



# Whiteadder Green

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE 2/4 INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION

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**NEXT MEETING:** January 22nd at the Gallipoli Memorial Club at 8 p.m. THIS IS THE FOURTH FRIDAY IN JANUARY, NOT THE LAST

## WELFARE REPORT (As at 30.12.81)

NX2048, COLE, Reg.: R.G.H. 510. Was in for an op. on the knee but bronchitis delayed that. He is to return next March for the op. He is home and says he is well.

NX 47546, Nearney, Max' Vera Provians writes that Max has been in Urbanville Hospital three times since July with heart attacks.

NX46996, PRIEST, A.E.: Vera also says that Aub has been in the same hospital with the same trouble. Vera says the 'poor old 2/4thers aint what they used to be.' Her words, not mine.

NX5911, BOWEN, Stan: Bob Lever sees Stan regularly. Reports all well. He expects to be home for Christmas.

NX58, CHRYSTAL, C: Cec has been in hospital for a foot op. Injured in Greece. Now home and doing well and the wires were removed with some subsequent pain but should be on the mend in a few weeks.

NX5324, REID, W.J.: Bill's brother-in-law rang Laurie who rang me. Bill wants to get to a more active nursing home. I referred them to Herb Pearson, the State Welfare Officer of the RSL

NX19616, FENTON, R.L.: At W.V.H. and doing very well.

NX7601, CHAMBERLAIN, R.H.: RSL Nursing Home, W.V.H. Slim Powers and Jim Robin saw Dick 16th December. Slim says he has not seen Dick so well for a long time.

NX191891, GILLARD, Chas: R.G.H.130. Said to have had a cerebral haemorrhage but was only there a few days. Cannot get any further information. He belongs to the Association and lives at North Ryde. News please Charles!

NX2002, DEAN S.: Was at L.D.H. after a gall bladder op. Vera P. says that your love of cream cakes has caught up with you. Good luck anyway, Selby.

NX4013, LOW, John. Was discharged from L.D.H. 14th December presumed now to be back at Port Macquarie.

NX5154, GUEST, J.: W.V.H. and doing well.

NX1977, WARING, B.: W.V.H. and also doing well.

NX160169, O'KEEFE, Reg: R.G.H. 330. 'A' Coy. Enlarged blood clots in legs.

7208, BRYANT, Alec (4 Bn. W.W.I) R.G.H. 520. A major throat op. Slim Powers says that Alec is only 79 now. He joined 4 Bn. at the age of 14!

## LAST POST

NX9528, O'HARA, F.L.: He died early December and was cremated 11 December. We heard about it rather late. Croydon Park R.S.L. attended the funeral.



NX8804, NORTHROP, Kenneth, Leo: Died suddenly 12 December and was cremated at Woronora, 16 December. Laurie represented the Bn at the funeral. Our deep sympathy to his wife, Dorothy and daughters, Brenda Gay and Lynette. Dorothy would like W.O.G. continued. Ken was an old friend and was Association president in 1948.

VX93053, DENNIS, Rex. W.: A friend just back from Victoria told Dick Pinson that Rex had died 20 August aged 56. He joined the Bn. in Queensland.

By 30th December there were no 2/4 Bn. members in R.G.H. Our thanks again to Larry Dooley for his co-operation with the Christmas gift of goodies for the R.G.H. computer staff. From us all, a happy and healthy 1982.

John Copland.

### COCK'S COLUMN

With 'Slim' Powers, visited R.G.H. Concord. Our first 2/4th was Selby Dean from Inverell. Selby has put on some weight and once a brunette, is now a silver top — I hardly knew him. Our next was Harold 'Pop' Williams, NX 41503, he lives at 55 Gasgoine Rd Birrong. Wishes to be remembered to 'Rocky' Denyer and Wally Lambourne. A phone call from Dick Pinson, checking on me. He had a letter from Gordon Robbins who has sold his home in Flinders and is now living at 406/105 Paul Rd., Windsor, Vic 3181. At Milson's Point Station met Jim Brown down from Kempsey. Had just attended a wedding at Bowral and was having the week-end in Sydney. Also had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Brown. Jim looks well, his old happy, hearty self.

Cock Robin.

### ADELAIDE ARGOSY

Arriving in Adelaide from Perth, I rang our S.A. Vice-President, Peter Denver who smartly had Ken (Coffee) Royal contact me as he and Pat were in the throes of moving to Goolwa leaving son Brian to oversee 'Wyngate'. Coffee proved to be an excellent host along with Owen Harrison. Between them they saw to it that I had wheels as, and when required and introduced me to their families, friends and clubs — AND AUSSIE RULES. Like myself, both are widowers. Owen has a daughter, Margaret and her family sharing his home and Ken, happily has a daughter, Rosemary, a nursing sister living at home. Both Ken and Owen are very active in their respective clubs. Ken is an ardent 'Tigers' (Glenelg) supporter and fund raiser as well as a popular member of Glengownie Bowling Club. Owen is similarly held in high esteem in Marion R.S.L. Club. I have a presentation glass to prove it. I enjoyed a pleasant little gathering at Owen's home which included a couple of his army neighbours one of whom was our own Keith Abbott. We were unable to contact most other S.A. members at the time, in fact Lloyd Cavenagh hasn't been in touch for a while. Wherefore art thou O Cav? Also due to the school holidays I failed to meet up with

Peter and Pat Denver, although Owen was good enough to do the grand tour, Adelaide, Victor Harbour, Port Elliot, Goolwa, Adelaide. I rang Pine Point on Yorke Peninsular where John and Dawn Robertson have a cottage but they were not down from Broken Hill. Was more fortunate with 'Robbie' Robbins whom I rang after suitable preparations. (See elsewhere in this issue— After conferring with his C.O. Mildred, we were invited to B.H.Q. for afternoon tea.

### THE SPELL OF ROBBIE

Any member of that exclusive group, 'Dasher's Privates Club' knows the feeling only too well, the dreaded 'Pre-Sar-Major scrutiny Shakes'. This scourge of the O/Rs fraternity could strike down even the bravest at any time from the moment he was warned for guard duty for 'Orderly Room' or any other reason that meant fronting up to that exalted presence — the R.S.M. It is easily diagnosed by the onset of highly agitated and feverous activities such as rifle cleaning, boot polishing, etc. Few indeed would be the number who survived their service in the battalion without having suffered at least one attack of this ailment. At the time of which I speak I was suffering one of my most severe bouts of P.S.M.S. shakes. Oh, the dread of it! No mere officer could possibly begin to sense the terror which grips one, that which sends one into a 'chicken without a head' paroxysm. Steeling myself to think and act rationally, I commenced preparation. I was determined that no fault would be found with my turnout, boots will gleam, buttons fastened, everything correct. Check and re-check, Not a flaw! Right! This is it, grit your teeth, chest out, stomach in, think positive! You're a member of a famous battalion of the Sixth Division. Sure the Sar-Major's tough but he's fair. If you're good enough he will pass you and give you the nod for 'Stick-man' Oh, for such fame! Steady man, stop quaking and On Parade! Committed now. I took one pace forward and rigidly at attention, dialled the home of ex-R.S.M. 'Robbie' It was 1981 and I was holidaying in Adelaide!

### 'EAGLE ON THE HILL' PIQUET

Of course a bloke should have known better to get within a thousand miles of an R.S.M. but there I was actually conversing with our one and only Robbie — well, he was doing the talking. 'Yes, not bad, not bad at all. Well turned out, soldier,' (Chest out.) 'Not quite Stickman quality but good enough for piquet duty. Report to Cpl. Harrison.' The phone went dead.

So it was that we three, Owen Harrison, 'Coffee' Royal and myself found ourselves piquetting the Eagle on The Hill Hotel as in the far off days of 1942. A few differences of course. The hotel had been extended and updated. The eagle, long since deceased, was perched in a permanent picturesque pose near the glowing fire. The troops patronising the establishment were all in mufti. The piquet



had a round of drinks as of yore followed by a meal. 'Troops were friendly and orderly and no arrests were necessary,' so read the report that Cpl. Harrison handed to the R.S.M. at B.H.Q. This report was presented after our tour of duty at the Eagle On the Hill and descended to the foothills and turned into Rivervale Road where a figure was discerned, standing very slightly slack, awaiting our arrival. The opportunity was too tempting. I JUST HAD to lean out of the car and roar, 'THAT MAN WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS POCKETS! — (a familiar cry from our beloved R.S.M. at Wondecla). Robbie and Mildred have a very nice unit in a Retirement Village, beautifully situated amongst trees, including olives, shrubs and ferns. The dense vegetation in the property helped create a tropical atmosphere. Whilst the 'C.O.' prepared the afternoon tea, the R.S.M. led us down the 'Eora Track' to his Headquarters situated on a slope, safely sited and well camouflaged. It was actually Robbie's workshop wherein he produces the most exquisite wood carvings and turnings to his own design using many tools of his own manufacture.

we were astounded by his beautiful work which adored their home. Complimenting this beauty was the gentle banter between two very special people and their guests. A very pleasant visit. My sincere thanks to Robbie and Mildred and to Ken Royal and Owen Harrison and Peter Denver who set the whole visit in motion, for the wonderful hospitality.

Dick Morris

#### NOTICE

Those members who are desirous of obtaining a Bn. blazer may do so if they like to call into Reuben F. Scarf's store at Parramatta or Hurstville with the pocket badge and the dollars. They have the cloth available and will gladly make one up to measure. If you haven't a pocket badge you may obtain same from me by sending \$8.50 and I will post it out straight away. Also please note that 1982 is the last year you will be able to get the Bn. medal.

Laurie Waterhouse, Hon. Sec.

#### THE SECRETARY'S MAILBAG

Whether it was all the preparations for the past festive season and the many functions that people attend during pre-Christmas time, there certainly was fall off in the mail for the month. However that makes my job lighter and gives me a little more time for other pastimes. First out of the bag was a letter from Bill Burton M.M. of Oakey, Queensland thanking me for my efforts in getting the battalion medal to him and to wish everyone, committee and members, a happy festive season. Thanks Bill for your message of goodwill and the 'bouquet'.

Charles Ellway of Paradise Point, Queensland wrote sending a cheque for subs and also a goodwill message to one and all. Once again thank you Charles.

It was very nice to get a short note from Nancy and Bill Shearwin of Macksville plus a cheque for subs and a little bit of news of Jack Delph and his wife.

Apparently they have ventured into Northern Territory doing community work amongst the aborigines.

Mrs. Bill Andrews, the good woman behind Bill Andrews of Lugarno, wrote in requesting a Bn. pocket badge so that the family could get a blazer made for Bill in time for Santa to leave on the Christmas tree. I only hope that Santa made it in time and I've an idea he did. Thank you Mrs. Andrews for your interest in the Association.

Roy Moores took time off from talking his way around the community of Adelong to send a Christmas card to my wife and self. Thank you Roy, we only hope that you continue to improve and be able to throw away those walking sticks.

It may interest members to learn that I have had a letter from a collector of coins and medals seeking a 'specimen' of the Bn. medal. Apparently it has created a lot of interest amongst collectors and is now considered a very good collector's item.

Finally to all those members who phoned wishing my wife and self an enjoyable festive season, I say thank you. May I wish you all for the ensuing New Year good health and every happiness and may life in its passing, treat you lightly.

Laurie Waterhouse, Hon Sec.

#### FROM GORDON BLADEN

(The Editor has been holding an interesting letter, addressed to Cec. Chrystal for several months against an opportunity to publish it in one issue. Hopefully someone may be able to enlarge on the incident he describes. Gordon was an original of the battalion but transferred to 19 Bde. Sigs in Palestine. He met up with a lot of old mates at the recent Kempsey Re-union).

The 19th Bde. had retreated to Brallos Pass and the next day a conference in the open with Lt. Col. Dougherty and other 2/4 Bn. officers was held and I was called to the informal talks and asked to go back to Domokos and pick up four 2/4th. Battalion soldiers that had been left behind to do some demolition work in the Domokos area. I was the obvious choice to go because I had a serviceable Ford V8 utility though it was without brakes and to stop the vehicle I had to put in in low gear and stop the engine. I knew the area well where I was expected to meet the soldiers and I knew the soldiers involved but today I have forgotten their names.

My instructions from 'Old George' (Vasey) was to go to this Domokos area, wait one hour if the soldiers were not at the appointed meeting place, then return to Brigade H.Q. Our Signals Sergeant, Tim Gaugha volunteered to come with me as did one 2/4th Bn. soldier who rode as running-board spotter. Our armament consisted for one .45 cal. revolver (me), 303 rifle (our spotter) and Sgt. Tim unarmed. Anyway we went around 1500 hrs. through Lamia, up the hills, down the dales, about a 20 mile drive



and the roads choked with fleeing Greek civilians, horses, carts and Greek soldiers on foot and an odd Greek car, only one or two short stops to avoid Messerschmitts seen by our spotter, returning from missions up the Brallos Pass and further south. One mild prang with a horse and cart attended by an old Greek peasant. We met on a narrow culvert and I couldn't stop the utility quickly. Result was one poor old horse knocked down and winded, much fluent and blue language from me and tears and entreaties from the women. But soon order was restored and the horse lifted to its feet and we all proceeded on our merry opposite ways. We arrived at our designated spot and not a soul in sight for miles. Our instructions were to wait for one hour so we all leave the utility to stretch our legs. Sgt. Gaugha and my spotter stay at the car. I wander across the road for about 20 yards so I can see down the road and down the hill and they lay down on the grass. Ahead of me, about 200 yards away is a small patch of dense scrub. I had not been in this position more than five minutes when around the bend in the road ahead came a German armoured car. We were in a spot! I watched, fascinated and next out of the scrub, same an Australian Ford utility. The German car stopped and the utility stopped beside it but slightly ahead of the enemy vehicle. Three German soldiers alighted and out of Aussie Ford stepped the Greek Liaison Officer to the 19th Bde. and his so-called Greek batman. I said, but not too loudly, 'Hey, Tim come and have a look at this!' I motioned to Tim and our spotter to keep down. They crawled up beside me and I said, 'Do you know them, Tim?' Interspersed with blasphemy, Tim said, 'You wouldn't read about this!'

The three of us watched this meeting for 15 or 20 minutes, then the German car turned around and returned to where it came from. Our two 'Greeks' scuttled back to their car and commenced to drive down the road towards our car. We three scuttled back to our car as I knew both these 'Greeks' well and that they were bound to stop when they saw me. I said, 'Here Jim, you take the .45 and both of you get to the other side of the utility. Keep the firearms out of sight but let them see you. They will stop when they see me and if they show any signs of aggression, let them have it!'

Along came the Ford with the 'batman' driving and the 'Greek Officer' beside him. When they saw me the car stopped and the 'Greek Officer' said to me 'What are you doing here Gordon?' I told him we had come back to pick up some Australian soldiers, just down the hill and as soon as they arrived we would be off. I indicated the direction I was expecting the party and suddenly one of them appeared about two hundred yards away. I waved to him and yelled, 'Hurry up, we want to get back.' (all with suitable adjectives), I doubt that he heard me, but he turned and waved to the party lower down to hurry up. Then the 'Greek Officer' said to me, 'We have been looking for Greek soldiers and our headquarters but cannot find them. Don't stay here too

long, the Germans are not far away.' With all our missing 2/4th Bn. in view, the 'Greeks' drove away and when they left Tim said, 'Just leave this to me Gordon, I'll fix those bastards when we get back.'

With smiles and greetings, all the 2/4th Party was assembled in the truck and out of Domokos, through Lamia and up Brallos Pass.

The next day I saw our 'Greek' Lieutenant and his 'Greek' batman under heavy armed guard near Brigade H.Q. I did not enquire what became of them or who they really were. (If any member has any further information on this incident, Gordon and the Editor will be interested to have the details for publication in W.O.G.)

## YOUR HORRORSCOPE

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19)

Aquarius derives from acqua which comes from the Latin meaning water. Some Aquaries go to water in crisis — some even pass water! All Aquaries are 'wet' one way or another. Lots of Aquarians are frustrated skin-divers. Those who can't afford the gear develop into skinny dippers. These have more fun than skin divers who only chase fish and stuff. Skinny-dippers show more zeal in their sport than skin divers. The 2/4 Bn. were all skinny dippers in Palestine once. An all-male affair and not much fun. What with pool parties and the like, to-day's kids have more fun than 2/4 Bn.

To be born on January 31 at 1129 hrs. makes you the Birthday Boy for the month. Don't go to work that day. It will rain all day. You will get a flat tyre and then the flu while changing the wheel. All-right then, go to work! You will not only get a blow-out and the flu but you will do it all on Sunday you stupid ninny!

'Seer-sucker'

## SITREPS

On 31 October, Frances Lynette, daughter of our dearly loved Yvonne and the late Harry Pearse, wed John William McCracken in St. Pauls, Stockton. Hundreds were in and around the church and the group at the altar with the beautiful stained glass windows as a backdrop, presented a colourful picture. The reception afterwards at the Golf Club was a brilliant affair, made so by this lovely family and their friends and relations and a club determined to do things proud by one of its most popular Associates. I'm sure we all wish the couple a happy future (From Dick Morris).

Also in the Wedding Bells section and also in October, Sandra, daughter of Marcia and the late Jim Crowe (Cootamundra), married Paul Hogan (Not THAT Paul Hogan!). Our Paul was immaculately turned out.) Sandra was a beautiful bride and Marcia is still attractive as ever. We wish Sandra and Paul all the best for the future (From Cock Robin).