

PIONEER NEWS

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SHORT STORY OF 2/1st and 2/2nd PIONEER BATTALIONS

2/1st PIONEER BATTALION

On May 1, 1940, Lieut-Colonel P. E. Macgillicuddy, Australian Staff Corps, was appointed Commanding Officer of the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion and by May 24 most of the senior appointments had been made, with a mixture of both infantry and engineer officers.

An Advance Party established Battalion Headquarters in Ingleburn (NSW) on May 24. However, four days later they were ordered to move the unit to the new section of Greta Camp — known as "Silver City".

From that day men began to arrive in "droves" and the build up of unit strength was fairly rapid. Colonel Macgillicuddy addressed the first battalion parade on June 11. The battalion had been launched and training proceeded with greater efficiency each day.

During early September, 1940, the battalion moved to a new camp in Dubbo and were the first troops to occupy the camp — the site today of the Western Plains Zoo.

However, the stay in Dubbo was short. The unit proceeded on pre-embarkation leave on September 20 for seven days and was back in camp and ready to move out to embarkation port on the 29th.

The battalion embarked on the *Johan-de-Witt* at Pyrmont on September 30, along with the First Reinforcement, and sailed late that evening. D Company had proceeded to Melbourne and embarked on *New Zealand*, which joined the convoy off Port Phillip on October 2.

Disembarkation took place at El-Kantara and from here the unit moved to Julis Camp in Palestine. Training commenced in earnest and by the end of December, 1940, it appeared likely that the unit would move to Egypt early in the new year. It was at this time that Colonel Macgillicuddy was admitted to hospital and Major Arnold Brown was appointed to administer command, which was later confirmed.

Early January saw the battalion on the move, firstly to Amiriya in Egypt and by January 22, 1941, they were in Salum. The capture of Tobruk by 6th Division was now complete and Italian resistance virtually ceased, so the battalion was under orders to move to Tobruk.

Our initial tasks in the Tobruk area were aimed at getting the port into working order, fixing roads, repairing wharves and it was here that they suffered their first desert casualties from booby trap explosions. From here on, the tasks took the various companies of the battalion to Derna and beyond to Barce, Tobra and Benghazi.

This was the period in Libya when events were beginning to take place which would drastically effect the future of the battalion. Rommel was on the move from Tripoli with his highly-trained Afrika Corps and soon had the British and Australian forces withdrawing back towards Tobruk.

In order to slow down Rommel's advance, the battalion was ordered to prepare demolitions and anti-tank obstacles through the Wadi Cuff area, the Tobra Escarpment and at Derna, thus destroying all the restoration work the battalion had done earlier.

On April 8, 1941, the unit was back in Tobruk (under command of 9th Division who had relieved the 6th Division in Libya in March) and remained there during the long months of the Siege. During this period, until they were relieved in late September, they shared front-line duties equally with the infantry battalions and casualties were high — 52 officers and men were killed, 72 were wounded and nine taken prisoner.

With their departure from Tobruk in September, the battalion moved to Palestine for a well-deserved

rest and further training, before returning to Australia in March, 1942.

After leave, the unit moved to Queensland to once again resume the role of an engineer, but in September was moved to New Guinea for top priority engineering jobs. However, the Japanese break through and the advance towards Moresby saw the unit once more swung into the role of infantry when they defended Imita Ridge. D Company had in the meantime landed at Milne Bay and after defending the perimeter for four weeks they resumed engineering and road tasks.

In November, 1942, after two months of patrolling and working in the forward areas on the approaches to Ioribaiwa, the battalion moved to a new site at 9-mile Quarry — working three shifts of eight hours each. This was back-breaking work and the morale and physical condition of the men began to deteriorate. Work continued here until June, 1943, when the battalion moved to Donadabu.

It was at this time that advice was received that Colonel Brown was to be transferred and that Major G. Graham had been promoted to Lieut-Colonel and was to command the battalion.

October, 1943, saw the battalion once more back in Australia and in camp on the Atherton Tableland.

Over the next 18 months the battalion regrouped themselves and carried out all phases of jungle exercises and amphibious training at Trinity Beach, north of Cairns. It was here on the Tableland that Lieut-Colonel Adrian Buckley assumed command of the unit and was able to train the battalion for its next and last tour of operations at Balikpapan.

On May 18-19, 1945, the unit began to move out of Kairi for embarkation points, and by early June was in Morotai preparing for their final campaign in Borneo.

The landing took place at Balikpapan on July 1 and by July 4 all companies were ashore and working in the beach area, with many interruptions due to Jap shells landing in and around beach and transport areas. The battalion was also busy unloading stores from ships in the harbour.

Later companies were moved across Balikpapan Bay to Penadjan and Djinabara to prevent raiding parties moving down river to the Bay. Further movement took place to the beach area at Tempadeong, occupied by the Japanese, and daily clashes with the enemy took place, resulting in casualties on both sides. Intensive patrolling was carried out in this area for several weeks.

News of the capitulation was received on August 10 and the surrender of the Japanese in our lines at Tempadeong on September 10 was a momentous occasion for the battalion.

2/2nd PIONEER BATTALION

Authority for the formation of the battalion was given on May 1, 1940, and Lieut-Colonel N. F. Wellington, M.C., V.D., was appointed to command. By May 16, the majority of officers and first draft of NCOs were taken on strength, and two days later assembled at 58th Bn. Drill Hall at Moonee Ponds (Vic.) to proceed to Puckapunyal where the troops arrived in large drafts during the first week in June.

A move to Balcombe was carried out on February 21, 1941, and it was from here on April 6 that the main body of the battalion entrained at Mornington en route to Pyrmont. The troops were moved by ferry to the *Queen Mary*, anchored in Sydney Harbour, and sailed shortly before dawn on April 9.

The unit arrived at Port Tewfik on May 3, then on to El-Kantara, before entraining for their first camp in Palestine at Hill 95.

Within a few short weeks the battalion was committed to action with the 7th Division in Syria and

moved out to an assembly area at Er Rama. Five weeks of intensive action against the Vichy French followed and the battalion took part in grim fighting around Fort Merdjayoun, Damour and surrounding areas. In that brief conflict, 73 officers and men had laid down their lives and a further 102 had been wounded.

Several changes in posting were necessary after the Syrian campaign and in November, 1941, Lieut-Colonel J. M. Williams, O.B.E., E.D., arrived in Qatana to take command of the battalion.

On February 1, 1942, the *Orcades* steamed out of Port Tewfik with the Pioneers, minus the baggage party and most of the transport party, bound for an unknown destination. The unit finally arrived in Java on February 18 and moved to the aerodrome at Tjilitan.

Confusing action and movement ensued over the next few weeks. Short of equipment, Bren guns, anti-tank rifles, no vehicles, no ammunition other than that carried by the troops, and no rations — the unit, along with other troops on Java, capitulated on March 9. A total of 865 members of the battalion became prisoners of the Japanese — those who did not come home numbered 258.

The battalion reformed in June, 1942, under the command of Lieut-Colonel J. T. Lang, O.B.E., M.C., at Wagga Wagga (NSW) and then moved to a new training area at Kapooka. The nucleus of the reformed battalion were, in the greater part, the original unit's baggage party, and troops mostly from NSW and Victoria.

On September 30, 1942, the battalion marched out to Strawberry, WA, and later moved to Camp Bellevue at Midland Junction. They were in camp here until January, 1943, when another move was made to Mangalore in Victoria, before entraining once again for the Atherton Tableland for intensive jungle training. In its first year the re-formed unit had moved six times and was about to embark upon its seventh — "we had to be better than Grace Bros" was the cry.

Embarkation for New Guinea took place on July 25, 1943, and on August 25 the unit was air lifted from Moresby to Tsili Tsili. It was planned the main body of the battalion would march from here to Kirklands Dump, a distance of some 50 miles, and a second party including engineers were to sail 12 large folding boats carrying heavy equipment down the Watut River to the Markham. On September 1 the main body, consisting of 780 men and 760 native carriers moved out on the long trip to the laying-up area at Kirklands, arriving on the evening of the 4th. The surviving river parties also arrived during the night and final preparations for the hazardous crossing and the assault on the air-strip at Nadzab were made.

Once the bombing and staving of the suspected Japanese positions around the area of the strip had taken place, the unit quickly advanced to meet the American 503rd Parachute Regiment who had been dropped on the strip. Detailed personnel in command of native labour quickly commenced to clear the strip, while the remainder of the unit, along with the Parachute Regiment and some gunners from 2/4th Field Regiment, put a defensive perimeter around the strip and partly down the Lae Road.

The first elements of 7th Division commenced landing a few hours later, amid burning grass and smoke, and went into action in the area.

Defensive action continued through to Lae, entering the town on September 16, where resistance had ceased. From Lae the battalion moved back to Nadzab and were flown to Kaiapit in the Ramu Valley, before moving on to Dumpu. The battalion carried out extensive patrolling in the lower

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MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

Hello 1990 and may it be a good year for all Pioneers. To all members of the Association we wish you well and hope that everyone enjoys the best of health for the coming year.

CYRIL AMIES 2/1, of Thornleigh, per pen of wife Doris, with a letter of goodwill to all and the news that they had a wonderful time cruising the Pacific. Such places as Rabaul, Cairns, Guam, Kobe, Yokohama, Hong Kong, Singapore — all roll off Doris' pen like a trip to the supermarket. Do say that this year they may stay home and do short trips to South Australia and Victoria. Try and make the trip to Gosford.

BILL ANDERSON 2/1, Beresfield, with a donation to funds, for which we thank you Bill, and his best wishes to all members of the Association.

IVAN PEPPER had loaned Bill his copy of the 2/1st history book, which he had found very interesting. Said it was great to have some record of the unit's war years to pass on to your grandchildren.

Thank you for your letter, Bill, and kindest regards to Dolly and yourself.

BILL ARTHUR 2/1, Sefton, with a change of address and the news of the death of his wife last year. Our sincere sympathy to you, Bill, in your sad loss, and trust that you have settled into your new home.

Your donation to the *News* has been passed on to our Treasurer, also your good wishes to all Pioneers, especially Gordon Finlay.

ALBERT BARTON 2/1, Yagoona, with a welcome sub. and greetings to all. He appreciates the news with the activities of the "old boys" and says it is just like a walk down memory lane.

Albie and wife Gwen are still doing their hospital and nursing home visiting and endeavouring to encourage these dear old folk. Keep up the good work, we are sure your visits and kind words are very much appreciated. All the best of good health, and happiness to you both.

LES BRITT 2/1, of Cairns, with a short note enquiring as to his financial situation with the Association, also regarding info on the Front Line Medal. Max has sent you an application form and you send \$10 to Bill Tasker. It may take a couple of months before you receive it.

KEITH BOYLE 2/1, Moama, with a sub. for the treasurer and an application for the Galaxy Motel at Gosford. They have had their share of problems over the past few months, healthwise, but they are both improved with the coming of the hot weather. Keith had a spell at Repat. in Melbourne with his leg, but on the mend and looking forward to Gosford.

ADRIAN BUCKLEY 2/1, Tamworth, ex-C.O. of our unit, and the news that his life has been a bit disorganised the past 18 months due to general wear and tear, but the necessary reconditioning has been completed with satisfactory results.

Has read his copy of *The Pioneers* and found it most enjoyable and educational — should have been issued to him the day he joined the Pioneers. To all those who worked on the book he sends his congratulations and said it was a shame Gordon Osborn did not live to see it completed.

Tells us wife Barbara is well and still putting up with him, and they enjoy the activity of the farm — although it seems to be more of a holiday camp for grandchildren. They have a Shetland pony, four dogs, chooks, sheep, lambs, cows and calves, two 4-wheel motor cycles and four 2-wheel motor cycles. What more could kids want?

He has recently bought himself a computer with which he does the farm bookkeeping and his tax work. However, it cuts one down to size very easily at the least expected time. He was demonstrating to a friend, put in a formula and somehow or other created a circular reference — three and a half hours later sorted it out and still does not know how he mucked it nor how he fixed it.

Good letter, Sir, and we look forward to hearing from you again — can assure you that all 2/1sts will appreciate news of your doings.

COLIN CAMERON 2/1, Campbelltown, with two lines — my subs for the year, no news, see you later. No writer's cramp for you, Colin.

FRANK CAULFIELD 2/2, Benalla, Vic., with his application for the Gosford reunion. He had a surprise visit from Joe Kyffin and Tom McNaughton recently and they have made arrangements to pick him up at Benalla on their way north to Gosford.

Good to hear from you, Frank, and it certainly won't be so far to travel this time.

ALLAN CRUTE 2/1, Woolgoolga, per pen of wife Beulah, with two letters, one to the Assn. and one to Peg with a booking for Gosford. Your sub passed on to treasurer, Allan, many thanks.

On a recent trip away they had called to see Edna Marshall, widow of Jack 2/1, at Glen Innes. (Edna has had a hip operation and doing well.) Also called on Dot and Claude Campbell at Inverell and had lunch at Coffs Harbour with Eric and Joyce Reynolds.

Allan and Beulah send their best wishes to all, with a special hello to Jim and Kathleen Field, and look forward to seeing the "gang" again at Gosford.

JACK COATES 2/1, Umina, with a sub for the treasurer and his usual newsy letters. Was at Tumut for the 9th Div. reunion and was the only 2/1 Pioneer on parade. It was a good show. Had a bus trip to Blowering Dam on the Sunday (seven times the water volume of Sydney Harbour) and enjoyed the trip home on the XPT.

Jack and Lex have been gadding around — they have been to see 42nd Street with the Central Coast Rats and Toukley RSL bus trip. Saw Ray Horne in the foyer at half-time and reckoned he looks well and still fit enough to run on the field tomorrow.

Jack also passes on the news regarding accommodation for the Rats reunion in 1991. Prices of motels will be up on this year and the going rate is \$150-160 double. I'd suggest we get our reunion in 1990 over with first, then perhaps we could give it some thought.

Passes on news of Jack and Gwen Collis (Gwen in hospital again late February), Ivor Garnon, Harry Hamer and wives, also "Bluey" Miller who has come good after his gall operation — he is 82 years young. Dick Seddon's health is unchanged. Jock Russell waiting on move to Bolton Point Home, "Griffo", Jack Bertram and Larry Robson all OK.

Jack and Lex had also been to Narrabri to see their grandson, apprenticed engineer at Wee Waa Cotton Gin. They travelled XPT to Werris Creek, then sausage train to Narrabri.

Good letter as usual, Coatesy, hope you are keeping well — take it easy old mate, we can't afford to lose you.

SAM COLES 2/2, Chadstone, with a sub and donation as an expression of thanks for the *Pioneer News*. Sam is keeping well, except for braces in various parts, the leg and neck, to help counteract his arthritis. Best wishes to all for the New Year.

JACK COLLIS 2/1, Umina, with a letter enclosing bus time tables for Gosford.

All the mob up there appear to be OK and for the ROTA Xmas dinner they had Jack and Valda Pearce and Roy Jardine up from Sydney. Jack visited Cliff Secombe of Thirlmere recently and Cliff has to have another operation on his eye.

Latest reports from Jack are that his trip to hospital for the check on his tumour was OK and he does not have to go back for another six months. Gwen was in Gosford Hospital late in February, but expected to be home shortly. All the best to you both — get fit for Gosford and take care.

PETER CRAIG 2/1, Leura, with the news that he had been in Concord again, but not as serious as before. Bill Tasker called to see him and told him that Kevin ("Frosty") McLean was in the next ward. Peter called to see Frosty the next day and spent a couple of hours yarning over old times.

In December, Peter met Viv Le Mesurier at the Katoomba RSL and over a couple of drinks they decided that Viv would be one of the oldest Pioneers still living. He is 84 (there are still a few around older than that) and lives at Cowra in a retirement village, but was at Katoomba visiting his brother. Peter closes with best wishes to all.

ARTHUR DAVIS 2/1, Granville, with a sub for the treasurer, and a thank you for sending the *Pioneer News* when he was overdue. Hopes to see Bill Hodges and a few of the boys on Anzac Day.

ALBY DEAN 2/1, Shepparton, with a sub for the treasurer and a thank you for continuation of *Pioneer News*. Sends regards to all Pioneers wherever they may be.

JOHN FLOOD 2/1, Lugarno, with a note of thanks for the regular receipt of the *News* which helps him to keep up with the doings of members. John also enclosed a cheque to help with the expenses of the Association.

LIONEL FULLARTON 2/2, Orbost, with a cheque for the treasurer and a thank you for the *News*. Lionel speaks of an association with both battalions, as when the 2/2nd was disbanded they went to the 2/1st. He writes of names that come to mind — Ron Edwards, Bob Sefton, Bill O'Hehir, Jack Brown and Fred Lay, who lives near him in Orbost.

He passes on kindest regards to Reg Armstrong, and hopes he is well. (Reg has been in touch recently and has just celebrated his 84th birthday.)

JIM GRAY 2/1, Primbee, with a letter dated 24.10.89 giving us a lot of information regarding one of our deceased members, Cecil Leape. He was a very active man in civilian life and was 85 years old when he died, and a TPI. Max has asked me to pass on the many thanks of the Association for your efforts on our behalf, Jim, and says he used most of this news in the last issue.

JACK GRIFFITH 2/2, Frankston, with a short note per pen of wife, Biney, with a cheque for the continuation of *Pioneer News*. Jack is keeping much better of late, but does have to take a lot of medication to keep him going. You have a lot of company there mate!

JACK GRIFFITHS 2/1, Mayfield, with a screed of the doings in Newcastle. Also enclosed his application for Gosford, but, as he says, a 50 year reunion is one hell of a way to remind one of how old we are.

Jack also passes on some information re the Colonels at Singleton Camp for Max.

Both he and Jack Bertram went to see Dick Seddon, who was on a little picnic outing at Speers Point. Jock Russell is still at Dudley Home and not very happy there, but making the best of it. He has an application in for Bolton Point, but he is full-time nursing material and they do not have that facility there at present.

With regard to the request re Tom Hilton, Jack, he is not on our Association roll, so cannot help you.

CLIVE HARRIS 2/1, Aberdeen, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that within an hour of writing he and Betty were off to the Snowy Mountains for about three weeks. Closes with best wishes and hopes to catch up with everyone in June.

JOHN HUNT 2/1, Brisbane, with a newsy letter. John and Mollie Jean have been overseas and arrived back on October 2, just in time for their Brisbane reunion.

They visited Scotland, England, Canada, and saw many relatives in New York and Boston. Had a full week at Interlaken and saw a lot of Switzerland as their Swiss pass took them on trains, buses, mountain railways and lake steamers. John says it's the only place he knows where the railway clocks have second hands on them and the trains do run on time.

John reports that his Brisbane reunion went off well, with the same numbers as last year. Had a few apologies, but with two newcomers, Charlie Kerr from Maryborough and John Taylor from Quirindi. All thoroughly enjoyed themselves and said they would be back next year. John also asked for the time for next year's reunion to be an 11 am start, as they have a few early birds.

BILL HOFFMAN 2/1, Kyogle, with a short note and some good photos he had taken last Anzac Day, and at the wreath laying ceremony. These will go into our unit album, Bill, and the photo of the late Austin Ronan will be passed on to his sister. We are sure she will be very grateful.

Many thanks, Bill, and hope you make it to Sydney for Anzac Day.

TED JENSON 2/1, Doonside, with a letter of confirmation for Gosford and a request for another crock pot order form. No other news but will see everyone at Redfern and Gosford.

MARGARET JONES 2/1, widow of Llew, with a thank you for *Pioneer News* and a special thank you to Bill Tasker who organised the Front Line Medal for her. Bill also arranged for a wall case to put the full eight medals in for display. She is very impressed with the end result and says once again, thank you Bill.

ALVIN KLAUS 2/2, Grafton, per pen of Merle, with a thank you for paper, which he reads word for word, but is unable to write. Did not get to Sydney for Anzac Day last year as he was laid up with a bad case of shingles, but over them now. Thanks for the cheque, old mate, and hope you can make the trip this year.

JIM LEE 2/2, Glen Innes, a new recruit, as it has only been in recent weeks that he knew the Association existed, through contact with Tom Manuel. Jim enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and Max has forwarded back numbers of the *News* to help him catch up with past news of any 2/2nds he remembers.

Mrs ELLEN MACGILLICUDDY, widow of the first CO of the 2/1sts, with a thank you card for the copy of "The Pioneers" which was presented to her recently. She came in contact with our President Bill Jollie at the funeral of Frank Dynon, to whom she was a first cousin.

It has given her great pleasure to read of the activities of the unit, which her late husband raised so long ago.

TOM MANUEL 2/1, Glen Innes, with a cheque for the treasurer and a second cheque for the Front Line Medal, which has been passed on to Bill Tasker. There has been a delay with orders, but hope you have received same by time you receive the *News*.

JACK MORGAN 2/2, Wagga, with a note to say he had attended the funeral of Dick Ryan in Wagga and that he had conducted the RSL portion of the service. John Dowd was unable to attend through illness, and Dudley Staniforth was away in Alice Springs. Also attended the BBQ of the Victorian 2/2nds at Jolls Park in Melbourne which was very enjoyable.

Jack did not go to the reunion at Tumut, but attended the 7th Div. reunion at Mulwala instead. It was a good show.

He wishes to thank Russ Harrison for sending on the Front Line Medal.

HARRY MOWBRAY 2/1, Thornlands, Qld., with three letters for the mail bag and a booking for the Gosford reunion.

He and Dot have recently returned from a trip to Britain and had a great time. While in Edinburgh they met John and Mollie Hunt when their two tourist coaches parked together. A small world! They will be attending the Gosford reunion and will spend some time in Sydney with their son before going home.

Dot also mentions that while in England she rang Kathleen Simmonds, wife of the late Bernard Simmonds 2/1, and they had a good yarn. Kathleen still lives at Maidstone in Kent and is keeping well.

JEAN McINTYRE 2/2, widow of John, with a card to Peg and Max and the news that she had a very nice trip to New Zealand last year. Wishes all Association members all the best for the year 1990 and quotes "what a wonderful job Peg and Max do".

ROMA McKENZIE 2/2, widow of Donald, with the sad news of his passing at Geelong Hospital early last year. Roma had been in Western Australia for some time and on receipt of the *Pioneer News* decided to write us a note. Our sincere sympathy, Roma, somewhat belated, to both yourself and family.

TOM McNAUGHTON 2/2, Reservoir, Vic., with a short note enclosing a sub for the treasurer and a deposit for Gosford for he and Joe Kyffin.

MAY OLLIFFE 2/1, widow of Joe, Kingsford, with a cheque for treasurer and a note of thanks for *Pioneer News*, which she still receives and enjoys reading.

Nice to hear from you, May, and our warm wishes to you and the family — hope you are all in the best of health.

NEV O'CONNOR 2/2, of Lennox Head, with an application for the Gosford reunion and plenty of news from his part of the world. Both he and Betty caught the bad 'flu that was around several months ago and were sick for a long time.

They both keep very busy and are planning another trip overseas in July. They hope to fly to London, via Singapore, on to Germany to see the Passion Play, back to London and Ireland (to be in "Athenry" for their wedding anniversary) and from there to the States, Canada and home by Honolulu. Sounds a great trip and, as Nev says, will be "the last". Reckons he's no chicken any more and a few of his complaints aren't improving.

He had a visit recently from Sid Booth (2/2) and his wife, Jean, from Queensland and he and Bet really enjoyed their company. Nev had not seen Sid since before the war ended, as Nev was attached to the Beach Group for the landing at Balikpapan and only saw the boys of the battalion when they were detailed on work parties, or on the beachhead.

Nice to hear from you both and looking forward to seeing you at Gosford.

PETER PEILE 2/1, Caringbah, per pen of wife Erika, with a sub for the treasurer and the news that their youngest son and his wife had a son early in January, and now have a "pigeon pair". Erika and Peter very pleased with the latest arrival. Just before Christmas they had lunch with the Selwoods and Slaters and all send New Year greetings to all Pioneers.

ERIC REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with a letter and cheque for the treasurer. They have been at Macksville for 13 years now and still enjoy living there. Recently had a visit from Joyce McGregor, widow of Bob McGregor 2/1, and said Joyce had a nice win on the "pokies" at the RSL club. Joyce was there on a bus trip to Macksville and surrounding districts.

Eric, you will by now have received the letter from Max and we hope the contents will be of some help to you — best of luck, mate.

GEORGE SAUER 2/1, Lower Mitcham, SA, with a cheque for the treasurer and news that he had been in hospital for a hernia repair. More troubles followed, with two more operations, and it has taken from May to November to get out of the woods.

He passes on his thanks for *Pioneer News*, although it is sad with each issue to read of the passing of so many of the old unit. Nice to read of Stan Jones and Ken Stuart and wishes everyone a healthy and prosperous 1990.

BRYAN SMALLHORN 2/1, Armidale, with subs and best wishes to all for 1990. You certainly won't suffer from writer's cramp, Bryan.

VIVIANNE SMILEY, of Gruyere, Vic., daughter of the late Colonel "Paddy" Macgillcuddy 2/1, with a very appreciative letter regarding the 2/1st History.

For many years Vivienne has wanted to know more about her father and the unit in which he served, as she was only a child of 12 when he passed away. She hopes the book will fill a lot of the gaps and will count it amongst her treasured possessions.

Thank you for your kind letter, and we do hope you and your family enjoy reading the history of the unit, proudly celebrating its 50th anniversary in May this year.

MURIEL SPENCE 2/1, widow of Jack, with the news that Jack had passed away in October. The old fellow had battled on for quite some time, he was nearly 90, but happily he had no pain at the end. Our sincere sympathy to you, Muriel, from his friends in the Association.

MAX STEVENS 2/1, Tweed Heads, with his remarks that it is hard to put pen to paper. He's no letter writer, but would like to say thanks for the *News* and enclosed a cheque for the treasurer.

HARRY SPREDBOROUGH 2/1, Alexandra Hills, Qld., a sub and a cheery greeting to all the troops and their wives and families for the coming year. He spent a quiet Christmas at home — was invited to his family but, as Harry said, with his deaf ears and cranky water works, much better off at home. Jean has to do all the driving now which makes it a bit hard on her, especially in heavy traffic.

He reports that the wine crocks came at just the right time for Xmas presents, but kept two for himself — one to keep and one to drink.

Harry speaks of the reunion at John and Mollie Hunt's home and said how everyone enjoyed themselves with the Hunts doing a wonderful job keeping everyone together.

JOHN VODICKA 2/1, Villawood, with a welcome donation to funds and apologies for the length of time he has taken to get around to writing. However, hopes to improve this year and to be present at both Anzac Day and the Gosford reunion.

Also passes on his congratulations to all who worked on the book as the accuracy and quality were outstanding and, although he has read it through, still picks it up and enjoys browsing through it.

HEATHER WIGGINS, niece of an ex-2/1, with a letter to Max telling of her graduation and of

finding an old Rats medal that was made in Tobruk, except that Heather called the "rat" a kangaroo. Max has written you about the Medal and how you will find the full story in the *Pioneer* history about your momento.

JOHN WILLIAMS 2/2, Blackburn, with a thank you for the back numbers of *Pioneer News*. He enclosed a cheque for further copies and is now on our mailing list.

John hopes to get to one of our reunions in the future, but said he will not make Gosford as his daughter is expecting her second child about that time.

Never mind, John, always a next time.

HARRY YOUENS 2/2, Essendon, with an apology for his late sub, but better late than never. Will not be able to attend Gosford as he will be in Darwin visiting his son, but intends attending the 2/2nd reunion at Essendon Town Hall before he goes. Closes with best and kindest regards to all.

TED WILCOX 2/1, with a change of address from Albion Park to Yanderra. This has been altered on our lists. Ted is now living in a caravan in the grounds of his daughter's home and is quite happy — closes with "see you Anzac Day".

BILLIE DYNON, widow of Frank 2/1, has sent the secretary a thank you card on behalf of herself and family for the expressions of sympathy sent to them in their recent bereavement. Thank you Billie, we wish you well and keep the chin up.

WIN DWYER also sent a thank you for the sympathy card sent on the passing of her husband, Mick 2/1, late last year.

ALLAN OLSON 2/2, Netherby, SA, with his application for the Gosford reunion and the gift of two 2/1st name bars for Peg and Max, with his compliments. Allan states they all have one in South Australia and he has just recently made a batch for Victoria. They are available for the four Pioneer Battalions. Thank you, Allan, for your kind gift — they are very well done.

ERIC CAUSER 2/1 of Macarthur, Vic., contacted the Secretary to report that he had read in *Mufti* that NX93268, H. Jackson 2/1 of Frankston had passed away. Many thanks Eric for notifying us.

Eric and Dot will be having a week's holiday in April at Merimbula and then coming up to Sydney for the Anzac functions. We look forward to seeing you both, Eric, and do hope you have an enjoyable holiday.

XMAS GREETINGS to the Association from Geoff and Ronnie Lloyd, 2/2 Pioneer Battalion Assn., Melbourne, George Murphy, 2/3 Anti-Tank Regt. Assn., Joe and Maida Kyffin are all gratefully acknowledged.

● That completes the mail bag for this issue and I have not decided on football for this issue, but I take it that our bet still stands as usual Jack Collis. What I do want to say — this is our 50th year, so let's make it one for all of us who are left to look back on. Let's have a bumper one on Anzac Day at Redfern and at Gosford in June. I personally appeal to Doug Turner and Gert to make the effort to make this trip with all those others from the North Coast who have been missing out over the years. It could possibly be the last country reunion, so come on chaps let's make it one to remember. That's all for now.

— LAKEY

GOSFORD REUNION

Full details of the Gosford Reunion on June 2 and 3, 1990, are contained in an insert in this issue of *Pioneer News*. It was designed this way so that members could bring the programme of events with them to the Reunion.

CROCKS STILL AVAILABLE

Crocks of Tawny Port Wine, displaying formation dates and spheres of action of both battalions are still available. All crocks are now with royal blue wording on a white background. Royal blue is the closest colour available to purple. This is the final call and the crocks are a once only opportunity.

Cost is \$26 each, plus packaging and postage at \$6.50. A bonus multiple buy of five crocks is \$136.50 which includes delivery.

Please state name, address, State, postcode and phone in block letters. Remit money and number required and mention you require the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalion crocks to: All Saints Wines, Ceramic Sales, P.O. Box 10, Waterford, Qld. 4133.

2/2nd PIONEER BATTALION — from page 1 ranges and on December 11 the battalion was ordered to occupy the high ridges overlooking Mene River valley and Shaggy Ridge. Patrolling was difficult and carried out into Japanese-held areas. It was during this time that command of the battalion passed to Major E. F. Aitken.

Operations in this area continued until January 23, 1944, when with the capture of Mt Protheroe and Kankiryo Saddle the battalion had completed their task.

The unit had cause for satisfaction — the first unit committed to action in the Nadzab-Lae campaign, it remained in the field to the end. It had served under each of the three Infantry Brigades of the 7th Division and earned the confidence of all Senior Commands.

On February 8 the unit was on its way home on leave before returning to North Queensland for amphibious training. Command of the battalion had been given to Lieut-Colonel C. E. Davis, D.S.O., M.C., and on arriving at Trinity Beach the unit was formed into 2nd Beach Group, and carried out exercises with troops of all three Divisions.

Embarking on the *Sea Barb* on March 16, 1945, destination Morotai, the battalion then saw service with 26th Brigade of 9th Division on Tarakan, as a Beach Group Battalion, before returning to Morotai in May.

In July, 1945, the unit once again acted as Beach Group Battalion for 7th Division landing at Balikpapan in Borneo and remained with 7th Division until hostilities ceased and battalion was declared redundant.

There are many memories in the minds of those who passed through both battalions during the five and a half years of their existence, but at the top of the list are the names of those who did not return or who have since passed on. Let those who are left pay tribute to their battalion — now celebrating its 50th Anniversary.

SICK PARADE

CLIVE (CASEY) BROWN 2/1 of Bondi contacted the Secretary to say he had recently had a hip replacement operation carried out at St Vincent's Hospital. While at the hospital he met Clem Moroney, who was having throat problems.

KEVIN (FROSTY) McLEAN 2/1 of Fairfield had a stay in Concord Hospital in February and was visited by Bill Jollie. Kevin sent regards to all Pioneers.

JOY PREEDY 2/2 of Shenton Park, WA, had a three day stay in hospital with gall bladder trouble but according to Len she is now starting to get around. Do hope by this time you are fully recovered. Joy and special regards from Peg and Max Herron.

ESME GRIFFITHS 2/1 of Mayfield had a spell in hospital and Jack is pleased to report she is improving steadily. With a busy person like Jack to look after, you can't afford to be on a sick pass Esme, but we do all wish you a speedy recovery.

BOB McCLOSKEY 2/1 who resides at a Parramatta nursing home, was visited by Bill Jollie in February. Bob sends regards to all Pioneers.

HUMPHREY JACKSON 2/1 of Norfolk Island was operated on at Concord Hospital in February, resulting in having the lower part of his leg amputated. He is now recuperating at Lady Davidson and has been visited by Bill Jollie, Steve Clarke, Ken Stuart and Bill Tasker.

FRANK HEPBURN 2/2 of Condell Park was recently in Bankstown Hospital and was visited by Bill Tasker. Thank you Irene for letting us know that Frank was in hospital and we hope by now he is much better.

RON CALLAGHAN 2/1 of Hunters Hill had a short stay in hospital and was visited by Bill Tasker and found Ron to be his usual cheery self. Hope you are now at home Ron, and fully recovered.

PETER CRAIG 2/1 of Leura came down in March for a further operation at Concord Hospital and was visited by Bill Jollie and Bill Tasker. Peter was in for a hernia operation, so we do hope that your health will improve.

WELFARE ENQUIRIES

All notification of hospital visiting and funeral attendance to be given to Mr Bill Tasker, 3 Killara Avenue, Kingsgrove, phone 78 6658.

TOUR TO GALLIPOLI

Hearty congratulations to Jack Griffiths on being nominated by the Gallipoli Legion Club of Newcastle to be their representative at the Anzac Day Service at Gallipoli.

Jack is President of the Gallipoli Legion Club, Newcastle, in addition to being President of the Rats of Tobruk Association, Newcastle Branch.

There are still four veterans of Gallipoli with the Club, but they were not able to make the trip on medical grounds.

The tour undertaken by Jack is being organised by a Newcastle travel agency and comprises a party of 30. It has no connection with the Government sponsored trip.

They leave on April 18 by Qantas and the first stop is Athens for two nights, Istanbul for two nights and Gallipoli for three nights, with a special Turkish guide to cover all those areas. Then on to Paris for one night and Belgium for three nights and a comprehensive tour of the French battlefields.

After this tour Jack will go on his own private tour with seven days in London, a six day tour of Britain, Wales and Ireland and a 13 day tour of Europe, comprising Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and France.

Jack will arrive back home about May 30, just in time to attend the Gosford Reunion. Hope you have a good trip Jack and look forward to a report from you.

MAX LAW IN HOSPITAL

Our popular Welfare Chairman suffered a severe stroke in October and has been confined to bed and a wheel-chair ever since. After a long stay in Sutherland Hospital, he has been transferred to John Paul Nursing Home at Heathcote.

The stroke has left Max paralysed in his left arm and leg and his memory affected.

Joyce Law and her family spend a part of each day at the hospital, in an endeavour to help Max to recover, and extend their thanks to all those who regularly visit Max. Their visits are much appreciated.

LAST POST

BOB GALES 2/1 of Toukley passed away on November 30, 1989, and the service was conducted at the Church of England Chapel at Rookwood Cemetery.

Bob had been in a nursing home for the past two years and he had been ill for some time.

In attendance were members from Lidcombe RSL, Bruce Perry of ROTA and Peg and Max Herron representing 2/1st Pioneers.

Bob had worked at Rookwood Cemetery for many years, firstly in the gardening section then later as Assistant Manager.

In his address the RSL President spoke highly of Bob as he had always been a regular attendee, and had been on numerous trips to New Zealand with the RSL and was highly thought of by many friends over there.

Sincere sympathy from the Association was extended to Bob's wife Lil, and daughters Marie, Janet, Doreen and Heather.

ARTHUR VINCENT HALE 2/1 of Anvil Creek via Greta passed away in February and the funeral took place at Beresfield Crematorium.

The RSL service was conducted by our Jack Griffiths who expressed to Mrs Hale and family the sincere condolences of the Association.

In attendance were eight members of the Maitland RSL.

BERT COOPER 2/1 of Chester Hill passed away in February whilst in Auburn Hospital. The funeral was attended by Bill Tasker who extended to the family the sincere sympathy of the Association.

The Secretary received a thank you card from Mrs Cooper.

SID VAUGHAN 2/1 of Revesby passed away on March 10 and the funeral at Rookwood Crematorium was attended by Bill Tasker.

The Revesby RSL conducted the Poppy Service and the Eulogy was read by Bill Tasker. On behalf of the Association Bill extended sympathy to Mrs Vaughan and her three children.

ANZAC FUNCTIONS — 1990 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 24 — REDFERN RSL

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Redfern RSL Club, on corner of Redfern and Gibbons Streets, Redfern, just east of Redfern Railway Station.

The meeting will commence at 3.30 pm and finish at 5 pm and members are invited by the President to partake of a few drinks at the conclusion of the meeting.

Then a snack at the club and proceed by train to Martin Plaza for the Wreath Laying Service.

WREATH LAYING SERVICE

Assembly will be on the corner of Martin Plaza and Pitt Street on the G.P.O. corner, as last year. Form up at 7.25 pm, march off at 7.27 pm and lay wreath at 7.30 pm.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25 — PHILLIP STREET

Forming up points for both units are the same as last year — 2/1st in Phillip Street, head on to King Street, and rear of 6th Division, 2/2nds in Phillip Street near Martin Plaza and rear of 7th Division. Both unit banners will be displayed at their respective assembly points. Please check notice in city newspapers for any changes in assembly points.

ANZAC DAY REUNION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25 — REDFERN HALL

Upon completion of the march and service at Hyde Park, members of both units will make their way to Museum Station to catch the train to Redfern for the Anzac Day lunch and reunion.

Members not able to march are still welcome at the Reunion and your mates will be pleased to see you.

The doors of the Redfern Town Hall, corner Pitt and Wells Streets, Redfern, will be open at 11.30 am and draught beer, served in jugs, will cost \$3.

A new caterer will be on the job, as John Winters has retired up the coast. Brothers Catering Service of San Souci have assured us they will make it an enjoyable meal.

THANKS TO OLIVE FINLAY

At the March Committee Meeting it was proposed that a letter of appreciation be sent to Olive Finlay in recognition of her dedication to the wrapping of the *Pioneer News*.

Apart from Peg Herron, Olive is the longest serving lady on the Wrapping Committee and this year Olive will have notched up 27 years as a member of the team.

The Secretary in particular wishes to place on record his grateful thanks to Olive for her regular attendance at the wrapping meetings.

2/1-2/2 PIONEERS, WA

A meeting of the WA Pioneers was held on November 17, 1989, at Anzac House, Perth, and those in attendance were: Joy Butcher, Joan and Jack Monger, Norm Le Cornu, Jean Lyford, Jack Murray, Arthur Dearden, Ethel and John McDougall, Fred (Pee Wee) Craig, Norma and Bob Sefton, Beth Lee, Syd Abercrombie, Freda Due, Jack Stewart and Len and Joy Preedy.

Barrie Hunt and his wife sent apologies from Coober Pedy which they were visiting while on their tour of NT.

Bob and Norma Sefton left to catch a bus and being in a hurry Bob fell over and had to return for first aid treatment.

Joan Monger reported that Jack broke a record of getting off his chair to get a jug of beer — not just once — but twice. Jack is back into growing a moustache.

Fred Craig brought along some old maps and newspaper cuttings about New Guinea, which everyone was keen to see. Also noticed Fred and Freda Due with their heads together, no doubt catching up on old goldfield times.

George Murphy, Secretary 2/2 in Melbourne, sent a letter to meeting with regards to all members.

— LEN PREEDY

PIONEER NEWS

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50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION AT GOSFORD 1990

From all States members began arriving in Gosford on Friday, June 1, 1990, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the forming of the 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneer Battalions. It didn't take long for the folk to settle in at their respective billets. I think the South Australian members were the first arrivals, led by Doug Waters and Allan Olson. Then off to the RSL for a thirst quencher and a bite to eat before looking for old faces of yesteryear. In all there were five from South Australia, 15 from Victoria and 15 from the Banana State, led by John and Mollie Hunt. This would represent the largest interstate group we have had for a country reunion. I feel, as did the organisers, how pleasing it was to see so many 2/2nds turn up with their ladies (65 in all), the balance being members of the 2/1sts.

As this was settling in day nothing was organised, but most met at the RSL for tea and to partake in the raffles. Of course, one or two had wins in the raffle — one character won a few plates of meat but very generously gave them away, as he thought the meat for Sunday's picnic was to be supplied by the Association. Someone didn't read their *News* properly, did they, Bill? (By the way, Bill Hoffman didn't have to get a late meal from McDonalds this reunion.) Also Flo, two Jeans, Irene and Wendy, and Betty, like so many others, tried the pokies without any luck. Better luck next time, girls.

Saturday morning saw the sun shining, but oh that June westerly sure made its presence felt and it persisted throughout the day. Some thought they were back at Greta, 1940. More members began arriving during the morning, while others spent a few hours seeing Gosford and its surrounds. Let me say, in the summer months it is a lovely place, with plenty of activity on the large expanse of water.

WREATH LAYING SERVICE

Under the direction of Gordon Finlay, the wreath laying was conducted by Ray Harris and our sincere congratulations on this wonderful ceremony. I know Ray was on edge because the PA system didn't work, but we all know he had nothing to do with this part of the proceedings. The catafalque party from Singleton Infantry Centre, the drummers from Newcastle Support Unit and the Musical Director arrived early. We thought we were having a corporal and four O.R.s — but not for us. We had Warrant Officers for the Catafalque Party with Senior W.O. Parsonage in charge, assisted by Warrant Officers H. Pregnal, S. Prentice, A. Stock and G. Stojhovic as guards. The drummers from Newcastle Support Unit were Privates Graham Voygh and Jacean Jones, the Musical Director Staff Sergeant Paul Scott, musician Evatt Zielaman and driver Pte C. Gipp. Without these personnel the ceremony would not have been so successful.

The banner party was Clancy Scholes 2/1 and Allan McInnes 2/2, while Jack Collis attended the Flag and Reg Ward was on the tape recorder.

Ray Harris called the parade to form up and the Royal Anthem was played. With the parade at ease, Ray called upon Jack Tooker to give an explanation of the proceedings. Captain Noel Kay, Chaplain of the Salvation Army, then conducted the Commemoration Service.

Following the final hymn, the parade was called to attention while wreaths were laid by the RSL Sub-branch, the RSL Club, Commanding Officer of Singleton Infantry Centre, and President Bill Jollie for the Association. The President then recited the Ode to the Fallen, the Last Post was sounded, followed by Reveille, the National Anthem and the Benediction. The Catafalque party were stood down and parade dismissed. It was then back to the RSL for the evening meal.

THE REUNION DINNER

On entering the hall the name tags were issued

by our ladies — Mary Lloyd, Ruth Rhodes, Marea McKay and Kathleen Field — and a big thank you girls for the job you did. Vic and Peg Whiteley were working hard collecting the fees for the dinners — hope your money balanced, Vic. Unfortunately Joyce and George Walker were unable to be with us this year, as George was ill with the flu. Also understand Joyce hasn't been the best. Hope you are both well by the time this report comes out. We missed you both. Reg Ward, our Nine Mile Sniper, carried out George's duties, ably assisted by Charlie Kerr.

At 6.15 pm Max called the gathering to be seated and Master of Ceremonies Jack (Glido) Griffiths commenced proceedings. Jack Bertram said Grace and Ray Harris then proposed the Loyal Toast. After the entree was served, President Bill Jollie passed on apologies from Colonel A. A. Buckley, 2/1, Colonel J. Williams, 2/2, George and Joyce Walker, Max and Joyce Law. Greetings were extended to the gathering from George Murphy, Secretary of the 2/2nd Pioneers, Victoria. Bill then proposed the toast to "Our Guests". This was responded to by Mr Geoff Morris, Treasurer of the RSL Club, who was standing in for their President, who had a prior engagement with Legacy. Allan McInnes then gave a short talk on our 50th Anniversary, which was very well received. The main course of the dinner followed.

Once this was over our MC gave the assembly ten minutes break before our guest speaker Colonel Peter Cosgrove, A.M., M.C., gave the gathering a very enlightening talk. Those present felt it was one of the best we have had and that, whilst we have men of the Colonel's calibre training our young recruits, we have little to worry about as regards our army. The Colonel also passed on the information that his driver, Private Graham Ryan, was one of the support contingent who went to Gallipoli for the 75th anniversary in April. Thank you, Sir, for your contribution to our celebrations, and we enjoyed seeing your good lady, Lynne, in support. Dessert and coffee were then served.

At this juncture, President Bill presented the Colonel with two copies of the 2/1st history book, one for the library at Singleton Infantry Centre and one to him personally. He also presented a copy to Mr Geoff Morris for the RSL library. Bill Tasker then presented Colonel Cosgrove with a framed map of the Tobruk perimeter, which was gratefully received. President Bill also performed the pleasant task of presenting Jack Bertram and Jack Griffiths with their Life Membership Certificates, to two very astonished gentlemen. Congratulations to you both.

Following upon the Ode, at 9 pm, the talk commenced, and wasn't there some catching up on since last reunion, particularly among the 2/2nds.

The South Australian contingent was small — Allan Olson, Joe Robertson, Bill and Betty Thiele and Doug Waters — and they certainly had many acquaintances to renew. I also found out Joe knew some of my relations in that State (I won't hold that against you mate). Pat and Edna Collins caught up with Don Murray and Roy Levy, Snowy Dodd, George (Bluey) Kelly and Nell and Tom McNaughton. Clemm McDonald and Norma Lowe down from Port Macquarie chatted with "Nifty" Nev and Betty O'Connor. Good old Jim Field and his good lady Kath. Jim was armed with his trusty camera and catching up with some 2/2nds he hadn't seen for a time. More 2/2 consisting of Ken and Ida Wilson, Ray and Nancy Robbins, Bluey and Jean Locane, Eric and Norma Lindsay, Don and Nancy Linton, Bill and Betty Steward, Bill and Toss Robertson, Tom and Mary Morgan, Dick and Heather Marshall, Jack Morgan and Evelyn Booth, Sid and Jean Booth, Peter and Enid Finney, Russ and Rona Harrison, Gavin Todd, Rod Standen, Alex

and Melva Mitchell, Roy and Marion McGregor, Jack and Dot McGregor, Chris and Marea McKay, John McKnight and Beryl Byrne, Frank and Barbara Cheal, Frank Caulfield, Fred and Evelyn Bellingham and Allan and Mary McInnes. Bob Lee endeavoured to see all and let them know he was present, as did Bob Ginnane and good wife Nell.

Our two nursing sisters, Sue Malcolm and Vera Hamilton with us again on this great occasion (and looking good) seated with Mary Lloyd, Ruth Rhodes and Gordon and Olive Finlay. Great to see you looking so well, Olive, keep it up. Vic and Peg Whiteley also there with them, Charlie Kerr, Reg Ward, Steve Clarke (first time) and Peg and Max Herron (guess who got the Bridal Suite at the Galaxy Motel).

The Central Coast mob Jack and Gwen Collis, Jack and Lex Coates, Bluey and Edna Miller, Ivor and Ena Garnon, Rebecca Clogg, Harry and Glad Hamer (no mishaps this time Harry). Harry and Jess Bentley were in a group of Roy and Phyllis Jardine, Pat Noonan and Jack Stone, and Frank Gillian (in good form) with Beryl, Tom and Laurel Crossman, Dick and Val Blakeney, Alec and Jean George and Winn Dwyer. The daughters of our old mate George Edman were there — and Pam Herrick was with her parents George and Dot Bates. Jack and Kath Tooker also had their daughter Ainslie and husband Robert Cole with them. John and Mollie Hunt, Allan and Beulah Crute, Doug and Roma Shearston, Ted and Marie Jenson, Clancy, Irene and Wendy Scholes, Clive and Betty Harris, Fred and Jean Wheaton were more 2/1 in earnest conversation. Another group were Peter and Dot Priest, Percy and Monica Penrose, Jack and Norma Price, Percy and Ruby Fisk. (Jack and Percy both quiet ones — how do you put up with that pair, Norma and Ruby?) Jimmy Gray seemed to be all over the place, just like Joe Kyffin. Jack and Jean Bertram were with Jack and Maisie Kempnich, Don Murray and self. Nearly forgot the two Robinsons — Geoff and Enid, Jack and Olive. (Glad your accommodation OK this time, Geoff.) Eric and Joyce Reynolds chatting to Noel and Rita Trefoni and Bill and Win Tasker. Keith and Marjorie Boyle having a good time, also Dot and Claude Campbell, Ted and Mary Carter, Neville and Betty Woodham (birthday boy), Bill and Mavis Johnson, Mac and Lettie McKibbin, who also had a birthday, as did someone else who was unable to attend, Maureen Waters — Doug's better half. She got a cheerio to Sth. Aust. on the 2-way from the Rambler Motel by the boys.

Another first-timer Richard Hook and Barbara, Ray Horne and Pat (never seems to change), Laurie (3 Course) Kelly and Daphne, Charlie Kerr (he didn't have to follow Joe Kyffin anywhere this time). Bill and Phyl. Jollie able to move about and chat too after their official duties were over. Brian and Betty Kybert, good to see you both along. Bill Wright, Bill Dundas and Veda, Les and Jess Patterson, Harry and Dot Mowbray, Wal Parsons and Marie, Bert Sullivan and Edna (another first timer), Noel and Jeant Grant (had been tripping around since Anzac Day), Jack and Mavis Green, Betty Creasy (keeping an eye on Bill Hoffman), Bob and Joan Lake, Ray Harris (doing a good job on the Committee), Cyril and Dot Amies, Ron and Jan Callaghan, Sam and Margaret Lewis, Jack and Esme Griffiths (good to see you looking so well Esme) and Jack and Marj. Kerslake. Steve Morgan and Jan brought along Ann Burns, widow of Arthur 2/1. It was nice to see so many of our widows in the groups. Caught Jim McDonald and Cynthia in earnest conversation with Jack and Maisie Kempnich (old friends). I think about 11 pm Max said the bar was closing, some still talked on, whilst others were glad to hit the sack in readiness for the morrow.

PICNIC AT MOUNT PENANG

The weather dawned fine and the cold westerly had dropped. The RSL supplied their bus for those who needed transport and it was much appreciated. The picnic was held at the Mt. Penang Detention Centre grounds and a great spot. Reg Ward and Charlie Kerr with assistance from Ray Harris did a good job as "parking attendants". Soon all were formed into little groups enjoying the sun, surroundings and great company.

During the latter part of the morning it was good to see Max Law arrive with Joyce and son, Craig, and was warmly greeted by his old mates. Another who paid a visit was Ivan Pepper with wife Mabel. It wasn't long before the BBQ was going and the cooks got to work. Some of the contents of the RSL meat trays, won on the previous night, were soon cooked and eaten. Didn't hear of any burnt offerings from the ladies.

When it came to cleaning up, and getting ready to leave, Clancy decided he didn't have enough cameras at home, so added Jack Shearmans to his luggage. Still I think you are forgiven, Clancy. An "emu parade" to clear up was organised before departure and the grounds left in good order. A great spot for a day's outing — just watch out they don't keep you there.

FAREWELL DINNER

After a few hours rest, members commenced arriving back at the RSL in readiness for the farewell dinner. They were all still in little groups talking and swapping addresses, no doubt for future visits during their travels.

At 7 pm Bill Jollie called the assembly to be seated. He thanked everyone for their attendance and praised the Committee, under the leadership of our secretary Max and Mrs Pioneer Peg, for their work in the organising of the reunion. Several newcomers joined us for the farewell dinner — John and Heather Taylor with daughter Ann Lake and Les Graham with friend Matt Mealing. The meal was excellent and, as soon as the tables were cleared, small groups drifted about still talking and saying their farewells. Did you hear about that certain fellow, Clive Harris, who turned up at the wreath laying with odd shoes — you didn't check him out too well Betty — and then had the hide to win a tray of vegies in the raffle. Joe Kyffin did better with two trays, and Marj Boyle won a tray.

About 10 pm the party began to break up with lots of goodbyes — see you Anzac Day, see you at the Queensland reunion, or just Somewhere, Sometime. Well, this is it. To our Committee we say many thanks to one and all. Warm wishes for the remainder of 1990 and Good Health.

LARRY ROBSON — Reporter

LIFE CERTIFICATES

On Saturday, 2nd June, at the Reunion Dinner, Gosford, President Bill Jollie presented Life Membership Certificates to two of our Newcastle members who had rendered many years of service to our Association. Their citations read as follows:

JACK BERTRAM — for 24 years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association, thereby qualifying for Life Membership.

In 1966 Jack was elected a Vice-President of the Association and has held that position ever since. He was responsible for the organisation of the Country Reunions held at Newcastle and Greta and carried out his duties in a splendid manner.

JACK GRIFFITHS — for many years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association, thereby qualifying for Life Membership.

Jack has acted as Master of Ceremonies at all Country Reunions since 1972 and performed his duties in a very efficient and capable manner. He has also been carrying out welfare duties in the Newcastle area, visiting our members in hospital and attending funerals.

Jack was elected a Vice-President of the Association at the Annual Meeting this year.

BRISBANE REUNION

Saturday, October 27, 1990, at 11 am
at residence of John and Mollie Hunt
4/25 Mountford Road, New Farm, Brisbane
Telephone: (07) 358 4349 by October 20

THE 50th ANNIVERSARY

Following is the speech by Allan McInnes at the Gosford Reunion Dinner at the Gosford RSL Club on Saturday, 2nd June, 1990.

"It is a great honour to be given the opportunity to speak on this, the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneer Battalions.

On 1st May, 1940, Commanding Officers were appointed to the two battalions and in a very short time both units were close to full complement and training was begun in earnest for the job ahead.

Thousands of raw recruits were marching into depots all over Australia and being greeted by other rookies, who may have only been there one day, with the old cry "You'll be sorry". From these depots, troops were being drafted to units everywhere, but only a small percentage had the good fortune to be drafted to the 2/1st or 2/2nd Pioneers.

I am not going to dwell on unnecessary details, as I know you are all familiar with the deeds of these two battalions. The brief history has been very well documented in the recent *Pioneer News*, under the heading "A Short Story of the 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneer Battalions", written so competently by Peg Herron.

Instead I would like to say how closely knit these two units have always been and would like to mention some of the reasons that have cemented this unity.

In action both battalions saw battle action in the Middle East and were closely allied.

Following the capture of the main body of the 2/2nds by the Japanese in Java the 7th Division needed another Pioneer Battalion so Colonel Joe Lang was appointed to regroup the 2/2nd Pioneers in June 1942. This was done with the residue of the 2/2nds who had not gone to Java from the Middle East and a cross posting of Officers and NCOs from the 2/1sts — all with Middle East battle experience forming the nucleus of the regrouped battalion. Troops from Victoria formed two rifle companies and NSW troops the other two companies and then commenced the training for future campaigns.

When other Divisions needed extra infantry the Pioneer Battalion was called on, hence the 2/1sts were attached to the 9th Division in the Tobruk action and their role has been well praised and documented.

The 2/2 were attached to the 9th Division also, for the attack on Tarakan and handled the Beach Group duties and did Patrol work before returning to Moratai, where both the 2/1st and 2/2nd embarked and took part in the attack and subsequent capture of the Bolikpapan area.

Both battalions were in Balikpapan when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945 and thus ended an era that had begun in 1940.

While we were thus engaged — at home the 2/1st Pioneer Bn Comforts Fund, formed under the leadership of that wonderful lady, Mrs O'Malley Wood, was looking after the needs of the 2/1st and their families. On the regrouping of the 2/2nds she immediately took them over and then became the 2/1-2/2 Pioneers Comforts Fund.

I am sure the 2/1st-2/2nd Pioneer Battalion Association is unique in bringing together into a combined Association — one battalion from 6th Division and the other from 7th Division.

Our thanks go to the foresight of dedicated members of both units who got together and formed the Association in 1946. Also thanks to the hard working and willingness of the Executive and Committee who have always given that most precious commodity they have — their time — to ensure the success of the Association over the past 44 years. The main aim of the Association has always been to perpetuate friendships.

I have no hesitation in claiming our Association to be the best ex-service Association in Australia.

The *Pioneer News* has always been one of the most important roles of our Association and is posted to members scattered from North Queensland all around Australia to the outback of Western Australia. Our editors and wrapping committee have done a splendid job.

So finally, on reflection, regarding this reunion tonight and having remembered our absent friends at the wreath laying this afternoon, we can see the dual elements of happiness and sadness which we who remain share, as we have shared so many of our early experiences."

COMMANDANT'S ADDRESS

Following is the address given by Colonel Peter Cosgrove, AM, MC, Commandant of Singleton Infantry Centre, at the Gosford Reunion Dinner. After several minutes reviewing the development of the Army into the 1990s, the commandant then moved on to remarks specific to the occasion.

"My wife and I wish to thank Bill Jollie and Max Herron most sincerely for inviting us to attend your commemorative service and dinner. We are honoured to be with you tonight. I regard such invitations as a privilege and a token of the continuing high regard in the community, particularly in the ex-services community, for the inheritors of the Anzac tradition.

As I looked about those present, I noted the very large numbers who had returned from active service. Many different emotions came upon me as I did so and some of these underly the remarks I make to you tonight.

First and foremost, I feel enormous pride. Proud to be an Australian and to share the heritage you have given us, through your sacrifices and service — the heritage of a free and proud country, beholden to no other on this earth. I am proud too that I in company have with many thousands of younger Australians in a small way tried to perpetuate the great Anzac spirit you created, in service to the nation.

Next I feel sadness; that sadness comes from the recognition that behind every one of you ex-servicemen stand rank upon rank of departed comrades whose memory we honour today. The sadness of their loss is at the very core of our national determination to live in honourable peace within this turbulent world. There is too a tinge of sadness as I reflect on the thinning ranks of those with personal memories of war, both as those who fought and those who worked and waited on the home front. "As we that are left grow old" — the sadness I feel in this case is at the thought that younger Australians may overlook or devalue the place carved by the Anzacs in our national heritage.

This would be a sad state of affairs for two reasons; first and foremost it would make us less of a nation if we lost sight of a foundation to our emerging nationhood. Secondly, by losing sight of the past, younger Australians and future generations may be compelled to repeat the horrific mistakes of the past.

After sadness, I feel joy, for the simple and unalloyed pleasure of mixing with you, the finest Australians our country has produced as we rejoice your survival of the most dangerous and exciting period of your lives. This annual opportunity to renew the bonds created by wartime comradeship also serves to remind us that one of our greatest national characteristics is mateship. Not the maudlin mateship caricatured by chairbound social commentators but the mateship that causes men and women to lay down their lives rather than leave their mates. That famous saying "Greater love hath no man . . ." might be translated by an Australian into the simple statement "We're mates".

And after joy what emotion is there left to me: certainly at the end of it all there is hope and confidence for the future. Living and working as I do among young soldiers committed to the defence of their country, I receive daily reminders of the quality and spirit of our youth. The essential spirit, initiative, good humour and comradeship of the original Anzacs has been passed on in full measure to our young Australians. They are brave, inventive, irreverent and enquiring. They do not tolerate fools, humbug or pomposity any more than did their forebears. They do not seek the horrors of war, but if Australia need her sons and daughters they will not be found wanting.

I feel most privileged to represent them and to represent you as we remember all those who embody the great Anzac spirit, created 75 years ago, for all the world to see and for all the world to envy. But in gathering today our primary purpose is to mark the raising 50 years ago of the two great battalions — the 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneer Battalions, in that great khaki force they were among the finest.

Pioneers, on behalf of the Infantry Corps and on behalf of the Australian Army, I salute you.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Introductory remarks by Jack Tooker at the Wreath Laying Service at the Gosford Reunion on Saturday, 2nd June, 1990.

Seventy-six years ago, the greatest human conflict the world has ever known commenced and when it was all over, the wise men said "This has been the Great World War, and has been the war to end all wars". Something went dreadfully wrong, as 50 years ago the wise men came to you and said "We need you to put on a uniform and hold back a force, which if unchecked, will grind to dust the freedoms which are the right of all mankind".

Why are we here? Is it not a fact that you and thousands upon thousands of your comrades, who died on the fields of battle, took up this challenge and you gave an oath to serve your country, wherever, not in aggression, but in defence of our right to live in peace with one another.

In the 2nd AIF you served in two of the most respected units ever formed. The pages of history record your name and the names of all your mates who died in defence of human freedom and the battles in which your units were involved.

In the mountains of Syria, in the Western Desert, in New Guinea and many countries of South East Asia you served and the names of the fallen, adorned with the name of their unit, shall forever remain. We are here today to remember those men — Lest we Forget. The debt we owe to them is beyond measure.

We are also here today to pay tribute to others who made a sacrifice, perhaps greater than we can imagine. We are here to say thank you to our loved ones, as the measure of their suffering, waiting, and loss, was as great as any, during the war years and beyond.

Stand tall, walk proudly and let us go from this Reunion, glad to have been here, resolute to serve out the remainder of our lives, as we did 50 years ago, that the world may be a far better place for us, having walked this way.

I believe this is why we are here today.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mr Max Herron, Hon. Secretary
2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalion Assoc.

Dear Max,

Although I have written too to Bill Jollie, I felt I must write to you and Peg to say how much Lynne and I enjoyed ourselves at your Reunion on Saturday last. It was in all ways a splendid affair. The warmth and hospitality were tremendous on all sides and were a great testament to the Pioneer spirit, undiminished by time. In particular though we were very conscious of the detailed organisation that was necessary to stage such a large and well conducted activity. I know that you and Peg and doubtless others as well must have worked very hard to achieve the success that you did.

We both wish you and all Pioneers and their wives continued good luck and good health. Given the spirit and camaraderie we saw in such abundance we know the Reunions will continue in the same way for many years to come. For your friendship and hospitality, again our thanks.

My sincere thanks also for the splendid gifts. Our Infantry Centre Library now contains the 2nd/1st's History and the fine map and description of Tobruk adorns the wall in the Officers' Mess.

Warm regards, Peter
(Colonel P. J. Cosgrove, AM, MC)

VETERANS' AFFAIRS GRANT

Application was made to the Department of Veterans' Affairs early in March by President Bill Jollie for a grant towards the expenses of the 50th Anniversary Reunion at Gosford.

Details were given to the Minister, Mr Ben Humphreys, and we are pleased to inform members that a reply was received on 25th May, 1990, informing the Association that he recognised the significance of our reunion and wished to assist. To that extent he would like to offer \$1000 towards the expenses of the reunion.

Certain necessary audit requirements have to be met before a cheque is forthcoming, but Bill has written to the Department accepting, with gratitude, the Minister's generous offer.

WEEKEND TO REMEMBER

Once more, in friendship, over 200 members and their ladies gathered at Gosford for the 50th Anniversary of both 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneers. I am sure all will agree with me it was a wonderful weekend, even the weather was kind to us after so many weeks of rain beforehand.

One of the highlights of the weekend was the solemn remembrance ceremony at the Soldiers' Memorial in Mann Street, where a very moving explanation of proceedings was delivered by Jack Tooker, remembering the many thousands of comrades who had died in the fields of battle and in particular those of both units who had paid the Supreme Sacrifice during World War II and those who had passed on since the cessation of hostilities.

The presence of Colonel Peter Cosgrove, AM, MC, Commandant of Singleton Infantry Centre, a splendid Catafalque Guard of Warrant Officers (who were on a course at Singleton), drummers from Newcastle Support Unit and the address by Captain Noel Kay of the Salvation Army all contributed greatly to this solemn occasion.

The reunion dinner was an outstanding success and I am certain everyone in attendance was impressed with the address by Allan McInnes on "Our 50th Anniversary" and the later speech by Colonel Cosgrove, who was our Guest of Honour, accompanied by his charming wife, Lynne. We were honoured that he was able to be with us on such a momentous occasion.

The picnic on the Sunday at Mt Penang Detention Centre (these last two words must have brought back some rather unhappy memories to quite a few of the fellows who had been AWL during the war years) was a wonderful day — the weather was perfect and the warmth and friendship of all those present was tremendous.

One of the highlights of the day — so I am told — was the setting up of the large BBQ at lunch time. The "powers that be" had not seen it working for some time, and doubted it could be made to go, let alone cook. However, with military precision under Major Bill Robertson as engineer-in-chief, second-in-command Reg Ward, communications handled by ex-sig, Charlie Kerr, workshop facilities provided by Cyril Amies, and lots of supervision by Ray Harris, it soon became a major engineering feat. To judge by the noise and laughter — plus all the camera activity — it was a lot of fun — and it WORKED.

The arrival of Max Law was a lovely surprise, and Max was given a warm welcome by all his old friends. Our thanks to Joyce and son, Craig, for the effort it must have taken to make the trip.

A big thank you to Jim Gray for his help to Marjorie Boyle over the weekend. Marj has to be admired for her long trip from Echuca as it's not easy travelling such a long distance, let alone the inconvenience of a wheelchair. Shows true Pioneer spirit, Marj. Also thanks must go to Pam Herrick, daughter of George Bates, for her wonderful help all weekend to our two nursing sisters, from picking Vera Hamilton up in Sydney and taking her to Gosford and then bringing both Vera and Sue Malcolm back on the Monday morning — what Max would describe as a "Good Scout".

The farewell dinner on Sunday night was a happy informal occasion, the meal was excellent, and members moved around the various tables to greet friends they had not been able to catch up with the previous day. All too soon it was time to say farewell and although the Committee have no future plans for a further reunion, let us hope we can keep in touch with each other in the years ahead. Some wonderful friendships have been formed and the ladies are now just as much a part of the great Pioneer family as their menfolk.

Once again a very successful reunion and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended — most thought it was the best ever. Many thanks to all those, who by their efforts, helped to make our 50th Anniversary a weekend to remember.

Reported by PEG HERRON

REUNION LUCKY DOOR PRIZES

The lucky door prizes of our battalion's wine corks at the Gosford Reunion Dinner were won by Mrs Beryl Byrne, Mrs Enid Finney (a cousin of Jean Booth) and Eric Lindsay from Coonabraban.

2/1-2/2 PIONEERS W.A.

A meeting of the W.A. Pioneers was held at Anzac House in March 1990 and in attendance were Jean Lyford, Beth Lee, Owen Heron, Norm LeCornu, Jack Murray, Sid Abercrombie, Norma and Bob Sefton, Joan and Jack Monger. Joy and Len Preedy, John Anderson and Millie and Barry Hunt, who had not finished their travels around Australia but came up from Bunbury by train for the meeting.

John Douglas M.C., 2/1, moved from NSW and is now at Silver Chain Cottage, 21 Wright Street, Highgate, so any Pioneers are welcome to visit him.

President Ted Hansen of the 2/2 Association in Victoria, on a visit with his wife, was welcomed by Norm Le Cornu, John Anderson and Len Preedy at Anzac House. Ted brought the roll of the 2/2nds and gave a general talk on the Association and made the comment members should get away from the "reformed battalion" idea to the true story of reinforcing the existing unit. He said the 2/2 were unique in that at one time they had over 2000 men on strength.

Secretary Max Herron of 2/1-2/2 in NSW wrote with information required by a 2/3rd Pioneer, Eric Wood of Greenwood. As Eric would be a lonely Pioneer a cordial invitation is extended to him to attend our meetings.

Joy and I have just returned from a three week holiday which started in Singapore and while there visited the Changi Chapel and museum in the gaol complex. This was all well worth seeing and we were very proud to see the 2/2 plaque.

From Singapore we motored up through Malaysia, staying at Malacca, K.L., Cameron Highlands and Penang. Then flew to Bangkok, which is a big sprawling, lively city where the traffic has to be seen to be believed. From here a coach to Kan-ghanaburi to visit the Jeath War Museum where we felt very sad and angry. There was a rail engine which was used on the Burma railway, also a replica of the bridge. Then to the cemetery which is very well maintained and found my brother's grave. W.X. numbers were far too common, from 2/2 Pioneers and 2/3-2/4 Machine Gunners. We took a lot of poppies but could have brought a lot more and although we felt very sad we were extremely proud.

Then by coach to the River Kwai village for a few days where it was very hot and dry around the hills, and almost had an Australian look. Despite the dry weather the river still ran very fast and we went down the river to Lum Sum to look around an old camp site. Near the railway line was a stack of original sleepers, so then on to the train and a ride over the old wooden viaduct to finish at Nam Tok station in Tha Sao.

We returned to Bangkok for another day then flew to Hong Kong which after Bangkok seemed very quiet and orderly. Then flew back to Perth after a great holiday and now Joy is picking out the places she would like to return to.

Once again there has been a request for Pioneers to march in Perth on Anzac Day and Ted Hansen has said he can get us a banner so let me know how many would be interested.

Next meeting is July 20 at Anzac House, Perth, so until then regards from Joy and myself.

LEN PREEDY, Chairman, Pioneers W.A.

LAST POST

WILLIAM JOHN MOORE 2/1 passed away on 27th March and the funeral took place at Rookwood Crematorium with Bill Tasker reading the Eulogy.

HAROLD MILTON CONNELL passed away on 20th April and the service was conducted at St Andrews Uniting Church at Yass on 24th April.

RON IRWIN 2/1 of Wentworthville passed away on 7th March and the service was conducted at Eastern Creek.

TOM GODDEN 2/1 of Pennant Hills passed away on 6th May and the service was conducted by the Epping RSL with Bill Tasker in attendance.

ERN SMALLWOOD 2/1, passed away on June 20 and the service was held in the Quirindi Anglican Church. Ern passed away quietly in his sleep at the age of 75. We are grateful to Heather and John Taylor for this information.

BILL TASKER, Welfare Chairman

2/1-2/2 ANZAC ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Tuesday, April 24, at the Redfern RSL Club at 3.30 pm with an attendance of 28 members.

The meeting was opened by President Bill Jollie with the Ode followed by a welcome to members especially those who had travelled big distances including: Jack Bertram, Eric Causer, Noel Grant, Phil Cramsie, Bill Hoffman and Clemm MacDonald.

Following reports from the various office bearers the President read his Annual Report in which he paid tribute to his Executive and Committee for their continued support over the last year.

Election of officers was then conducted and the President appointed Vice President Bill Robertson as Returning Officer. Senior appointments resulted in Bill Jollie, President, with John Gilchrist (2/1) and John Williams (2/2) as Co-Patrons.

New appointments were Russ Harrison as Association Reporter and Bill Tasker as Welfare Chairman, and new Committee members were Bob Ginnane and Clemm MacDonald.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

At this stage President Bill called forward Vice-President Bill Robertson and presented him with an Association Life Certificate, which left Bill so thrilled and surprised he was at a loss for words. The citation read as follows:

"To Bill Robertson for 15 years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association, thereby qualifying for Life Membership.

"Bill joined the Management Committee in 1975 and has been a staunch and regular member ever since. In 1985 he was elected to the position of Vice-President.

"For many years Bill has acted as March Leader for the 2/2 Pioneers on Anzac Day and has performed this task in an admirable manner.

"This Life Certificate is presented in recognition of valuable and faithful service voluntarily given to the Association."

GENERAL BUSINESS

In general business Russ Harrison and Bill Robertson stated they would be attending the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion 50th Anniversary Dinner in Melbourne and were asked to convey the best wishes of all members of our Association.

A vote of thanks was extended to Wal Smith, Vice-President of Redfern RSL Club, a 2/1st member, for the refreshments provided after the meeting and for the use of the RSL Board Room.

Upon closing the meeting, the President invited the ladies to join us and on doing so Jack Tooker called Peg Herron to the Executive table. Jack gave a run down on the valuable contribution Peg had made in editing the 2/1st Pioneer history book and, in addition to this, had researched and written the front page article in the April issue of the News titled "Short History of 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneer Battalions".

The President then closed the meeting and invited the gathering to join him for drinks.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

After the Annual Meeting, members had a meal at the RSL Club then proceeded to Martin Place for the Wreath Laying Ceremony. Thirty-two members were formed up by Marshals Ray Harris and Bob Lake. The unit banners were carried by Eric Causer 2/1 and Clemm MacDonald 2/2. Wreaths were then placed on the Cenotaph by Allan McInnes for the Association and Marj Kerslake for the Ladies Auxiliary.

Allan McInnes recited the Ode to the Fallen and Aub Brazier played the Last Post and Reveille. Again many thanks Aub, for a fine performance.

This is always an impressive and solemn occasion and we remembered, quietly and reverently, those who gave their lives and have passed away over the years.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

On boarding the train, heading for the city one could see Anzac Day 1990 was going to see a record crowd turn out, as people were coming from everywhere. This certainly proved to be the case, particularly noticeable when the marchers wheeled into George Street from Martin Place. There was just a sea of happy faces in very high voice with their cheering.

For the 2/1sts at the starting point President Bill

Jollie had rounded up the Bankstown Youth Band and also appointed Colin "Clancy" Scholes as marshal. The march commenced to move off at 10.30 am with an assembly of 85 members. The march leaders were John Gilchrist (Patron) and Bill Jollie (President) with "Clancy" Scholes in front of the troops making sure they kept in line. The banner was carried by Tim Lloyd, son of the late Jack Lloyd.

For the 2/2nds Ray Harris was the marshal and at 11 am the assembly of 35 members moved off. The march leaders were Bill Robertson and Allan McInnes (both Association Vice Presidents) supported by Padre Jock Steele and Ray Harris. The banner was carried by Michael Bye, son of Tom Bye. Michael is a cadet at the Defence Forces Academy at Canberra.

ANZAC REUNION DINNER

The 136 members attending the Reunion Dinner at Redfern Town Hall after the march were really in fine spirit and never have the organising committee seen such a happy crowd.

A typical example of this was the table near the stage which consisted of Bill Jollie, Steve Clarke, John Gilchrist and son Peter, Stan Jones, Ken Stuart, Bill Robertson, Jack Tooker, Allan McInnes and Ray Harris. Immediately after lunch this whole group was seen moving around and mixing with the members at other tables.

It was pleasing to see so many travel such long distances from country and interstate places, such as those at one table, namely, Ray Horne, Macksville, Noel Grant, Altona, Vic., Eric Causer, Macarthur, Vic., Phil Cramsie, Brisbane, and Dick Hobley, Bremer Bay, WA. The long distance award should certainly go to Dick for travelling by car all the way from Perth. Thank you Dick — we were thrilled to see you.

Another happy group were George Nichols, Lloyd "Porky" Graham and Frank Gillian, who were all pleased with the meal provided by the new caterer and were thrilled at the work carried out by the numerous sons of members.

In the gathering here and there were 32 2/2nd members and Bob Ginnane headed one table which included Horrie Sedger from Queensland, Clemm MacDonald, Ray Levy, Bruce Metcalf, Rod Standen, and Kim Ginnane, son of Bob, as well as Michael Bye, son of Tom.

Hovering around at various times were Pat Collins, Jim Field, Padre Jock Steele, Tom Brabin, Bill Lewis accompanied by son Paul, Don Crawford, Andy Beebar, Bob Lee, Wally Coe, Ian Willmore and Gavin Todd.

Tucked away in a corner were a group heard talking about army days and they were Bert Beasley, Queensland, Ron Kennewell, Dick Kennewell, Brian Neiberding, Chris McKay, Oss Carter, Ken Wilson of Lismore, Bluey Locane, Jack Henderson and son-in-law, Bill, and Charlie Henry.

To offset the cost of the meal a raffle was conducted by George Walker which resulted in a taking of \$295. Many thanks George for your effort. First and second prize of wine crocks were won by Dan Gannon (brother of Ivor) and George "Snowy" Hemmings. Third prize, a bottle of Bourbon (donated) won by Phil Cramsie.

The organising committee thank all those members who assisted on the day to make it such a success, and George Nichols in a letter puts it very nicely — "Our President spoke well to a most appreciative audience, and the 'bouquet' for day would go to our Patron, John Gilchrist, for an excellent speech to the most disciplined group at any Anzac day reunion, proof that what he said was being absorbed. The catering was excellent and congratulations to all who assisted in making the day a memorable one". Many thanks for your kind remarks George, from the organising committee.

A very special thanks is also due to all the sons of members who gave their time and effort to ensure the "Dads" were relieved of some of the work. These included Geoff Finlay, Terry Bird, Bill Lake, Peter Gilchrist, Ray Law, Tim and Anthony Lloyd, David Herron and Ray Brennan (son-in-law of Laurie Kelly).

To sum up on the day, it is worthwhile quoting a comment heard on the day — "It is funny that the Pioneers spend more money on food than on grog at their Reunion these days.

RUSS HARRISON, Reporter

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mr M. Herron
Hon Sec. 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn Assoc.

Dear Peg and Max,

Just a short note to express appreciation and I am sure I echo the views of all who thoroughly enjoyed the weekend at Gosford which, as usual, reflected the smooth efficiency and hard work you good folk have put into the organising of another very successful function for our two battalions.

It is human nature to be complacent when everything is coasting along smoothly and it sometimes takes the comments of an outside observer, in this case Colonel Cosgrove, whose praise for the large attendance and obvious close knit bonds which have held us together over half a century, to make us realise how much credit lies at your doorstep.

It was great to see all our mates and their ladies and pleasing to see interstate members making first appearances, since war days.

"Peg and Max" — Nancy and I can only say thanks for the long years and dedication you have given on our behalf, to make all these functions so successful, and a lot of credit is yours for our Association being the "greatest" as Colonel Cosgrove said.

Good health and long life and our thanks.

Yours sincerely,

NANCY & DON LINTON
(2/2 Pioneer, Tuncurry)

S.A. PIONEER ASSOCIATION

The President of the above Association, Allan Olson, files his latest report as follows:

THANK YOU to the 2/1st Pioneer Bn History Committee for their generous donation of two copies of "The Pioneers" — one for my personal use and one to loan out. They will both be treasured for years to come. Bill Thiele and Doug Waters have already had it on loan.

GEORGE SAUER 2/1 reported he was feeling much better after having an operation.

BERT MOLLOY 2/1 has moved from the country and is now living 20 miles out of Adelaide. He had a slight stroke recently which prevents him from marching but he did make it to our Reunion, with the help of his wife and friends.

SID ELLIS 2/2 passed away on April 12 after a serious illness and the service was conducted in the Florey Chapel, Centennial Park. Condolences were passed on to his wife and son.

Pioneers present at the service were Doug Waters, Stan Clarke, Len Norman and Allan Olson. The Ode of Remembrance was recited by President Allan Olson.

Sid was an original member of the 2/2nds and after service in the Middle East was landed in Java where he became a POW and served three years on the now infamous Burma Railway. Apologies for non attendance were received from Cyril Denton, Garry Hooper and Geoff Lloyd.

CHARLES RICHARDSON 2/2 of Queensland recently called on the phone as did Allan McInnes 2/2 of Sydney.

ANZAC DAY March and Reunion was the best we have had as there were 25 at the march and 30 at the Reunion.

In addition to 2/3 and 2/4 Pioneers in attendance were 2/1 — Bill Thiele, Doug Waters, Bert Molloy and George Sauer. 2/2 — Les Bence, Cyril Denton, Harry Fenwick, Geoff Lloyd, Len Norman, Allan Olson, Joe Robertson, Bruce Scott, the late Sid Ellis and Roy McGregor and his son-in-law.

ALLAN OLSON, President

SICK PARADE

HUMPHREY JACKSON 2/1 of Norfolk Island, convalescing at Lady Davidson Hospital, Turramurra, was visited by Peg and Max Herron in April and was soon to be discharged to go home to Norfolk Island.

CLEM MORONEY 2/1 of Canley Vale was in hospital in April and was visited by Gordon Finlay and Bill Tasker.

ALBERT WILKINSON 2/1 of Narrabeen was in Concord Hospital in May and visited by Bill Tasker one afternoon only to find he had been discharged an hour before.

BILL TASKER, Welfare Chairman

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

July issue of the Mail Bag and a good variety of letters with quite a lot of newsy items. With Anzac Day and the Gosford Reunion behind us we have seen a lot of members and wives, so I'd best get down to the nitty-gritty and respond to the mail that we have received.

PHYL ANDREWS 2/1, widow of Neville, now in residence at Charnwood, ACT, with a thank you for the news and a cheque for the treasurer. Phyl has settled down to life in Canberra and lives in the same street as her daughter and son-in-law and I believe they thoroughly spoil her. Has joined the Canberra Laurel Club and they have quite a lot of trips and outings. Was also one of the lucky 250 Legacy ladies to have morning tea at Government House on the lawns and patio. Getting quite hybrow aren't you, love. The Lakes and Finlays were down in Canberra in May and we tried to ring you, but you must have been out socialising. Thanks Phyl for the good wishes, the cheque for the treasurer, and we will be in Canberra around September for the Floriade festival, so will give you a call then.

DON ANDERSON 2/1, Merimbula, per pen of wife Dora, with a sub for the treasurer and good wishes to all for 1990.

REG ARMSTRONG 2/2, Coonabarabran, with a letter of apology for his absence on Anzac Day. The house pressure pump broke down and Reg had to become the local Gunga Din until he was able to renew the pump. Marched with the local RSL and enjoyed the day very much.

He was sorry to read of Max Law and his old mate Jim Field having a rough trot on the sick parade and extends a warm welcome to anyone going through Coona to call in. Enclosed a cheque for his subs — to cover his fines for being AWL.

MAVIS ASHTON 2/1, widow of Wally, of Murwillumbah, with a short note and a photo of a grave in Herberton. However, we cannot publish the photo as we can't print colour photos, but we thank you for your kind thoughts.

JACK BERTRAM 2/1, Hamilton, with a short note to say that he and Jean would be attending all the functions at Gosford. I hope you are OK now, Jack, as I gather you had a bit of a turn on the Sunday night before the dinner.

MAVIS BLANCH 2/1, widow of Joe, Beaudesert, with a nice letter and a sub for the treasurer. Says she will be thinking of us all at Gosford and with us in spirit.

On a recent bowls tour to Armidale she rang Ted and Mary Carter and Ted told her they were going to Gosford. She had also been down to Melbourne in January and saw quite a lot that she had not seen before. Also attended the reunion at John Hunts and enjoyed the company of old friends. Says it is dwindling in numbers, due to age and illness, but John and Mollie do a good job. She was also off to Longreach to the Hall of Fame, providing the floods go down. Thanks for the letter, Mavis, and try to be a good girl for now.

SID BOOTH 2/2, Maroochydyore, Qld., per pen of wife, Jean, with a nice letter of thanks and a cheque for the treasurer. They will be attending the Gosford reunion and looking forward to meeting Sid's old mates. Max has forwarded Len Preedy's address, as requested.

MICK BYE 2/2, Dubbo, with a cancellation for the Gosford show — bad luck, Mick, but these things do happen. You should have received the deposit from the Galaxy Motel by now. Thank you for the good wishes — no doubt about Peg, we all agree on that question. She is worth her weight in gold. Joke, Peg!!

CLAUDE CAMPBELL 2/1, Inverell, per pen of Dot, with request for motel booking at Gosford. Well I hope you enjoyed the weekend as much as I did, Claude, if so you had a whopper.

JACK CLAYPOLE 2/1, Matraville, with a letter letting us know he is still around. Has had a few health problems these last few years and has been conspicuous by his absence on Anzac Day. Jack has been in and out of hospital with skin grafts on

both legs and feet and says it has slowed him down, also off the beer. That's a blow Jack. Sends his regards to all and a special mention to C Company.

VINCE CULLEN 2/1, Peakhurst, per pen of Eve, with a cheque for the treasurer and best wishes to all. Eve also apologises for being a bit late, as the saying goes "When's late?"

JOHN DOWD 2/2, Wagga, with a sub for the News, and says a good day was had on Anzac Day and good weather. Because of failing eyesight John says to excuse short note. Many thanks, John.

VINCE DUNDAS, son of Bill 2/1, with a letter to Peg thanking her for her help in arranging accommodation for his father at Gosford. The family had financed the trip for Bill and he certainly enjoyed every moment. To be truthful I did not know him until I saw the name tag and I spent a lot of time with him on the Tablelands. I don't know if he has any health problems, but he looks better than he did then and certainly better than he did when he attended the Grafton reunion many years ago. Maybe because he copped a speeding fine on that occasion, he could have been still recovering from the shock.

RON EDWARDS 2/1, Frankston, with a cheque for the treasurer. Although a late-comer to the 2/1sts, he still enjoys reading the News. Ron enclosed a photo of Robert and Kathryn Curkpatrick holding a copy of the history of 9 Aust M.G. Btn. which they had compiled and was duly launched by Bruce Ruxton early this year. Robert was the son of Jack Curkpatrick, 2/1, and although we cannot reproduce coloured prints in our News, Ron, the photo was passed around at our last meeting. Many thanks for sending it on and for your good wishes.

FLORENCE GRAHAM, widow of the late Colonel Geoff Graham, 2/1, with a thank you for the copy of "The Pioneers" sent by the Association. She has many fond memories of the troops. Geoff's nephew, from whom we got her address, she has never met. Who knows, Mrs Graham, we may have opened up a whole new family for you.

Thank you once again for your good wishes and may you enjoy your copies of the *Pioneer News* in the time to come.

STELLA GRANGER 2/1, widow of Bill, with a donation to the Association, and a thank you for the continuance of *Pioneer News* which she reads with interest.

TOBY HALE 2/1, Kyogle, with a cheque for the treasurer and says it is a long time since he dropped a line. He plays indoor bowls on Friday night and he and Vera both go to Bingo on Tuesday — but they never win. Toby says he often sees Jack Shearman, Jim Hall, Paddy Gray and Bill Hoffman and saw Clancy Scholes in Lismore recently. Closes with best wishes to all Pioneers.

JOHN HAYDEN 2/1, Orange, per wife, Wyn, two letters dated April and May, and a sub for the treasurer. John has been doing it a bit rough lately. He had surgery the day after Anzac Day with 17 days in hospital having his gall bladder removed. Also had a knee replacement some 12 months ago, which was not a success, and that is still causing some concern.

Daughter Helen has been a tower of strength acting as taxi driver to Wyn, as she does not drive. Hope there is some light at the end of the tunnel in the near future for you John, and that you will soon be OK again. Our thanks to you, Wyn, for keeping in touch.

FRANK HEPBURN 2/2, Bankstown, per wife Irene, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that Frank is recovering from his trip to hospital. Irene also sends her thanks to Bill Tasker for his hospital visit and sends her warmest regards to Joyce Law and family and hopes that all goes well with Max. She knows what a strain Joyce must be under.

JOHN HUNT 2/1, New Farm, with a short note to apologise for not making it to Sydney for Anzac Day, owing to visitors from Canada. John is teaching himself to type as he reckons his writing is fast becoming illegible. I am starting to have that trouble myself, mate, so don't let it worry you.

NEVILLE JAKINS, son of Alf 2/1, Lakes Entrance, Vic., with a newsy letter and a cheque for the treasurer. He and wife Judy visited Sandy Creek, near Gawler in South Australia, last year and they think that Judy's parents have leased the property where the Pioneers were camped on their

return from the Middle East. There are still remnants of the camp on the site.

He and Judy were off to Alice Springs for three weeks, coming back through Coober Pedy, Broken Hill and Mildura. Was looking forward to getting amongst the fishing when he got back as he had been catching some fair-sized King George whiting in the Lake, the biggest he had ever caught.

Hope you both had a good trip and the fish were still biting when you got home.

HAZEL JOHNS, widow of George 2/1, Villawood, with a cheque for the treasurer for the News. Every so often a name will bob up that George has spoken of and great to read news of them. Also would like to thank Max and the Committee for the work they do and the hours put into the paper, also for the help given to members, wives and widows. Many thanks for your letter, Hazel, and we appreciate your kind remarks.

BILL JOHNSON 2/1, Victoria, with a cheque for treasurer and a thank you for the News. Says it is good to be a part of the Association and to be kept up with the doings. Bill has to go into hospital for a possible back operation and is hoping that it does not interfere with the Gosford weekend. I don't think it did, Bill, as I remember seeing your name card on my travels. Hope you enjoyed your trip.

CHARLIE KERR 2/1, Maryborough, with a thank you to Peg for her suggestion that he share a room with Reg Ward at Gosford. They did just that and got along famously. Hope you had a pleasant and safe trip home.

JOE KYFFIN 2/1, Reservoir, Vic., with a short note re Gosford and glad to know that Jack and Jean Clarke are settling happily into their new home. Joe is looking forward to getting together with Wally and Marie Parsons again, as well as many others.

PAT LAUGHREN 2/1, Nambour, Qld., per pen of wife Nell, with a cheque for the treasurer and says Pat's eyes are not improving. She reads the *Pioneer News* to him, which he enjoys, but sad to hear of friends who have passed on. They won't be joining us at Gosford, the old fella is now 84 years young and, as Nell says, it takes energy to travel now.

JIM LAW 2/1, Tahmoor, with a cheque for treasurer and best wishes for Anzac Day, with special mention for his old 13 Platoon mob.

RAY LAW, son of Jim, with a short note to say that the old man had his 70th birthday on the 11th April. Says his Dad had spent a week in Camden Hospital, but was now home. Your poem to the Pioneers was read out at the Annual Meeting, Ray, and will be published in the News as soon as space permits.

BOB LEE 2/2, Concord, with a change of address for Pat Egan to Canberra. Pat had intended coming to Sydney for Anzac Day, but was not feeling the best so unable to attend. Hope things are on the up and up, Pat.

ERNIE LUNN 2/2, Dubbo, with a subscription to the News and best wishes to all. You certainly won't get writer's cramp, Ernie.

VIC McDONOUGH 2/2, Banora Point, with a change of address from Mermaid Beach and a cheque for the treasurer. Many thanks.

TOM MCGUINNESS 2/1, Laurieton, with a sub to funds and regrets that he and his wife won't be able to be at Gosford. They had booked to go north at the same time. Closes with a thank you for the *Pioneer News* and best wishes to all.

JACK MCGREGOR 2/2, Shortland, with subs for the Association and his booking for Gosford. Brother Roy and Marion will be joining them at Wyoming Caravan Park for the weekend.

Jack and Dot both keep reasonable health and keep the local chemist off the dole queue, despite his claims of approaching disaster. (I like that, Jack, it sums it up perfectly.)

ROY MCGREGOR 2/2, Rothbury, with a donation to funds and the news that he had been to Adelaide to visit their daughter. Was in Adelaide for Anzac Day, contacted Geoff Lloyd and marched with the Adelaide contingent, also lunched with them afterwards. Had a good day and was made most welcome by all and sundry, including Joe Robertson, Len Norman and A'an Olson, all from D Coy, and says he hasn't seen them for 45 years. Said he will be in Gosford with brother Jack "rearing to go".

TOM MANUEL 2/1, Glen Innes, with subs for self and Bob Donald. Bob is well and still plays bowls

and does a bit of fox shooting with Ernie Lee 2/2 at times. Ernie has been elected Vice-President of the Glen Innes District Services Club, so we offer our congratulations. Col Noon has just returned from a trip to the drought country of Moree, but left there when it started to rain. Probably in need of a Club Tooheys by that time.

Tom also writes that the local widows Mrs Eric O'Hara and Mrs Jack Rogers, are both well and Mrs Jack Marshall was delighted with a visit from Allan and Beulah Crute from Woolgoolga recently and was so pleased to see them. Tom said Concord had spared no efforts on him, and at time of writing was quite well.

Thanks for the news, Tom, you have almost made the North West Courier edition of *Pioneer News*.

OWEN MILLS, President, 7 Div. Sigs. Assn., with a letter to Max expressing sympathy at the demise of Arthur Smidt, whom Owen knew many years ago when the Smidt family had a bakery in Maclean. While in Maclean he looked up Alec Cameron, who is getting on in years now and troubled with diabetes, but keeps it reasonably under control with diet.

Owen and his wife spent six weeks at Brooms Head over Xmas and while there Owen nearly went to a watery grave after being swept out to sea in a violent rip. They had to put a power boat to sea to pull him back.

He had ordered two copies of "The Pioneers", one for himself and one for Jim Day, son of Ted Day 2/1, who was killed in Tobruk in June 1941. However, before he could get it to Jim he had died with cancer, so he passed it on to Greg Day, Jim's son, who was so glad to have something to show of the grandfather he had never known. Greg's mother was to have spent Xmas with Greg and his family, but sadly she lost her life in the Kempsey bus crash. Trouble certainly came in big packages to the Day family over the years.

Thank you for your letter, Owen, and I know Max has been in touch with you. Just a suggestion re the Corvettes, has your friend tried putting an ad in *Reveille*.

JACK MORGAN 2/2, Wagga, with a short note saying he and Evelyn will be at Gosford. Jack still has some trouble getting his crowd together down there — hard to get final answers. Don't worry, Jack, so long as you come yourself.

RON MURRAY 2/1, Hill End, with a thank you for back issues of *Pioneer News*. Ron is a new member of the Association and came along on Anzac Day for the first time. Hope you enjoyed yourself, Ron. He mentions the names of Ron Coyte, Ross Dagger and Albert Dean — they were together all along the line. Max has sent you an application for the Front Line Medal, also Ron Coyte's address.

STEVE MORGAN 2/1, Ashfield, with a note that he and wife Jan will be at Gosford, along with Ann Burns, widow of Arthur. They spend a lot of time together at Pretty Beach, so would not require accommodation.

GEORGE NICHOLS 2/1, Cronulla, with a good letter on Anzac Day, and the fact that "Porky" Graham turned up put the icing on the cake. George reckons the sons and off-springs of Pioneers who turned up to help with the chores are worthy of a mention, but the bouquet of the day goes to our Patron, John Gilchrist, for a very worthy speech which I think really started blokes thinking.

I wonder who spiked your very last drink, George, might have been Porky or maybe that "minder" you speak so well of.

PETER PRIEST 2/1, Ballina, with a short note per pen of Dot, with the news that they have retired and now live in Ballina. Pete still does a lot of fishing and really enjoys it. Closes with a "see you at Gosford".

ROY PARRETT 2/2, Scarness, Qld., with a donation to funds and his best wishes to all Pioneers.

DARRIL REID 2/1, Swansea, with the news that he has been travelling around a lot, including some time at Scotts Head, but had decided to settle down at Swansea. Rest assured your *Pioneer News* will be forwarded to that address, Darril.

MONTE REID 2/2, Cessnock, with a cheque for the treasurer and quotes what a good paper the *News* is. He will be in front of the TV on Anzac Day hoping for a glimpse of faces that he remembers. Tells that it is always good to have a phone call from

Bob Lee and how he appreciates his friendship over the years. Enjoyed reading the book and although some recollections differ to his own he must bow to the reliability of the War Diary.

JACK SHEARMAN 2/1, Kyogle, per pen of wife Flo, with a short note. Jack does a lot of fishing and they both play bowls when the weather permits. They have had a lot of rain since Christmas. Glad to hear you are both coming to Gosford.

DOUG SHEARSTON 2/1, Forster, with three letters. He and Roma went on a coach trip to Bright in the Autumn and really enjoyed the lovely colours of the trees. Roma has also had her eye operation at long last, in fact her eyesight has improved so much she feels she could do with different glasses. Doug also had a short trip to hospital, but everything OK now. He had Anzac Day at Forster this year with lunch at the club and played bowls in the afternoon — Army v Air Force. The Air Force were the winners, as Doug said the Army boys had too many "starters" — whisky and rum — so they became bowls "stoppers" when the chips were down. Closes with best wishes until Gosford.

JACK SPOTTISWOODE 2/1, Allambie Heights, with a short note that ill-health will stop him going to Gosford, but his thoughts will be with us over the weekend. Thanks for the sub, Jack.

MRS GWEN STRODE, Yagoona, sister of Keith Jones 2/1 (killed in action at Balikpapan) with a cheque enclosed for *Pioneer News*. Thanks Gwen, and good to hear from you.

BILL THIELE 2/1, South Australia, with his second letter to the Association. Since Bill retired some seven years ago has spent all his spare time fishing and playing golf — that's a laugh, Bill, with only one point of rain since Christmas, you would be fishing in the sand. Bill and his wife Betty, Allan Olson, Joe Robertson and Doug Waters were all at the Gosford reunion and we enjoyed meeting up with them after so many years. Also reported that the Anzac March in Adelaide was well attended and about 30 Pioneers enjoyed a lunch after the march.

BILL WELLS 2/2, Lismore, with a letter of thanks to whoever it was that submitted his name to the Association and thanks to Max for the back numbers of the *Pioneer News* that were forwarded on. His guess — Ken Wilson. Glad to have you on the list, Bill.

DONALD WRIGHT 2/1, Camp Hill, Qld., with many thanks for the copies of *Pioneer News* that he had received since ordering a copy of the history. He enjoyed reading the newsletter and enclosed a cheque so that he may continue to receive same. Many thanks, Don, and welcome aboard.

JACK RICHARDS 2/1, Lennox Head, per pen of wife Olive, with a cheque to treasurer and warm wishes to the Lakes and Kerslakes. Jack has his good and bad days, but they have a good medic who understands and treats accordingly. Sorry you could not make it to Gosford.

TOM BLAINEY 2/1, Noble Park, Vic., per pen of wife Vi, with donation to funds and best wishes for the Gosford reunion. Tom enjoys reading the *News* and looks forward to its arrival.

Vi mentions that they bought another copy of "The Pioneers" to give to Tom Budge 2/1, but he had left the hotel where he had been staying. However, they eventually caught up with his daughter in Berwick and left the book with her.

Tom and Vi are off to Queensland in July — by bus — Tom has eye problems and doesn't do any driving these days. Happy holiday and hope to catch up with you both in the near future.

BLUEY KELLY 2/2, Mt Waverley, Vic., together with Nell, just back in Melbourne after the reunion, have passed on their warm congratulations to all concerned for a wonderful weekend. They had a few extra days in the Gosford area, then south to Jervis Bay, before making their way back home.

JACK NILON 2/1, Murrumburrah, with a donation to funds and his apologies for not being able to attend Gosford owing to trouble with his legs — although his health otherwise is good.

Jack asks that his best wishes be especially passed on to Jack and Kath Tooker, George Nichols, Snowy Hemmings, Clive Harris, Fred Wheaton, Alec George and Ted Wilcox.

Thank you, Jack, for your good wishes and I can assure you the reunion was a beauty.

I have been asked by the ladies to publish a word of thanks, on behalf of all the widows who

attended Gosford, to the Executive and Committee for a wonderful weekend and for providing them with such wonderful company.

Well, that just about wraps it up for this issue. Sorry if I have appeared to repeat myself, but the mail had such a lot to do with the reunion that it was unavoidable. Joan and I had a wonderful time all the weekend, never a dull moment, and to top it off the two happiest faces on Saturday night were Jack Coates and Bob Lake, not only because we were having such a good time, but because Balmain and Manly won their games of football on Friday night and Saturday. A special vote of thanks to all those who attended Gosford and for those who didn't make it, you would have to be sorry. That's all,

LAKEY

2/2nd MELBOURNE REUNION

The 2/2nd Pioneer Bn conducted their 50th Anniversary Reunion and Dinner Dance at the Essendon Town Hall on 18th May, 1990.

The Sydney based Association was represented by Rona and Russ Harrison and Bill Robertson who were guests of Barbara and Frank Cheal for five days in Melbourne and their hospitality was very much appreciated.

It was a great night — good food and a few drinks and lots of talking, with many couples still making a fair effort on the dance floor. The floor show and music during dinner was enjoyed by all.

At the Cheals table were Rona and Russ Harrison, Bill Robertson, Phyllis and Stan "Bluey" Hucker and Kevin Doolan.

Colonel John Williams and many other old mates were there. Greetings from the 2/1 Pioneer Association were read during the formal proceedings. The organising Committee and others involved are to be congratulated.

RUSS HARRISON, Reporter

ANZAC DAY SERVICE

An Anzac Day Service, especially commemorating the 75th Landing of the Anzacs at Gallipoli, was held at Stephen's Anglican Church, Willoughby, on Sunday, 22nd April. The principal guest on this special occasion was Sir Frederick Chilton, C.B.E., D.S.O. and Bar.

As may be recalled at the time of the Balikpapan Campaign, Sir Frederick was Brigadier commanding the 18th Brigade and on occasions during that particular action members of some 2/1st Pioneer companies were in contact with units of the Brigade. Knowing that Sir Frederick was mentioned personally twice in our book "The Pioneers", Steve Clarke (who had been invited to the service) took the opportunity to present him with a copy, suitably inscribed.

Whilst talking to him, it was gleaned that Sir Frederick began his AIF career with the 2/2nd Infantry Battalion as a company commander and one of his platoon commanders was Adrian Buckley — later to be appointed Commanding Officer of 2/1st Pioneer Battalion. Amongst other things Sir Frederick mentioned how he and Adrian, with others, were lucky to scramble aboard a boat when escaping from the Germans as they advanced into Crete.

As the unit history of the 2/2nd Infantry Battalion states Adrian Buckley had a fine record in Bardia, Tobruk, Greece, Syria, Ceylon, Kokoda Trail and Sanananda Track.

WELFARE REQUEST

Both Welfare Officers request that the families of members notify them when members are in hospital, so that they can make arrangements for a visit.

They also request that when a member is deceased, that the family notify the appropriate Welfare Officer and include in the death notice the unit the member belonged to, so that arrangements can be made to attend the funeral.

The Association Welfare Officers are:
Sydney Region — Bill Tasker, 3 Killara Avenue, Kingsgrove. Phone: (02) 78 6658.

Central Coast — Jack Collis, 24 Hobart Avenue, Umina. Phone: (043) 41 2977.

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A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY TO GALLIPOLI

The following is an extract of a 14-page article written by our Newcastle Vice-President, Jack Griffiths, who has been President of the Newcastle Gallipoli Legion Club since 1983. Jack was the first person to be elected President other than a Gallipoli veteran.

Jack was chosen by the Board of Directors to represent the Club and joined a group of 20 people organised direct from Newcastle by John Reid City Travel. Jack stated the travel arrangements, itinerary, accommodation, local guides, sightseeing, factual and historical explanations could not have been bettered and the group as a whole were most co-operative — and the price was right. In fact Jack backed a winner!

In addition to Gallipoli, it covers his visit to Anzac Cove and the French Battlefields of 1914-18. Following this Jack did his own private tour but, because of the length of his article, we have only covered his story of Gallipoli and Anzac Cove, which we take up on the day he arrived on the Peninsula.

On Monday, April 23, we left by coach with our tour guide Ali for the Gallipoli Peninsula and he fed us with heaps of information. It is interesting to note that Turkey is divided or bisected by the waterways of the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles, so we have the Eastern or Asian side and the Western or European side. Total population of Turkey is 52 million and from my observation, most of them must live in Istanbul.

It was a most interesting trip as we travelled down the peninsula with the Sea of Marmara on our left. There is a lot of construction going on and blocks of units not yet occupied. A lot of the peninsula is now under cultivation with crops such as grain, onions, cucumbers, etc., and a lot is now being exported.

We reached the town of Gelibolu (Gallipoli) from which the peninsula derives its name. A quaint little town on the coast. It is a fishing village with a little boat harbour and a little open-air fish market on the footpath. It remains almost as it would have been in 1915. Small and rather dilapidated houses with red tiled roofs rough and uneven. A combined vehicular and passenger ferry runs between Gallipoli and Canakkale which is across the Dardanelles on the Asian side of Turkey.

I could not help but ponder on the fact that here we were at the town of Gallipoli and wonder how our troops could have felt if they had been in our position in 1915. They never made it!

Next morning, April 24, we left early for a tour of all Anzac positions and it seemed ironical that we were to enter the Anzac perimeter by land or "through the back door". It was only a comparatively short drive of 20 miles or so and we entered the Anzac perimeter near Gaba Tepe.

Our first stop was at the Queensland Point Cemetery also known as Hell Spit Cemetery which is near Brighton Beach and adjacent to Anzac Cove. Here we located the grave of Colonel Braund, 2nd Battalion which was predominantly a Newcastle Battalion. Also located and photographed the grave of John Simpson Kirkpatrick who served as, 202, Private J. Simpson and was killed on 19th May, 1915, aged 22. He of course, was the man with the donkey.

Next we were at Anzac Cove. It was deserted and we were able to walk right along the beach. It was an emotional experience standing on the beach and looking into the hills and gullies. It accentuated the almost impossible task given to the Anzacs. The beach is small and narrow and the hills so close and steep. I did bring back some stones from the beach. The whole area is now a National Park and no development has taken place since 1915. It is almost a wilderness and is covered by thick shrub and thorny bushes which is difficult

to penetrate unless on a defined track. However, in some areas trench lines, although almost filled in, are clearly discernible. Relics of the campaign can still be found and members of our party found shrapnel, cartridge cases, old tins, parts of an earthenware rum issue jar and, regrettably, human bones.

We saw Shrapnel Gully, Monash Gully, Ari Burnu, Gaga Tepe, Bolton's Ridge and then covered the whole area by foot and by coach. The explanations and history of all points were excellent. We were lucky as the main crowd had not yet arrived and we moved around all areas with ease.

We reached Plugges Plateau, Razorback, The Sphinx, The Nek, Watkins Ridge, Shell Green, Lone Pine, Courtneys Post, Steeles Post, Quinns Post, in fact every point of interest including the Turkish positions. We climbed up to Plugges Plateau and you get the impression you are heading for the summit but when you reach there you are faced with a sheer drop into another gully and then another steep climb up to the Lone Pine Ridge. It must have been a hell of a disappointment for the Anzacs on that first day but they pushed on and reached Lone Pine where they stopped on that first day and apart from some infiltrations, they did not advance any further during the whole campaign.

Courtneys, Steeles and Quinns Posts were perched along that ridge and were part of the front line. They are only small areas and the men in reserve were dug in on the side of the hill just below the ridge.

We took a break for lunch and drove back to Eceabat, a town on the Dardanelles opposite to Canakkale and which are both serviced by a combined vehicular and passenger ferry. We had lunch at a waterfront café and right opposite some enterprising Turkish "mine host" had renamed his establishment the "Bob Hawke Hotel".

Back to Anzac and visited the Shell Green Cemetery and saw the grave of Private R. O. Harwood of 2nd Battalion AIF. His sister Mrs Jean Milliedge and her son Jack Marion were with us as members of our party.

On to the Turkish Memorial, Turkish Museum, and then along the front line to Lone Pine, German Officers' Trench, Baby 700 and The Nek. This is where the ill-fated charge took place which was featured in the film "Gallipoli". The area is so surprisingly small and could not accommodate more than a company of men at any one time. With the Turks entrenched on the hill at Baby 700 they just had no chance of success.

It just seems unbelievable that that attack should have taken place and history tells us that when the Australian mission returned to the area in 1919 they found the bodies including those of the Turks still unburied. It was a very sombre experience to walk over that area.

We went on to make our final stop for the day at Hill 971. This was a commanding position with a complete 360 degree view of the whole area including a panoramic view of the Salt Lake and Suvla Bay. There is a viewing platform and we were given a full explanation by our tour leader Anthony Hall and in fact it was a very comprehensive coverage overall and everybody was more than satisfied.

It was natural for me to compare the Anzac area with the Siege of Tobruk and the big difference would be in size. The Tobruk perimeter from coast to coast was approximately 30 miles, whilst the perimeter at Anzac would be no more than 5 to 6 miles. Whilst there were some wadis or gullies on the Bardia side of the Tobruk perimeter the terrain at Anzac was a shocker in comparison and they were confined to such a small area. It seemed that almost any part of the Anzac area could have been in the range of small arms fire.

It was an early rise on Anzac Day. In fact it was 12.30 am as we had to catch a ferry at 02.00 back to Eceabat and on to Anzac where we arrived at 03.30 for the Dawn Service. A little early but we avoided the congestion as the roads are very narrow.

We were ushered to a VIP position and it was interesting to watch the arrivals. Many backpackers were still stretched out as they had camped overnight and were stubbornly ignoring requests to get up. Finally the Gallipoli Veterans arrived and they were brought in from the beach. They were greeted by applause although, unfortunately, there were a few "yahoos" present.

The Remembrance Service, to me, was rather disappointing. It started late, after dawn, with a band playing before the Service started. There were lights on before and during the Service including the lights of 12 naval ships anchored off shore and one even had the outline of a kangaroo in lights. It was more like a carnival or a political exercise. The Ceremony was brief but lacking in sincerity — never mind, we were there and it was a great experience to be part of it.

However, the Turks played their part. As the daylight showed up the hills we could see Turkish soldiers distributed throughout the foliage of the low rushes. It was a wonderful gesture and a great and realistic tribute.

The service at Anzac Cove was confined to a small area and there was an extremely large crowd present, consequently we were packed in pretty tightly but practically alongside me was the chap who sat next to me on the flight from Sydney and his mate. His mate was dressed in uniform and was a retired Admiral from the New Zealand Navy. He informed me that Geoff, also an ex-serviceman, was there for a very specific reason. His father was the Captain of the submarine which had breached the narrows in the Dardanelles in 1915 but was later sunk.

It took a very long time for the traffic, mainly coaches, to clear and then we drove up to Lone Pine Cemetery to await the Remembrance Service there at 12.30. Because of the crowd and traffic and congested narrow roads, we did not think it wise to endeavour to attend the International Service at Cape Helles at 10.30.

We had a long wait at Lone Pine but had plenty of time to look through the Cemetery which is the largest of over 30 cemeteries in the area, and also the Memorial which contained the names of over 3500 Anzacs who have no known grave and those who died whilst being evacuated and were buried at sea. The cemetery is situated on the area which separated the two opposing front line trenches and where such fierce fighting took place.

The Lone Pine Service was held in the Cemetery facing the Memorial. It commenced at 12.30 with another large crowd present. It was a very good service with two speakers, Bob Hawke and John Hewson. Bob Hawke's speech was very good and his voice broke at the end with emotion. Wreaths were laid and at the close of the Service I laid a wreath, which I had taken with me, on behalf of the Gallipoli Legion Club and The Rats of Tobruk Association.

On their arrival, the Veterans were greeted with applause and I was in a great position to photograph many of them and to speak to some. I was seated near them and met and had a yarn with Bill Hall, who is Patron of the First World War Veterans' Association, and was in charge of their party. Bill is also a Rat of Tobruk, and is currently President of the State Branch of the RSL Clubs' Association.

My Gallipoli Club coat and ROTA Badge attracted a bit of attention and I met two Army Corporals from HMAS Tobruk who laid the wreath

for the NSW Branch of the Rats of Tobruk Association. One's father was in the 2/34 Infantry Bn. at Tobruk. I also met an Australian Air Force helicopter pilot who was on standby to fly out any of the Veterans if necessary.

I strolled around and spoke with several other people then back to our coach to join the traffic and head back to our motel. After again crossing the Dardanelles by vehicular ferry we had time to look around Cannakkale which is a town of 40,000 people. There were quite a number of Australian and New Zealand soldiers in the area. Many of the Aussies had come over aboard HMAS Tobruk.

Our visit to Anzac had concluded but its memory will remain with me for all time. My admiration for the Anzacs and the Anzac Spirit can only be strengthened by the experience.

LAST POST

ALLAN STEFF, HQ Coy. 2/2, of Coleraine, passed away on March 25, 1990, at the age of 79 years. His wife, Connie, rang the secretary in August and apologised for not notifying the Association sooner. Our sincere sympathy to you and your family, Connie.

ROD TARR 2/1, of Kempsey, passed away on July 22, and our sincere sympathies are extended to Mrs Tarr and family.

N. ROSE 2/1, of Mathoura, passed away recently and we are grateful to Eric Causer, who had seen the notice in "Mufti", for passing on the news.

ROD STANDEN 2/2, of Sylvania, passed away on September 1, and we thank Roy Levy for notifying the Association.

KEVIN NEVILLE 2/2, of Padstow, passed away on September 14 after a stay in Concord Hospital, where he had been visited by Russ Harrison, Frank Cheal and Roy Levy. The funeral was conducted at Leppington Crematorium and was attended by Ray Harris, Vince Longmore, Bob Ginnane and Roy Levy, who read the Eulogy.

CLIFF ANDERSON 2/1, of Thornlands, Qld., passed away in Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital on September 15 and we thank his daughter, Carol Shepherd, for ringing us with the sad news.

MICK EGAN 2/2, of Bexley, passed away just after Anzac Day and we were notified of his death by the Permanent Trustees. No details were supplied.

EDNA EDMAN of Parramatta, passed away on October 1 and the funeral was conducted at Northern Suburbs Crematorium, with Roy Jardine and Jack Pearce in attendance.

Edna was the widow of George Edman 2/1, who was for many years a staunch committee member. Her daughter, June Jones, wished to thank the Pioneers and Rats of Tobruk members who attended the funeral.

ALBERT WILKINSON 2/1, of Narrabeen War Veterans Home, passed away on October 6, and the funeral was conducted at Rookwood Crematorium with Bill Tasker in attendance.

Albert had been on the Committee for many years until his move to Narrabeen.

Sympathy was extended to Mrs Clarke, sister of Albert, and we thank her for passing on the information.

RAY TOWNSEND 2/1, of Ryde, passed away on October 9 and the funeral was held at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium with Roy Jardine representing the Association.

North Ryde RSL Club was represented by Bill Aulesbrook, Welfare Officer of the club.

Our sincere sympathy was extended to the family and we thank Mrs Townsend for providing us with the details.

SOCIAL SECRETARY RESIGNS

At the Committee meeting on July 20, Gordon Finlay tendered his resignation as Assistant Secretary (Social) for health reasons.

Gordon has been Social Secretary since 1985 and, apart from his duties on Anzac Day, has given valuable support at all our country reunions and functions.

The Executive and Committee thank you most sincerely Gordon, for the close co-operation and assistance you have given the Association at all times and hope that you still give your continued support as a member of the Committee.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT, 1989-90

On the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the formation of both Battalions it gives me great pleasure to give you a resume of the activities of the Association during the past 12 months.

During the period under review three Committee and one Executive meetings were held at Redfern RSL Club which were well attended and when many matters and activities relating to the well being of the Association were discussed, debated and resolved. I might add that at all times such discussions were carried out in a most amicable manner and I wish to thank all members of the Executive and Committee for their input at such meetings.

Our highlight during the past year was the Anzac Day March and Dinner which were well attended. I sincerely hope that this year's events commemorating our 50th Anniversary are likewise, as your Committee has gone to no end of trouble to make this year one to remember. Special tribute must be bestowed upon Max Herron and Gordon Finlay for the tremendous task undertaken in organising the 50th Anniversary Reunion at Gosford coming up on June 2/3 this year, and also to Peg Herron who has acted a Chief Booking Clerk and made all arrangements for accommodation, etc.

The usual annual Brisbane Reunion was held at the home of John and Mollie Hunt on Saturday, October 28 last, and enjoyed by all who were able to attend. The Association's appreciation and thanks are conveyed to both of you.

The Association also takes this opportunity to thank those members in other States who are keeping up the tradition of the Association and forwarding news of such meetings to our Editors of *Pioneer News*. Keep up the good work.

Our Treasurer Vic Whitley keeps the Committee regularly apprised of our financial position which is in a more than satisfactory condition. Thanks Vic for a job well done, but, I must remind members that the cost of running the Association, especially the publication of *Pioneer News* increases every year and we rely entirely upon your generous support to carry on.

Unfortunately our Welfare Chairman Max Law suffered a massive stroke a few months ago and

following hospitalisation is now confined to a nursing home at Heathcote. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Max all the best and to his wife Joyce we extend our hopes that his complete recovery is not in the too far distant future. With the help of our Secretary and Bill Tasker we have endeavoured to carry out the Welfare work with hospital visitation and representations at the far too many funerals of our members. To the wives and families of those members who have passed on, we extend our deepest sympathy.

I am sure you will all agree that receipt of the *Pioneer News* is eagerly awaited by all members which after all is the eyes and ears of the Association. Congratulations to our Editors Max Herron and Bob Lake and to those of you who contribute. We also convey our thanks to the members of the wrapping Committee who give up quite a bit of time to get the news out on time.

Bill Tasker and Russ Harrison have completed distribution of the Front Line Medal, what a task. Both Bill and Russ carried out a most difficult operation in arranging collection and distribution of the medals. My thanks to both of you.

The same can be said of Vic Whiteley and Roy Jardine in relation to the sale of the Wine Cocks. Although the distribution of the Front Line Medal has been completed, I'm sure Vic and Roy will be only too pleased to dispose of a few more Cocks upon request.

Thanks are also due to Ray Harris who has represented the Association on 7th Division Association.

On behalf of the Association I would like to convey my appreciation firstly, to all the ladies who have so generously assisted during the year, we can't do without you; and secondly to the President and Directors of the Redfern RSL Club for the free use of the club facilities during the year for our Committee and annual meetings.

In conclusion a special tribute is due to both Max and Peg Herron for their untiring efforts in furthering the interests of the Association throughout the year and on behalf of all members I extend to both of you our most grateful thanks.

— BILL JOLLIE, President

2/1-2/2 PIONEERS, WA

Thanks to all who phoned or wrote with some news items. Dorothy Jenkins rang on behalf of her father, Steve Goldsworthy, who enjoys reading of his old mates. Maybe some would like to give Steve a ring, his number is 291 7115.

We had a cake and card ready at the July meeting for Norm Le Cornu's 75th birthday, what happens, he goes to hospital with pneumonia, best wishes Norm. Happy birthday also to Jack Monger and Ted Lyon on their 76th. Ted and Dorothy were travelling to Geraldton for a few days and hoped it may work in with our meeting, but it was not to be.

Had a phone call from Ken Duncan of Victoria, an ex 2/2 Sig. passing through on a tour, he sent regards to Jack Murray, Jack Crispin and George Bayliss. George is a member with an interesting story. He was a 2/2 Independent Coy member in Timor before joining the Pioneers, he can tell a few good fishing stories as well.

Victorian Reg Longmore phoned to say Hello on his way up north, likes to get a little bit of sunshine, did not get enough when he was here last time.

Dick Hobbly wrote regarding the wonderful time he and Sheila had at the Anzac Day in Sydney. Max Herron really turned on the VIP treatment. Dick was towing a caravan and heading around the top, on their way back home they met up with Vic Donald and his brother Bob, both ex 2/1 B Coy. Another interesting phone call, Bob Malone WX 2892, who was originally with the 2/2 but transferred to 2/21 Batt. then went to Ambon with Gull Force, Bob now lives at Midland.

Wally DeGruchy called in and had a chat, he lives in the town of Kondinin now while family carry on the farm. Owen Heron and John Anderson went to the 2/2 reunion in Victoria, it must have been pretty good as John has not shown up since.

Donations received towards postal and printing from Ted Lyon, Dick Hobbly, Freda Dhu, Joy Butcher, Hugh Vincent and Fred Newton, many thanks to you. Those attending our July meeting were: Barry and Millie Hunt, Freda Dhu, Owen

Heron, Jack and Joan Monger, Fred and Ivy Newton, Bob and Norma Sefton, John and Ethel McDougall, Syd Abercrombie, Joy Butcher and Joy and myself. Apologies were received from Jack Murray, Dick Hobbly and Ted Lyon.

Beth Lee phoned after the meeting, she would love to hear from anyone who knew her husband Don, he was a 2/2 "I" sec. member. Another from "I" sec. was Harold Lyford.

From an old mate Sid Booth came a letter filling in a lot of answers about the doings of old friends over the last 45 years. It was a great letter all about D Coy. 2/2, Sid wished to be remembered to Johnny Ure, anyone wishing to hear some of his news please let me know.

Took it upon myself to write to another old D Coy chap, Jack Allison, who was our acting platoon commander in New Guinea. Jack wrote back telling me that he and his wife had recently been to WA and had a lovely trip, more so as they won the trip in a competition.

A letter from Hugh Vincent of Floreat enclosing a copy of a letter sent to Max Herron regards lack of mention WA in unit records.

Max Herron sent the name of a new member, Gordon Buller ex "C" Coy, he lives at 16 Windich Street, Esperance.

From Jack Hocking came a complete 2/2 members roll, any one who wishes to write to old mates please let me know. Also with the name of another member, N. O. (Neil) MacPherson, c/o J. L. Pearce, 12A Woodall Ramble, Booragoon, WA.

Many thanks to both Max and Jack for your assistance with records. Lastly a letter from George Sauer in South Australia who read in our last newsletter of John Douglas, a very good friend, John now lives at Silver Chain Cottage Home, 21 Wright Street, Highgate, WA. George sends regards to friends of both units. Alby Machin, 2/1, now resides at the RSL War Veterans Home in Mt Lawley.

Hope to see you all next time, which is NOVEMBER 16, 1990.

Kind regards to all,

LEN PREEDY

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

This issue of mail bag is mainly on the Gosford 50th Anniversary Reunion, plenty of letters all commenting on the success of the show and congratulating Max Herron, his wife Peg, and the committee for organising same. I think that Max and the committee all realise that the success of any show is your turning up and we get our appreciation by your attendance.

JACK ALLISON 2/2, Eastwood, writes a letter with a substantial donation enclosed and his appreciation of the *Pioneer News*. He quotes that a phone call from Jack Henderson (played a bit of hockey together post 1945 for Eastwood) was welcome and sorry that Jack was not enjoying the best of health. Also had a letter from Len Preedy, West Aussie, and had not heard from since footslogging days. Jack did not have Len's address when he visited WA on a recent trip to Perth, a trip won on a travel show.

Jack has retired from teacher-training, as has his wife Barbara from teaching, and has flown the "retired flag" on trips to Cairns and the Flinders Ranges in SA last year. Still manages to have a game of bowls (a novice) and a shot at square dancing (a bigger novice) but enjoys both.

With regard to the history of the 2/2nd Pioneers, copies are very scarce, and our only suggestion is that you contact some member of 2/2 and possibly borrow a copy from them. Only one edition was printed and they all sold very quickly.

Have checked our members' roll, Jack, and have no record of Oyster Bay, so hope the news continues to arrive at Glendower Avenue, Eastwood.

DORA ANDERSON 2/1, Merimbula, on behalf of hubby Don, with a notice on the death of Fred Ness on July 18, 1990. Don had picked Fred up from the nursing home where he had resided and they had attended the local Anzac Day function together. Sadly enough, that was the last time that the Andersons saw him. Dora thanks us for sending him the *News*, as he really enjoyed reading same.

BOB BALDIE 2/1, Albert Park, with a sub for the *Pioneer News* and enquiries for the Front Line Medal. Max has personally written to you explaining what he has done and has told you that the delivery time for the medal is a bit behind due to production difficulties.

GORDON BELLMAINE 2/2, Frankston, with a cheque for the treasurer and many thanks for the pleasure that reading the *Pioneer News* gives him. It's great to keep up with the doings of former mates and sends best regards to all old Pie-and-Beers.

KEITH BOYLE 2/1, Moama, with a note saying thank you for a lovely weekend at Gosford, both from himself and Marj. Keith enjoyed meeting up with Frank Gillian, whom he hadn't seen since January, 1946, also Noel Grant who had been one of his tent mates. They called in to Mt Druitt on the way home to visit a sister, then off to Katoomba first night, second night at Temora and arrived home after a glorious weekend. Thank you for your letter and words of praise for the workers at Gosford.

FRED BROOKS 2/1, Taree, with some cash for the treasurer and a letter, quoting he would much rather read than write, and notifying us of the death of Alex Boyd. He enclosed a cutting from the local paper telling of Alex's prowess at bowls and his service in the 2nd AIF.

Fred often sees Bill Nicholson who still manages to walk to the local tavern and stagger back. Doubts whether he could make it over the Owen Stanleys, but his doctor says he is OK as long as he lifts nothing heavier than a silk nightie.

Closes with the news that both he and Gwen are well, along with their empire (now numbering 22), four fishing vessels, three dance bands and heading into their 14th year of retirement.

THELMA BUDGE, daughter of Baden Snowden 2/1, Shalvey, has requested the Front Line Medal on behalf of her deceased father, to add to her father's other medals. Max has been in touch with you, Thelma, and same will be posted to you

when available. Max has also placed your name on our mailing list for copies of the *News* when published.

ANNE BURNS, widow of Arthur (Scotty) Burns 2/1, with a big thank you for the *News* and words of praise for a wonderful reunion at Gosford. Her thanks go to Steve and Jan Morgan for providing her with transport and she met quite a few fellows who knew Scotty, so it was a night of memories. Thank you for the donation to funds Anne, and your kind wishes.

FRANK CAULFIELD 2/2, Benalla, with a cheque for the treasurer and that he thoroughly enjoyed the weekend at Gosford. Wishes that it was on again next year, and claims that if the army could have organised a show like this 50 years ago, no one would have wanted their discharge.

He was supposed to meet Joe Kyffin and Tom McNaughton at Woy Woy station on the Monday, but their train was an express so he missed them. On arriving at Central decided to do a Cook's tour. Went on the Monorail for a complete circle, then had a look at Darling Harbour, and Centrepont Tower. Meandered down to The Rocks and went into a pub for a beer. They charged \$1.95 for a middy — a bit of a shock after 70 cents at Gosford. Wandered from there down to the Quay and on to the Opera House, up through the Botanic Gardens, and Hyde Park and by now starting to feel the pinch headed back towards Central. Had a few middies at the Sydney RSL and then on to the train where he met Joe and Tom. Between the bar there and the club car on the train did not need any rocking on the trip home — just as well the conductor woke him up at Benalla, or he would have finished up in Melbourne.

Since returning has been on a trip with Betty to Mount Buffalo, where Frank saw snow for the first time. Has also been busy in the garden growing his own veggies (silly bugger) and a few flowers for Betty to make the place look a bit better.

Closes with best wishes to all and hopes to visit us all next year at the Annual Reunion.

RON CLARK 2/1, Kingsford, with a donation to the *News* and thanks to the Association for the wonderful job they are doing.

JACK COLLIS 2/1, Umina, with two letters, first to say what a great weekend at Gosford and the fact that we were all so close together and no distance to walk to the dinner made it so great.

Reports that Jack Coates has had a stint at Concord with skin cancers on his head and will have to attend for about six weeks. Bluey Miller was OK at last sighting. Also wishes to thank all the friends who have called in and visited his wife, Gwen, who has been in Concord for a long spell. At last report Gwen is home and managing well with the dialysis — Jack says he's the back-up and looks like an RAP job again.

Jack had a letter from Bill Wright saying that Jack Palmer, C Coy., passed away on the 9.8.90. Closes with best wishes and "he will buy the ticket, Lakey", for which I am extremely grateful.

RON COYTE 2/1, Wentworthville, with a cheque for "moneybags" and expressing his sympathy at the death of Ron Irwin. Also noticed that Ron Murray has been enquiring after him — the last time he had heard of Ron M. he was on his way to Japan in 1945.

Ron has not long returned from a holiday along the North Coast — Tweed, Bellingen, Dorrigo, Armidale — and claims that he is fortunate in that he has a very good co-driver in his wife, which lets him look about a bit.

Closes with best wishes to all and expressed his thanks to the Committee for the good job they are doing for all Pioneers.

MRS BILLIE DYNON, widow of Frank 2/1, with a thank you letter for the *Pioneer News* and expresses her thanks to George Nichols for visiting Frank so many times while he was in hospital. Thanks also to Bill Jollie and others who attended his funeral service.

Billie was most impressed by the closeness of men of our unit and how we have stuck together over the years. Many thanks for your cheque to the Association and the *Pioneer News* will continue to arrive in your mail box.

JIM GRAY 2/1, Pimbee, with two letters to the Association — first to say how much he enjoyed the first country reunion he had attended, although he did say that the Galaxy Motel was a little rich for him. He is not used to such luxury living and

he felt a little bit lost in the double bed. Then goes to write a "remember when" — nice to know that our memories still remain, Jim, after such a long period of time, and not all of them sad ones.

Jim has called in a few times to see Max Law at Heathcote and thinks he is much improved in speech and communication.

He also writes of ways and means of reducing the work load of the Committee and these were discussed at our last meeting. They will also be brought up again at our next meeting so I would suggest that you bring these ideas up then, Jim. Many thanks for your suggestions and for your support.

STUART HALDANE 2/2, Preston, with a note of thanks for the *Pioneer News* which covers news from all States and from members of both battalions. He sends his regards to all and some cash to keep the printing press rolling.

VERA HAMILTON 2/2 CCS, Blakehurst, and one of our nursing sisters on Johan-de-Witt, with a welcome donation to funds. Both Vera and nursing sister Sue Malcolm, 2/5 AGH, had a wonderful time at the Gosford Reunion and very happy to renew old friendships. It was great to have you both with us on such an occasion and we look forward to meeting up with you again.

MABEL HANNON, Shepparton, widow of Bob (Lofty) 2/1, with a sub for the *News*, per pen of daughter Ann Smith. Sorry to hear you have not been well and hope that you are now on the mend.

NOEL HIBBARD 2/1, Meadowbank, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that he had been plagued with asthma over the last 12 months. However, he has been able to play a little bowls at Denistone Bowling Club and was selected to represent the club in the No. 6 Pennant Team last season, coming third in the competition. Keep up the good work, Noel, and best of luck.

RICHARD HOOK 2/1, Lambton, with a thank you letter to Max and Peg for a wonderful weekend at Gosford. It brought back memories of people and places he had long forgotten. Said both he and Barbara enjoyed themselves immensely, and hope to meet up again in the not too distant future.

JACK HUMPHREY 2/1, Vincentia, with a donation to treasurer for the *News*. Says it always makes interesting reading and keeps him up to date with the Pioneers who are scattered all over the country. Jack is contemplating a move to Casino to be near one of his family who are also scattered — one in Geelong, one in Sydney, and a son near Casino. Don't forget to let us know your change of address, Jack, and hope by now you have received your Front Line Medal.

BERT HUTTLEY 2/2, Bloomsbury, Qld., with a cheque and a big thank you for the *News*. Says it creates a feeling of nostalgia when you read of your old mates and wonder if you would recognise them after so many years.

He attended the Anzac march and dinner at Proserpine, as he does on most occasions. Bert and his wife have taken up old time dancing again and go along once a month with the family — they enjoy the music and the outing and do a few steps together as well.

Bert sends a big hello to members of 1 Platoon, 2/2, who served in New Guinea and Borneo.

ROY LEADBETTER 2/2, North Rockhampton, with a welcome cheque and a change of address — you won't get writer's cramp, Roy, but many thanks for your good wishes and the donation to keep the *News* going. Your new address has been noted.

HARRY MOWBRAY 2/1, Cleveland, Qld., with words of praise to all for the organisation of the Gosford Reunion. Said both he and Dot could not fault any part of it, and the goodwill of all so very evident. Harry has not seen Harry Spreadborough since returning home, but he is looking forward to October when he plans to attend the reunion at the Hunts.

ERIC REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with a note of thanks to Max for his help with Eric's claim to Veteran Affairs for a disability pension, which has been granted. Glad to hear of this mate, and happy to know they helped with a bit of back pay too.

Joyce and Eric enjoyed their trip to Gosford, staying a night with Bert and Edna Sullivan 2/1, before going home, and another night with eldest daughter Heather at Hawkes Nest. Have had daughter Alison and children from Victoria staying over the

school holidays and Eric says the two young ones keep him moving. He and Joyce still do Meals on Wheels once a month, sometimes an extra day if short-handed.

Sends his best wishes to all especially old D Coy. Thanks for your cheque, Eric, will be passed on to worthy treasurer.

DON MURRAY 2/2, Tinonee, with a word of thanks for the reunion at Gosford and a cheque enclosed for the treasurer. Was most appreciative to Doug Waters, Larry Robson, Jack and Jean Bertram for help with transport. Hope you are well, Don, and taking things easy.

JOE ROBERTSON 2/2, Findon, SA, with a letter of congratulations for the Gosford show — accommodation was first class, the smooth running of the whole weekend was something that had to be seen to be believed, and the hospitality of the RSL was great. It was a long way to come, but the effort was well worth the long journey. It was also good to meet up with old mates not seen for many a year. Joe enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and our thanks for a nice letter — it is good to know that those who came really enjoyed the weekend.

GEOFF ROBINSON 2/1, Quaama, also with a note of thanks for a very pleasant and memorable weekend at Gosford, and Enid especially asked that Peg be thanked for such good accommodation — it made her visit so much more convenient and comfortable. It was a great reunion and most voted it the best ever.

Best wishes to you both and your cheque has been passed on to the treasurer.

JOHN RYAN 2/2, Narooma, with a cheque for subs and writes that is good to keep up with the doings of the Pioneers over the years. Jack was only with the Pioneers for a short time at Greta in the '40s, but it is still good to receive the News.

FRANCES SHEA, widow of Col 2/2, with a cheque and short note saying it is good to read the News. She also recognises a few of the names, some she has met and others she had heard Col speak of. Sends regards to all members and best wishes to Max and Peg.

DOUG SHEARSTON 2/1, Forster, with a letter to say that he and Roma had been on a bus trip with the local RSL had lunch at Singleton, and then continued on to Singleton Military Camp to the museum. No wonder Colonel Peter Cosgrove spoke so highly of the museum, it is something that has to be seen to be believed.

Roma is well, her eye completely healed (what did you hit her with, Doug, a broadaxe?) and Trevor has finished his latest book and hopefully a best seller.

A second letter from Doug with the news that Jim McDonald of Tuncurry was in Taree Hospital for a stomach operation and was in intensive care. Doug speaks highly of the care at the hospital and says the ward sister had informed him that Jim's recovery would take time.

Doug reports that he was made a Life Member of Forster Bowling Club recently and as they only appoint one each year, he doesn't have much company. There are only two others, the rest are all deceased. Congratulations, Doug, you will soon have more Life Memberships than days in the week.

CEC SLOGGETT 2/2, Gunnedah, per pen of wife May, as Cec unable to write on account of eye problems, and awaiting operation. They have been confined to the house but hope to get going again once the op is over. Sorry to have missed the last reunions through health reasons, but apart from Cec's eye problem they are both well. Closes with best wishes to all and enclosed a cheque for worthy treasurer. Hope you have had your operation by now, Cec, and well on the road to recovery.

HARRY SPREADBOROUGH 2/1, Alexandra Hills, Qld., with a letter to say he has not been enjoying the best of health for some time suffering with pains in head and hips. Finally the doctor came up with Paget's Disease and put him on medication which, after six months, has vastly improved the condition. Hopes to attend the reunion at John Hunt's home in October, providing his driver will take him. Jean says he doesn't look so much like a zombie now.

Both hope to attend the Rats of Tobruk show next year and afterwards are going to the ACT for a tour of same. Harry has not been there since 1945, so you will notice a few changes.

Last July they attended a Rats meeting at Kyogle

and met up with Jim Hall, Jack Martin and Jack Shearman. Said he thinks there were a couple of other Pioneers, but his old brain could not remember their names.

Sends best regards to all and will be in touch later on.

MARY TARR, Kempsey, widow of Rod 2/1, with a note to Jack Collis that her husband had passed away on July 22, 1990. Rod had been a TPI since 1985 and he always regretted that he was unable to attend our reunions, but did enjoy receiving and reading the *Pioneer News*. Despite his health problems he managed to do his bit to assist ex-servicemen and was awarded Life Membership of the local RSL.

Many thanks for your letter, Mary, keep your chin up and the News will be sent to you as usual.

PHILIP TONKIN 2/1, Sylvania, with a letter and cheque for subs and the Front Line Medal. Said his chance meeting with Bert Woodhouse and Nan at Adelaide River in 1988 brought back interest in the 2/1, whom he had joined at Kairi on the Tablelands, and had enjoyed reading the history of the battalion.

He also talked on the phone to Syd Abercrombie in Perth, also at Bert's instigation. Phil relieved Syd at Tempadeong in 1945 and was present when Mick Duncan was killed out on a patrol with only weeks to go before the surrender.

Many thanks for your letter, Phil, now you have caught up with us, keep it up.

BILL THIELE 2/1, Flinders Park, SA, per pen of wife Betty, who writes that she does the writing while Bill does the talking. They both enjoyed the reunion and said it made the long trip from SA really worthwhile.

On the trip home they called in at the War Memorial in Sydney and were surprised to see a copy of the 2/1 Pioneer history on display.

Bill sends his regards to all his mates and enjoyed meeting up with them again after 45 years.

GERT VICKERY, Goulburn, widow of "Snow" 2/1, with a welcome letter and a donation to Association funds. Says 58 Citizen Street is in the throes of having a face-lift and she is pleased with the progress so far — guttering replaced and roof painted.

Has had a few calls from Pioneers passing through Goulburn and extends her thanks for the kind thoughts, and has managed to be home when a few called or phoned. Was happy to see Peg and Vic Whiteley, and met the Finlays and Lakes in the park for a short while some months ago.

Glad you enjoyed reading of the reunion, Gert, and many thanks for your good wishes. All the best to you from your "Pioneer family" and keep well.

MRS THELMA KELLY, widow of Bill Kelly 2/1, has applied for a War Widows Pension and would like to hear from anyone in the unit who could verify that Bill commenced his consumption of alcohol as a result of war service. Please contact Mrs Kelly at 2 Donnelly Avenue, Wagga Wagga 2650.

● That concludes the Mail Bag for this issue, but I will just add a little regarding our Safari in September. After the reunion at Gosford, we decided that a rest was necessary, so we just set off. Organised by our fearless leader Gordon Finlay, the safari of five cars left Sydney on September 1. The convoy consisted of five cars — Herrons, Kerslakes, Walkers, Finlays and Lakes headed south west for 15 days. Following the usual highways we arrived at Young first night, second night at Hay, looked up Mick Tassell and spent a couple of pleasant hours with him. Spent four days in Wentworth, on to Nhili, one night, through Grampians to Stawell (where Eric Causer 2/1 and wife Doff joined us for the night), through Minyip, Sea Lake, to Swan Hill, two nights, Narrandera, Leeton, Cootamundra and Canberra. Had trips on the river boats both at Wentworth and Swan Hill, on the Darling River at Wentworth and the Murray at Swan Hill. Both rivers were in flood and predictions were for further risings. Sounds like a rushed trip, but we had plenty of time really and we enjoyed it immensely. Had time every night for a few ales, and after our dinner, which we had at RSL clubs or in pubs in Victoria, we would all meet in one motel room for our next day's briefing and partake of a port or two before retiring for the night. All in all we enjoyed the trip, travelled about 2200 km and once again, on behalf of us all, our thanks must go to Gordon, or as Kerslake dubbed him, the "Minister for Misinformation". — LAKEY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Floreat Park, WA

Hon. Secretary, 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn

Dear Max,

Thank you for the July *Pioneer News*, which I read with interest as always, particularly the coverage of the 50th Anniversary celebrations, undoubtedly a great success and a credit to the people who spent so much time organising and a display of loyalty by those who supported the events.

On reading the account of the reformation of the 2/2 Pioneer Bn. I was disappointed that no mention was made of troops joining that unit beyond the boundaries of NSW and Victoria.

May I speak on behalf of an extremely fine contingent of Western Australians who were drafted to the unit at Christmas 1943 while stationed at Bushmead Camp, Western Australia. 81 AIF NCOs and ORs, a number approaching Coy. strength. These were no raw recruits but men who had undergone rigorous training at Northam camp for up to and over 12 months, many of them with pre-war militia experience. The purpose of the ITB was to provide re-inforcements to the three infantry units of the 24th Brigade, 9th Division. When it was decided to return that Division to Australia all personnel in the ITB were sent to various units and I venture to state that no better re-inforcements were ever received by the commanders concerned. Perhaps their worth was evidenced by the fact that on becoming members of the 2/2 all NCOs had to relinquish rank, without exception those men were all later promoted.

On a Bn parade in Queensland prior to embarkation to New Guinea we were addressed by Major Aitken, 2IC and at the time acting CO. He paid a tribute to the Western Australian members of the unit and stated that they were the equal of the best soldiers in the Bn.

Historians are seldom provided with complete details and the passing of time dims the memory of those who participated in events. I write as one who was proud to have served with those men, a number of whom are still my dear friends.

I hope my account is of some interest.

Yours faithfully,

HUGH VINCENT 2/2

Hill End, NSW

Dear Max,

I am writing to give you a run down on Captain Fred Ness who passed away on July 14.

When the war finished, they called for volunteers to go to Japan for an occupation force and we finished up in the 65th Battalion; 34th Infantry Brigade with 'Fred' in charge of the Pioneer Platoon. We were stationed at Fukuyama which is on the coast of the Inland Sea.

In 1946 the unit started up company athletic teams and Fred was our coach. Then we had inter-unit sports and the winners going into the Brigade Athletic team of which Fred became the coach. We had meets against the NZ forces and the Air Force.

Then in the winter the Brigade Headquarters acquired a ski chalet up in the mountains for the use of Australian troops and nurses, where they spent time learning to ski and having a break. Fred was in charge of the Chalet and each winter we would go up there.

When I came home Fred was still in Japan and later on he went to Korea with the 1st Battalion and then with the 3rd Battalion. He was awarded an MID in Korea and upon making enquiries about him at a later stage I was informed he had been killed. Apparently this was not correct.

I have a few photos of Fred taken in Japan and if you could give me the particulars of any relative I will send them to that person.

Regards

RON MURRAY

EDITORS NOTE:

Thank you Ron for your very interesting story on Fred Ness. The only contact we have is Miss Norma Brown, 161 Raglan Street, Mosman, NSW. This was in the death notice.

SEASONAL GREETINGS

As this is the last publication of *Pioneer News* for this year, I would like to convey to all members and their families the Seasons Greetings for the coming year.

— BILL JOLLIE, President