sent in a photostat copy of the German surrender document signed on 4th May 1945, in Europe. It reads as follows:—

Instrument of Surrender of ALL GERMAN armed forces in HOLLAND, in northwest Germany including all islands, and in DENMARK.

1. The German Command agrees to the surrender of all German armed forces in HOLLAND, in northwest GERMANY including the FRISIAN ISLANDS and HELIGOLAND and all other islands in SCHLESWIGHOLSTEIN, and in DENMARK, to the C-in-C. 21 Army Group. This to include all naval ships in these areas. These forces to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally.
2. All hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by German forces in the above areas to cease at 0800 hours. British Double Summer Time on Saturday, 5th May, 1945.
3. The German command to carry out at once, and without argument or comment, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject.
4. Disobedience of orders, or failure to comply with them, will be regarded as a breach of these surrender terms and will be dealt with by the Allied Powers in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.
5. This instrument of surrender is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the Allied Powers and applicable to German and the German armed forces as a whole.
6. This instrument of surrender is written in English and in German.

7. The decision of the Allied Powers will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

Signed:

B.L.Montgomery, Field Marshal

4 May, 1945
1830 hours

Signatures here of five German generals, which are all indecipherable.

Thank you Bill for this interesting document. It might be an appropriate time to include here some of an article taken from the Sydney 'Sun' on Anzac Day 1963, quoting from the just published unit history 'White over Green', under the heading of:

AND THE 2/4th BOYS WILL REMEMBER HOW BILL BEAT THE GERMANS — PANTS DOWN!!

'Invading German planes flew in over Crete, spraying out group after group of paratroopers.

'But Bill Andrews stood his ground coolly.

'In fact, no man of the 2/4th Battalion was cooler. AND NO WONDER!

'Bill was potting away with his rifle — without any pants. Bill was caught with his pants not only down but far away.

'They were away wrapped around the frame of one of Bill's mates in the 2/4th Battalion, who was in the nearby town of Heraklion looking for something to eke out the short rations.

'Things had been so tough for the Australians that Bill had for some time been the owner of the last presentable pair of pants in the section. And whoever went looking for food used to borrow Bill's pants to go into Heraklion. So when the German planes launched a fierce attack on Heraklion and its important aerodrome, Bill Andrews had to grab his rifle and start shooting — without pants.

'Moreover he got out of it unscathed — a winner.

'His mates couldn't help laughing when they recalled the rumour which had swept the unit — that the German paratroopers would be disguised in Australian uniforms.

'As Angus Ferguson of 'A' Coy. pointed out, the furphy must have been crook; he'd requisitioned for a new uniform 12 months ago, which he'd never seen. If HE couldn't get some new clobber, the Jerries didn't stand much chance.

IN THE MAILBAG

A little more nonsense from our scribe 'Dasher Deacon'

'The 2/4 Ex-Private's Assoc. have closed its Membership. We have reached our goal of Two Thousand Four Hundred and Twenty Four (2424). 2423 members are unfinancial. The financial member wishes to remain anonymous — anyhow, I bought a beer with his subs. We have had a marvellous year, very successful, mainly due to the fact we have no President, Vice President and no Committee. I am the Treasurer, so we have no money to worry about. Except make sure that we meet at least a couple of times a year. At our Mother Club's Anzac Day, Country Reunions or a Monthly meeting. Talking about Anzac Day — good to see Tich Fordham — maybe he

will get another rail warrant next year. Don't worry about your old team Newtown. Next season the Ex-Private's old footballers are going to play for the Jets. Lew Dubber is transferring from Cronulla R.S.L., Ted McCaffery will be Coach, 'Blah' Smith Captain (look out Arty Beetson)

'The sight of Grey Haried Pot Belly men running down the field with Slim Pollock screaming obscenities will frighten any team.

'Also pleased to see Tich's old side-kick Ron (Windy) Windeyer — Anzac Day first time, but not the last. Have not seen him since he borrowed some cigarette coupons from me.

'There is a certain Ex-Sgt. from Queensland who used to have Sgt. stripes sewn on his white over green pyjamas. No name, no pack drill — he is always slinging off about my golfing ability. I have just finished playing in the Middle East Circuit — had a 69 in the Kilo 89 Open. You would not recognise the old Sisters St. Course - used to be an easy course now a complete new layout, much harder. Had a hole in one on the 1st but could not finish the course.

'Back home I won the Wondecla Open and the Mount Lofty Masters. On the Pro Circuit this fellow from Queensland is known to us by Provians Over Par, or Tom the Tee (tees up on fairways and greens). We Privates always gentlemen, we always stand up when ladies enter our Wet Canteen.

'I will play Tom the Tee any time in Gaza or Brisbane. He can have his mate Joh caddy for him — both a couple of nuts. I only have two sticks (can't afford any more on a burnt out Pension), a Putter and a Driver. Always carry the Driver at the correct slope.

'Remember Ex-privates special Jubilee Offer. 'If you die this year the Government will bury you with Military Honours plus the Parramatta Pipe Band. So if you have to go, DO IT NOW. See you all in Lismore.....Dasher'.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Always remember — Money will buy a bed but not sleep, books but no brains, food but no appetite, finery but not beauty, medicine but not health, luxury but not culture, amusement but no happiness, a house, but not a home.