



# White Water Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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**NEXT MEETING – Friday November 28 at 8 pm in the Gallipoli Memorial Club, Loftus Street, Sydney.**

## RETURN TO GREECE AND CRETE 1980

It seems I am fated not to attend a Country Reunion having gone down with a bad bout of 'flu for the latest one. It was my intention at this reunion to give a brief detail of my recent experience.

Phyl and I together with Jean Jackett (who is my sister) had intended going to London mid August for a month, however this changed dramatically when the plaque which had been ordered for Alex Sheppard to present to the Greek people of Vevi, had been very much delayed and it was not expected to be ready until the end of July or early August, by which time Alex would be back in Sydney. Hence the change of itinerary to give us two weeks in Greece and two weeks in London. This was able to be done and here is a very brief account.

We left Sydney on the 18th August by Qantas after having had discussions with Mrs. Diana Hutcherson, secretary to the Greek Consul in Sydney, who was most co-operative and handing me a letter of introduction to the Greek authorities in Athens. She had conveyed to them that I would be taking a plaque and gave them full details of our movements which they were very conversant with on our arrival.

Our first contact was with a Miss Coumanakou a most delightful young Greek lass who knew me by name as soon as I entered her office. (Her father by the way

served in the Air Force in the Desert, was a personal friend of General Tsetapadakis who recently visited Australia for the presentation of the Greek medal.) She, incidentally, is secretary to the Ambassador to whom she introduced us and suggested that we fly north as it was too hazardous and tiring a trip by car. I presented the Ambassador with a copy of 'Dougherty' which he was very pleased to receive.

We left Athens for Thessaloniki in the very early morning on Wednesday 27th August where we were met on arrival by Mr. 'Terry' Stamatopoulos and his driver. He was a young man very well educated and spoke perfect English, was the liaison officer for the Department of Foreign Affairs in Northern Greece. He informed us we would be doing a three and a half hours' drive in a large Audi staff car, the driver being a professional and 'bo could he drive!' By the speedo the highest I saw it register was 155 ks. per hour, not a single thing passed us; he kept us informed of all towns and villages on the way. We had a delightful stop about half way at Edessa which was on the heights with a magnificent natural waterfall the intensity powering a hydro-electric power station.

On our arrival at Vevi (population of about 800 people) we were ushered into Mayor Frombis' office and offered a cool drink. Thence arrived singly his many councillors who came over and warmly shook my hand, also Phyl's and Jean's – the Mayor of Amindaion



and several of his councillors then joined in. No one (except us and Terry) spoke English and I asked Terry if the Mayor would have a local area map which he produced and showed Hill 1001 which was where the fighting took place. This caused quite a bit of excitement and all talking together in Greek and pointing at me, it was rather embarrassing but I learnt many of them had been in the action there fighting on our left flank. At this stage I produced the plaque, presented it to the Mayor who gave it to one of his deputies to take out and place on the monument just outside and below the Council Chamber. The Prefect of Florina, Mr. Aspididis in a large car flying the Greek flag on the front mudguard, arrived with Colonel Porfyrus of the Border Station representing the Army and Colonel Dalambiras representing the Gendarmerie. The Prefect is head of all municipalities in Northern Greece, he was accompanied by his very attractive wife and two small sons.

Then came the priest with incense burning and bells ringing and he carried on his blessings of the plaque chanting the whole dedication and reminding us of the ceremony at the Cenotaph during the Cretan celebrations. I then laid a wreath followed by the Prefect and Mayor Rombis; I spoke a few words interpreted by Terry as many villagers had gathered and then Mr. Aspididis gave a message (in Greek) which Terry also interpreted. Whilst we had previously been in the Mayor's office his deputies had placed the plaque in front of the Memorial with Greek and Australian flags and had also put up tiny Greek flags in festoons with a Greek shield at the top of the Memorial.

At the completion of the ceremony I made a request of Terry that I would dearly like to see the memorial at Xinon Neron (page 124 WOG) so with all speed, I with the Prefect, drove south to the memorial where Hill 1001 and the Monastir Pass were seen by me to bring back many memories. There were no changes or alterations in any of this area.

Following this with the time now about 2.45 p.m. the Prefect took us all to a magnificent Greek luncheon at a restaurant overlooking the whole of the Florina Valley and Colonel Porfyrus invited us out to his Border Station for fruit and coffee – this was marvellous and we passed through the check point and saw the Yugoslav Border. Colonel Porfyrus asked us to convey to General Dougherty his warmest regards. An Evzone Guard presented arms as we passed through to the Colonel's private mess. The Prefect presented Phyl with a Greek urn which was rather wonderful. Then said our byes and headed back at a rather fast rate to Thessaloniki airport just managing to catch the plane for Athens.

What a magnificent day, with VIP treatment these Greek people were so hospitable and repeatedly mentioned Australian soldiers with affection and seemed amazed that we should travel such a distance to present a plaque in memory of their Greek soldiers and their Australian brothers-in-arms. On 29th August we were up early and went by air to Heraklion arriving at our hotel just after 9 in the morning. On the way from the airport I saw both the 'Charlies', Apex Hill and the

Barracks. Everything in this area was much the same as when we had been there with the exception of a double highway running through and some factories at the rear of the 'Charlies'. Revisited the next day with a taxi driver who had been in the partisan force and knew the area very well.

Later on called in to the Town Hall but unfortunately missed the Mayor but spoke with his deputy who showed us the plaque which General Dougherty and Harry Gjedsted had taken across some years before. This has been framed and hangs proudly on the wall in the Mayor's office.

On Tuesday 2nd September we left this spot which had brought back so many memories and headed by air-bus for London where we spent the next fortnight thence Home.

Cecil Chrystal.

#### WELFARE REPORT AS AT 24TH OCTOBER, 1980

NX 47468 LYNCH, Leo. RPA GH2. A major abdominal op. Leo made a good recovery. I found on telephoning the Hospital that he was discharged Monday 20th Oct. He had many visitors and phone calls.

NX 13273 FRANCES, Vic. RGH 110. Vic was eventually transferred to RGH Heidelberg. They will find a local nursing home.

NX 9868 RAYMONT, Ron. A good letter from Ron. He has a comfortable flat at his son's home at 63 Green Point Road, Oyster Bay. Ted HOPKINS has been to see him and others are welcome. (Well done Ron and thank you! John).

NX 26150 BELL, Harold W. RGH 220 (ICU) Harold has been in intensive care now for at least 16 days and was unable to have any visitors. Vera WALSH however exercised her charm and saw him. While still D.I. he was cheerful. A serious heart and lung condition.

NX 7601 CHAMBERLAIN, R.H. WVH. Not at all well.

NX 2055 HONNERY, A. W. LDH 'A' Making good progress. Lady MACKAY kept in touch with him while she was there.

NX 1977 WARING B. WVH. Under local treatment for chronic chest condition.

NX 2054 ELLICOTT, D.P. RGH 330. Heart attack but now making progress.

NX 14263 BARTLETT, W. G. RGH 510. Kidney op. Discharged.

NX 2945 BOWMAN, V. LDH 'B'. Vince was in RGH in June for a vascular by-pass on one leg. He was NOT on the computer list and only seen because Des CUNNINGHAM was in the same ward. It appears that Vince has been there again, unknown to us because he is at LDH recovering from the amputation of one leg. Ted HOPKINS has seen him. Bill PARRY will call next week.

#### W.W.1 1914-1918.

520 WOLFF, Otto. RGH 520. Recovering from an



eye op. (cataracts). Otto is an old friend of the team. He was I.O. in 4 BN. to Sir Iven MACKAY. Lady M. MACKAY. LDH informed me that she was discharged 22nd Oct.

On behalf of he gang....John COPLAND.

#### LAST POST.

NX 5351 FAULDER, A. J. Jim died in Orange Hospital 18th October after a burst ulcer. Funeral at Parkes 22nd October. Jim joined up with his brother Dick who died four years ago. They were good soldiers. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Frances and Alexander and Andrew.

BARTLETT, Tom (Woy Woy). We are told that Tom died about 1st Oct. but have no more news than this. Our sympathy is extended to his family.

NX 3941 HOGAN, Frank. Died 13th October at a nursing home at Parramatta following several strokes and a long illness. Len SMITH kept in touch with him and attended the funeral. Parramatta RSL conducted the service.

NX 46901 CLOUGH, Tom (Macksville). Tom was in RGH 4 months ago for a pancreas op. Allen LINDSAY had the news by phone. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

NX 13375 ALEXANDER, Tom (Scottie). Tom died at Graithwaite Red Cross Home on 21st October after a very long illness. We saw him often, especially Bill PARRY, and admired his pluck. Scottie had no close relatives in Australia. He may be remembered as being batman to our first adjutant, Capt. Lou LOUGHRAN. At the funeral were Tom's second cousin, Mrs. Davies and two friends from Adamstown. Ken KESTEVEN, Ted HOPKINS, Bill PARRY and myself attended also. These patients from Graithwaite came with a male nurse..... LEST WE FORGET

#### CASH REGISTER

The Treasurer reports having received the following subscriptions:—

\$6.00 A. D. ARNOTT, F. IVEY, E. CROSSTHWAITE, J. STOREY, C. LOUGHNAN, W. ESLICK, G. KYLIE, C. HOLZIGAL, H. S. TAYLOR, L. HOPE, R. HOLMES, J. CUMMINGS, P. DALLA, C. GEELAN, J. FORMAN.

\$5.00 LAURA WALLACE, V. PIKE, R. STENNERT

\$10.00 K. McINTOSH, T. J. TAYLOR, V. HILL, R. PERRAM, G. HART, J. MANN, D. RUSSELL, M. McALLON, W. NORRIS, J. McPERSON, P. R. JACKSON, E. SWAIN, J. HUSTON, VERA PROVIAN, E. RIORDAN, W. NEWTH, H. BOWMAN.

\$12.00 E. WOOD, S. BLACKSLEY, A. KLEEM.

\$20.00 G. CHRISP, J. LISTER, E. KNOX, D. STEBBING, T. HART, K. BAILEY, J. ORMISTON, T. GORMAN, J. FALLA.

\$30.00 JOAN CHASELING.... \$50.00 E.P.A. SMITH (donation)

\$50.00 Paid-up LIFE MEMBERSHIP: R. WARRILOW, W. McKENZIE, K. WEBB, J. FORMAN, F. PEGG, M. SYDENHAM, F. J. TAYLOR, H. BURGDOF, E. SWADDLING.

A Word from the Treasurer: The Association has approximately 500 members and supporters on its books, therefore, approximately 500 copies of W.O.G. are despatched each month. The cost of producing our Magazine each month has now risen to \$220 including postage. In other words \$2,640 per annum. The Association's finances are at present in fairly good shape. They will continue to be in good shape if ALL members pull their weight. Of the 500 members on the books there are 163 who are unfinancial. Most of the unfinancial members have so far failed to forward their 1980 subscriptions, which is, and has been since 1970 \$6.00. There are a significant number, however, who, while continuing to receive W.O.G. have not remitted their subscriptions for periods up to four years. I now appeal to all unfinancial members to forward their back dues so as I can present a clear set of books to our Auditor, Harold SILVER, at the end of this year. I suggest that when remitting your outstanding subscriptions you also include your 1981 subscription. Subscriptions are \$6.00 per annum.

If there are red figures in the following sentence then YOU are unfinancial.....

Dear Member, You have not paid your subscription since..... Please remit to the Treasurer \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Plus 1981 Subs \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Better still, I suggest that you forward \$50.00 which will entitle you to paid up membership for life and this relieves you of the responsibility of having to forward your subscription in future years.

Allen LINDSAY, Hon. Treasurer.

CENTRAL COAST CAPERS (continued from last month). Great to see COL. CAMPBELL from Wauchope at the GREEK NIGHT. First time I have seen Col on his feet. When I used to see him he was always laying down in WAUCHOPE HOSPITAL. Although he used to use his feet at night chasing the nurses. Must have thought he was running through Greece into Turkey again. Seen him occasionally in the Pub in Wauchope, same result not on his feet. Keep up the Bacardi Col. Talking about the Greek night I asked Sir Ivan did he bring his Bren Carrier back from Greece. The one he kindly gave me a lift in, still owe him for the flag fare. Could not hear his reply for all the Greek music and dancing. Will buy him a second hand Russian model from Afghanistan. If ever



a man needs one, it is him, he always on the move. Am going to try once more to teach Nugget Greedy the Coogee crawl also left Foot Harry WRIGHT. He seems to do the Canadian Crawl and the World Waltz O.K. So will have them both ready for Ladies Night. Will give the Ladies a good excuse to keep away. While we are staying in the Ex-COLONEL'S HOUSE he said we could use his wife's car. So the first time I started it, not his wife, the car, it burst into flames. Lily kept cool (B/Coy). She rang the Police, the Fire Brigade, also the American Navy who are in Freemantle. When I got out of my slit trench it was all over. Borrowed Lily's son's car to go to Wave Rock, flying stones from a Stuka shattered the windscreen. Can't wait until I get delivery of Sir IVAN'S Bren Carrier (one owner). Have just heard Lascar Roach is moving to the Central Coast. Would sooner have Lascar's Greyhounds as neighbours. The last time I saw him he had trouser problems. Hope he gets his zipper fixed, don't want him frightening hell out of my club members, Tourkley Senior Citizens Club. Any of Geoff QUINN's many friends can reach him — Geoff Quinton, 88 Brennon Gerekan. Another one of my Bowling Team. Also met Geoff's brother who was also a POW only this time he was with the Japanese. Good idea of Peter DENVER's to organise a 2/4 BOWLING CARNIVAL it would be great fun. B/Coy. versus the rest of the B/N. If the old cricketers can do it why not the bowlers, even ex-officers can play. They always use the wrong bias. Will have to get Vera PROVANS to join the Journalistic Staff of Comedy Capers. Do hope that one day you will drop in and see us, Vera, Lily sends her love.

..... Dasher Deacon.

#### ROBIN'S CORNER:

At Canberra Reunion met Merv JONES, 2/4 Bn. Merv lives at Blairgowrie Victoria, is a friend of Claude RAYMOND, Doug MILLER and Ken MOSES. I was sorry to hear that Ken has had an operation on his hip, is now at home, all the best Ken.. Merv sees Leo DUNN who is well, also Guy VANCE of Westrosebud Victoria and Sid VALENTINE (Gunda Den) on Anzac Day.

Snowy MOORES gave me Lance SUTCLIFFE's address, Unit 4, 18 Hazel Street, Camberwell, Victoria 3124. At the Canberra RSL met Ted 'Swado' SWADLING and Jack HAMILTON from Griffith. Ted has recently seen Fred DRISCOLL, Fred APTHORP. Mrs. Tom ERSKINE, Dennis JACKSON, Arthur WEBB, David McCLURE (who has just returned from England). David sends apologies to all at Reunion, he was unable to attend. Eddie WILSON will not leave Griffith unless there is a fishing trip on. Jack HAMILTON reports the 'Beau' HESTER C. Coy. died at Griffith approximately two months ago. Also at Canberra RSL met Ken WEBB. Ken sees Alf CARPENTER and John 'Bookie' RAE, Jim FORMAN, HQ Trans, Jim lives at Waragamba. Originally from Inverell -- enlisted there, there were 85 enlisted at Inverell with Jim, all in the 2/4 and 85 came back. They enlisted 13th October, 1939. In that 85 were Geoff HAWKE, Gus HYLE, Vince, 'Budda' BOWMAN

Fred STAGGS, Errol WILSON, Bill NESBITT, Roy DEAN, Selby DEAN (no relation) Ross SMITH, Stan and Ken GRAHAM (Spanner and Slim) Fred SIMPSON, Athol HONNERY, Ron CLARK, 'BLUEY' MILLS, (Band) Hector HOLDER, Alan EDMONDS, Ossie BLOWES, 'Shirley' TEMPLE, Bob 'Lascor' ROACH. Also at Canberra RSL met Sid and Florence YOUNG. Sid lives at Leichhardt and is a Supervisor at the Leichhardt RSL, anyone passing that way would be more than welcome. They enjoyed their stay in Canberra and are now heading North to Grafton for holidays — will collect news of 'Pom' WALLACE, Sid BAYLEY, and Roy KINGSLEY. Sid enlisted at Newcastle with him was Neil WALLACE, Syd BAYLEY, and George SMITH, Jack HAMILTON (5899) enlisted at Griffith Oct. 39. Enlisted with him were John 'Porky' HOLLAND, Ted SWADLING Joe GALVIN, 'Nobby' CLARK, George HAZEL, 'Pat' SMYTH (A.W.5906), Harold ELLWAY and Gordon 'Darky' FOSTER. Ted SWADLING was disappointed that Keith 'Slim' VENN could not attend the Reunion with his mouth organ.

Jim 'COCK ROBIN'

#### 6TH DIV. REPORT — 19.8.80

GREEK MEDAL.... 170 issued in N.S.W. 1500-1800 expected prior to Xmas...no further news. Due to unexpected total of claims Greek Government to strike more medals....print more scrolls. Jan 1981 should bring more news. Total applications, army, 6th Div. Force British troops, navy approx. 1800. Greek Government has stated it will keep its promise, so patience is the word.

6th Div. Plaque to be placed alongside Greek Tablet on Memorial at Vevi.

Refer 2/3 FD Regiment news Ubique P.N.G. Trust moving slowly Refer 2/3 news UBIQUE 6th Div. Memorial (only Div. without one) Suggestions 2/3 FD Regiment inform unit and refer comments back next meeting 6th Div. 10.10.80. Contact can be made with Lord Mayor re Memorial (possible site funding etc.).....George STACK.

#### IN THE MAIL BAG:—

Dear Bob, This note is to pay tribute to the cheerful and efficient way in which ATHOL HEATH has served the Association for many years. His work compliments the work done by many stalwarts on the Committee in Sydney. Those of us who live in the bush are surely indebted in a big way to Athol for his unfailing courtesy and assistance. A word also for his wife, Pat, no man can do these jobs well without assistance from the lady of the house. Here's to them both. I'm sure that all the boys in the bush will join with me in wishing Athol and Pat some good times in future and a speedy return to good health for Athol. Yours sincerely, Jack HUSTON, O'Connor, A.C.T.

Dear Athol, The wife and I are shifting to Macksville. We are both well and keep busy with church work. We hope to take some time off and do some fishing. Jack DELPH and his wife will be back in Mudgee at the end of October. They have been helping out on the mission at Wave Hill, N.T. Many thanks to you all for keeping us in touch. Regards, Bill SHEARWIN.