



White Water 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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NEXT MEETING: Friday November 23rd, 1979 (4th Friday) at 8 p.m. at the Gallipoli Memorial Club, Loftus St. Sydney.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

After suffering a sudden severe illness in July and being incapacitated for many weeks, it is nice to be back at the helm of the Association and doing my bit to steer it on its normally successful course. I chaired my first meeting for months in October, when we had in excess of thirty members present. It is most gratifying to see such a response, and I find it particularly satisfying to see 'Cock' Robin on deck again.

To those people who did my job whilst I was away, I would like to say a very big 'Thank you' - particularly my Senior Vice-President, Ted Fox, whom I believe stepped right into my place, sat in my chair, and did a top job. To the Newcastle team, thank you once again for a really good re-union this year. When any country team can say they have sat down in excess of 220 people for a reunion dinner, see them all get up happy and satisfied and have a most enjoyable night, it is truly indicative of the hard work that has been put in by that Committee, and worthy of our hearty congratulations.

It is now my pleasure to welcome Laurie McCosker as our new Queensland Vice-President to replace the late Tom Provians. Laurie was elected at the October

meeting and we wish him well. He can be assured of all the assistance possible from Norm MacIntyre and Mrs. Vera Provians. Those old shoes of Tom's are going to take a lot of filling, Laurie, and I wish you well, but I know you can do it.

As I mentioned in last month's W.O.G. we now have news re Editorship. Since being elected in February to this position, 'Dasher' Deacon has unfortunately not been able to take up the reins due to continued ill health, and now that he has regretfully had to hand in his resignation. I therefore now have much pleasure in announcing the appointment of Bob Fergusson, M.M. as the new Editor of W.O.G. Bob as Editor and Nina as his typist have volunteered to take over the job which — as I have said before — is the toughest and most time-consuming in the whole Association, so please fellers, treat them kindly. Let them hear from you — their address and phone number — 3 SUMMIT AVENUE, DEE WHY, 2099, Phone: 98 0654.

Your Committee had quite a deal of discussion in Newcastle regarding the venue for the next Country Re-union, but it was decided to leave it to the October meeting, which has subsequently chosen Canberra as the 1980 venue. We do try to take alternate directions North one year, South the next, when applications are available, to suit as many members as possible geo-

graphically. So it will be Canberra for 1980, Kempsey in 1981, and tentatively Wagga in 1982.

Finally, my very sincere thanks for the many good wishes that poured in during my illness — personally, by phone, by letter and by card. It was terrific to receive such a volume. I might say at this stage that I have to return for another operation to forestall any further trouble, but don't wish to become known as 'Mac the Knife'. Cheers for now, and thank you all once again..... Bill MacLennan.

FROM THE MIGHTY MAN FROM MELBOURNE

A phone call received from a very excited Vic Frances yesterday, (3rd) indicated that Melbourne had just completed their Mini Reunion (to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Unit) at the Caulfield R.S.L. and that it was an overwhelming success. A full report is being compiled for next month's W.O.G., but we are happy to have the news that Vic's efforts resulted in a gathering far beyond his expectations. Congratulations, mate.

WELFARE REPORT (as at October 26th, 1979)

NX 6048 WEBB, Arthur, L., R.G.H. 610. Arthur has had a couple of difficult ops. Now at home in Griffith, is to report back to R.G.H. today for further treatment.

NX 1698 KONG, Charles. R.G.H. 430. Charlie has had a bad time, now discharged.

NX 5294 ROBERTS, Henry, R.G.H. 27. Now making some progress but not the best.

NX 9528 O'HARA, Frederick L. R.G.H. 230. A very nasty melanoma. Fred was in 'D' Coy. and joined those in the bag on that fateful Sunday in Greece, 1941.

Bill Parry keeps in touch at W.V.H. at Narrabeen. We now have five members at the homes, Dick CHAMBERLAIN, Buzz BENNETT, Athol HONNERY, Brian WARING, and John GUEST.

4 Bn. 1914-18

2860 SLANE, M.R. R.G.H. 330. Heart check up and pace-maker renewed.

2246 DOWNIE, C. R.G.H. 530 Ray treatment on lungs.

1894 McQUIRK, H. R.G.H. 530. Routine check-up.

2631 GRIFFITH, Harold H. R.G.H. 520. Now quite blind but very cheerful. Harold marched up till 6 years ago and helped to carry the banner.

LAST POST (From Reveille, October 1979)

VX 48619 COCKNELL, A.E.

NX 146104 LANDON, R.J.

NX 175349 SMITH R.J.

NX 2071 QUINNELL, A.J.

NX 135655 LEIBECK, C.J.

NX 39297 BUETTELL, E.V.

For the four visiting teams.....JOHN COPLAND

FINAL DOUGHERTY BIOGRAPHY REPORT:—

Cecil Chrystal had much pleasure in making the final repayment cheque of \$2,000; This being the final payment of all monies borrowed for the publication of the biography. Note it took only six months for the committee to accomplish this task, also worthy of comment is Alex SHEPHERD, the publisher, stated that a biography usually sells only 750 copies, yet 'Dougherty' has exceeded this number within six months.

Congratulations Cecil and Committee.

We should be aware of the many thousands who served under Sir Ivan in a period of six years and can identify at some level with this book. Please get those orders in as soon as possible....Editor.

IN THE MAILBAG

From Esca RIORDAN West Kempsey:

'Our trip to America was very interesting but rather hectic. We did a lot of bus travelling and it was tiring. We also crossed Canada. We are leaving for W.A. on August 30th, travelling by 'Indian Pacific' and returning by air on Sept. 24th. We are hoping to see some of W.A.'s wild flowers, also do some tripping around. We have a friend in Perth who is going to meet us at the station — very nice to have a contact.

'Beb and I have taken up golf and are having a lot of fun learning to play. Our life seems to be very busy with gardening, golf Legacy and a P.O.W.reunion.

From Vera PROVIANS, Morningside, Queensland.

'Joan CHASELING rang from Kyogle last week. She is just back from a trip to U.S.A. and had read the August edition of W.O.G. and was quite upset at the news. We had all known each other from childhood. 'I rang Delores FRANKLIN yesterday to check. Two of her boys are studying for exams — one still at High School, the other doing his 1st Geology Uni Exams. Delores is kept a busy Mum, which helps.

'Had a letter from Bobbie WELLS (June) last week — she had undergone major surgery earlier in the year. She is such a lovely person — another one to remember in our prayers'.

From Marge BATCHELDOR, Cowra.

'Just a thought on this beautiful morning as it dawns the 4th year of the passing of the late Hylton Batchelor (19.10.75). I felt a small subscription to your White over Green would help in a way you see fit to keep the colours flying. To mates I know, this publication means so much. I came across an old letter the other day with news of the boys arriving in the Middle East. It was all so important, the mail arriving in those days. I have the Battalion History which my grandchildren are going to enjoy one day. They are bookworms.

From Keith BAILEY, Yarralumla, A.C.T.

'Hope you are well and that everything is progressing satisfactorily for the Newcastle Reunion. Sorry for being out of touch, but have not had the best of health over the past few years. I have been retired for 2 yrs. and was granted a T.P.I. by Veterans Affairs

early this year. Was down in Sydney on a brief visit and called in to see Snow and Gwen MacLennan. Very sorry to hear that Bill was not well and wished them both all the best. Enclosed please find Stat. Dec and \$20 for medal. Please advise where it should be worn in relation to other gongs. Have spoken to John Hyles, Jack Huston, Frank Crutchett and Dave 'Speed' Taylor and all are well.

From R.M. ROBBERDS, Castlehill.

'I saw the article about Victor Makepeace in the recent W.O.G. Vic was in a working party which went to the village of Gratkorn on 10th January, 1942. On the 19th February I heard from a young German girl that Vic had passed away - incidentally I could not speak or understand much German, and we conversed in French which I had learnt at school and which she was also learning. On Sunday 22nd Feb. I had written in my diary which I kept while a P.O.W. 'that Victor Makepeace was given back to the earth whence he came'. No service was held but we said the Lord's prayer. The Pall Bearers were Harry Bell, Malcolm Kesham, myself - all 2/4 and Robert Greenway an Englishman. The grave had been dug, but as the weather was so cold (up to 35% centigrade below freezing) the earth was frozen and could not be shovelled. We had to loosen it with a pick before the shovellers could fill in the grave. I understand that Vic died of Meningitis

From Laura WALLACE, Maclean.

'I was interested to read the paragraph in the September issue of W.O.G. about Victor Makepeace. As I remember quite clearly my husband, Neil Wallace, speaking often about him but I cannot recall just what it was, the name rang a bell. He would have been in the same camp in Austria as Neil. Looking through my scrap book I found quite a few poems, some funny, all about P.O.W.s. If you would like to print some I would gladly send them.
(Will be pleased to receive poems....Editor)

From Chris WHITE, Gordon Vale (excerpts)

'had a note from Norm MacIntyre to drop a line to you re 'Nominee' to fill a very big gap left by our mate and friend, Tom Provians. A gap that will be hard to fill as there was only one Tom Provians. I will miss him, we all will. He was to visit with us this year and it was a great shock to hear of his passing. Since retiring off the cane farm we have built a comfortable home at Gordon Vale. Saw Jack Reynolds... very keen gardener. Missed seeing Norm Everson when he called. Sends his regards to all in the chilly South...

From Allen and Carma KIRK, Lismore.

'Back home again after our trip up 'North', got as far as Mossman or just beyond actually had a truly great two months away. We visited the Atherton tablelands but didn't come in contact at anytime with ex 2/4th personnel. Great news that the Newcastle 'show' was a success, sorry we didn't make it. Sorry to hear also of President Bill's illness. Please wish him a speedy recovery and good wishes when next you see

him. Since arriving home have been talking to Fred Varley, Harry and Ada Whitman, Jack Hughes (Southport) and Joan Chaseling, so had first hand information on Newcastle. On the subject of reunions, our annual Christmas Party is on again at the East Lismore Bowling Club on the 8th December and we are looking forward to a great night. A special welcome to any 2/4th 'bods' passing through Lismore. Please find enclosed \$10 for dues from Billy Nilon ('C' Coy. Sgt. cook) who has returned to the fold after all these years.

From Ken MOSES, Melbourne.

Ken reports he is recovering from his operation and wishes to thank all those who inquired after his welfare.

From Miss M. JORDAN, Ashfield

'I am writing to tell you and all members of the 2/4th what I have just completed as a memory to my Father. I have just finished cleaning his 'Slouch Hat' and his army cap and buttons from his uniform and the Sgts. stripes from his tunic. I intend to keep all these things as a lasting memory to him. I have a large photo of him in his uniform and a slouch hat on show at all times. My Mother and I still miss him, but I think having these things around help us to remember that he fought right to the end even in his illness, its five years now since he died of lung cancer. Thank you for sending Mother and I W.O.G. we enjoy reading all the news.

From A.E. 'Dick' PARRY

'A note to thank you for so promptly forwarding the screeds on the Greek Medallion. Unlike some people I know, I don't mind which part of my left breast I wear the medal, as the only part of me visible during my stay in Greece was my backside. My Major reason for this literary effort, containing 'interesting snippets', as W.O.G. of Sept. suggests everyone should do, is to mention a recent trip to Darwin. I spent a few days there and was employing a very simple ruse to prevent dehydration, (as practised by the locals) when I remembered that Vic Frances had said 'Don't forget to ring Henry ELLIOTT. So I rang Henry and the Darwin image improved immediately - a more hospitable couple I haven't met, in Henry and his wife Maisie. Amongst other things, (I don't hold this against them) they produced a very doubtful looking character named Johnny Hawkins and another charming person in his wife. I'm joking about Johnnie of course, and it was great to meet up with him. I missed seeing Russ McWilliam - I believe he is the only other resident 2/4th in Darwin. Healthwise, this might have been a good thing. Getting back to Henry and Maisie, they picked me up and took me to the Sgt's mess at Larrakeyah, where we joined John Hawkins and his daughter and son-in-law, the latter being a worthy member of the establishment. We had a most enjoyable evening, but I must have eaten something that disagreed with me, and I had to cancel a meeting with the Elliotts next morning. However, the most important instruction issued by Henry and

Maisie is 'let no 2/4th ever visit Darwin without ringing 854686 and the address is 11 Mills Street. I can assure you that they are most sincere about this.... regards.

FROM YOUR QUEENSLAND ROVING REPORTER

Newcastle Country Reunion has come and gone. Once again one was privileged to share the warmth, comradeship and love which radiates from any of our get-togethers. Thank you Alf, Marge and your many helpers.

Mixed News of our Queensland W.O.G.'s

Bill SUMPTER, still hospitalised, was visited by Norm EVERSON (Norm is doing a great job keeping his eye on our 'SICKIES'). Bill has always been a stalwart where activities of the 2/4th are concerned and as his stay in hospital could be a lengthy one, I'm sure he would appreciate a note from his mates to break the routine and loneliness that one can feel in these circumstances. He is in Ipswich General Hospital.

I have to record the passing of Eric Vivian BUETTEL (NX 39297) on 1.10.79. Unfortunately Eric's whereabouts were not known to us, and, as I was in Newcastle was not able to arrange for anyone to attend his funeral. I sent his wife, Laura, a card and note on behalf of the Association.

'Wink' and Win Walker have returned to a unit at Caloundra. They have become grandparents for the first time to Adam, son of Ross and Glenn Walker. Received a phone call from 'Beatles' Collins, Charleville, he used to be Tom's runner in New Guinea, he thinks he has let his membership lapse (shame on him). Norm MacIntyre is on deck again, newsy letter from Selby Dean, has just returned from a trip in out-back Queensland, and now looking forward to a shooting trip with his son at Christmas time.

In the absence of Allan Kirk, rang Doug Stebbings to find out date of northcoasters break up, 8th Dec. is the day. Sixth Division Association is having their 40th Anniversary Dinner here on 10th November — all welcome — I can take bookings. Signing off, Vera PROVANS.

YOUR NEW EDITOR.....

BOB FERGUSON,

3 Summit Avenue, Dee Why, 2099

Phone: 98 0654

Do write to him today with news....

THE SIXTH DIVISION 40TH ANNIVERSARY (extracts from old Sydney Morning Herald by Peter Manning)

This was the Australian Army. The date: January 9, 1940. The division: 'The Fighting Sixth,' Australia's first contingent in World War II. In the five years the famous 6th was to gain more battle honours and decorations and fight more battles in more campaigns than any other division of the Second A.I.F.

Quickly the 'Sixth Divvy' established its reputation. Within months of landing, the Division wiped out or captured 180,000 Italians over a 1,100 mile front of the Western Desert, securing it for the Allies and fatally mauling Mussolini's desert army. That operation was to be the most spectacular of the Division's victories. The swash buckling capture of Bardia, the storming of Tobruk and Derna — these are gems of Australian military history. But then came the hell of the Greek campaign. As Hitler's panzers and Luftwaffe roared southwards from Yugoslavia in March, 1941, the Division held out, with New Zealand troops, against impossible odds. Without air or tank support Australian soldiers stuck to their ground.

The purpose: To draw German forces away from the northern European theatre and keep Stalingrad out of German hands. It was too much sheer weight of military 'hardware' forced the Division out. The same story was to be repeated on Crete.

It was in these terrible days of 1941 that the name 'Anzac' took new meaning. The next year, 1942 saw depleted Division reform back in Australia, rest for a couple of weeks and then split up — some of its units were stationed around the Australian coastline while the now famous 16th and 17th Brigades joined the 7th Division in the malarial swamps and jungles of Papua.

18,000 Japanese troops invaded Papua in July, 1942. Fewer than 6,000 lived through the hand-to-hand fighting on the Kokoda Trail and to retreat under Australian and American attacks.

But the bitter attrition of Wau, Gona, Buna and Sanananda once again cut into the Division's ranks. Reformed back in Australia, the 6th set off for New Guinea again, this time in the Aitape Wewak area. It was near Wewak that Private Edward Kenna, of the 2/4th Bn., gained his Victoria Cross.

The 6th Division swept through the area to hurl the final groups of Japanese from New Guinea.

The 'Fighting Sixth', in fact, drove so hard they ended up in Japan — as the bulk of the Australian Occupation Force.

FOOTNOTE:—

Dear Readers, as this is our first attempt at editing your W.O.G., please endure our short comings for a time. Bob & Nina