

PIONEER NEWS

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THE 2/2nd AUST. PIONEER BATTALION

A series in three parts covering the Battalion from its re-formation in June 1942 to the 50th anniversary in 1992.

Part 1 — The move to Kapooka Camp

Part 2 — Training and other activities up to departure from Kapooka in September 1942.

Part 3 — Operations and activities of the Battalion after leaving Kapooka to war's end and activities of Battalion Associations up to the 50th anniversary of re-formation in June 1992.

Part 1 appears in this edition of *Pioneer News*. Parts 2 and 3 will appear in the two remaining issues to be published this year.

Part 1 — The MOVE TO KAPOOKA CAMP

The tragic end to the Allied campaign in Java in March 1942 saw the passing of members of the 2/2nd Australian Pioneer Battalion into captivity after heroic service and resistance to Japanese onslaughts.

The baggage and stores party arrived back in Australia after having travelled from the Middle East in slow moving ships, one of which had been at sea for 11 weeks. These ships contained transport, ammunition and other stores which would have been invaluable to the troops in Java. These ships had not been able to proceed to Java due to their slow speeds and the great speed of the advance of the Japanese forces.

Australian Army authorities decided that the Battalion would be disbanded and the troops transferred to other units in the Adelaide area.

Rumours began circulating of the Battalion being re-formed and late in May 1942, orders were issued for that to take place at Kapooka Camp, a few miles from Wagga Wagga, a city in southern New South Wales.

JUNE 1942, FIRST DRAFT

The first draft, from Victoria, consisting of five officers and 400 other ranks, which included a number of those who had returned after service in the Middle East, arrived at Wagga Wagga in late June, 1942.

The second draft followed in mid July and consisted of four officers and 308 other ranks from No. 1 Pioneer Training Battalion in Bathurst in New South Wales.

The Victorian contingent spent about two weeks at the Wagga Wagga Showground. Within days an Australian Rules football team was formed and in their first match easily accounted for a team of RAAF personnel from the Forest Hills base.

The first Church Parade was conducted by Arch-deacon West on June 28.

There was a need for experienced NCOs and while these were being trained and training programmes organised, the troops were sent on route marches and engaged in physical exercises during that period.

Those in the Bathurst contingent remember well that cold frosty morning in July 1942 when they arrived in Wagga Wagga. The troop train drew into the siding and orders were given to de-train. Thoughts as to what the future held were soon dispelled as the troops formed up and marched to the Showground, where a hot breakfast was served. After the meal, many congregated around the sawyers in the kitchen area trying to warm frozen feet and hands. Wagga Wagga seemed to be even colder than Bathurst.

With the arrival of the Bathurst contingent, the Battalion was close to full strength and concentration of the troops in Kapooka Camp began. The hills and gullies soon rang to the shouting of orders and sounds associated with building an army camp and settling in.

FIRST IN KAPOOKA CAMP

The 2/2nd Pioneers became the first Battalion to occupy Kapooka Camp. The re-formed Battalion contained a sprinkling of original 2/2nd officers and men who had seen action in Syria as well as officers and men of the 2/1st Pioneers who had served in the Western Desert and who were veterans of Tobruk. Also joining the Battalion were officers who had served with Pioneer Rifle Companies in the Northern Territory.

The troops were allotted to their respective companies, namely HQ, A, B, C and D, and then formed into platoons, then sections and finally tent occupants. Friendships formed during that period have lasted to the present day. Nicknames began to appear — Lofty, Shorty, Curley, Bluey, Softy, Granny, Rocky Ned, Stumblebum, Deserthead, Blockhead, Rags, Spag, Tanglefoot, Paddles, Hobbly, Darky, Snowy and so on — names that still can be heard today when old mates meet.

It did not take long for the men to appreciate being members of a famous battalion with a proud history of achievement in often the most difficult of situations. The 2/2nd Pioneers had served with distinction in the Syrian Campaign and in the short Java campaign. What the Java campaign contributed to the final Allied victory is incalculable. The enemy admitted to 500 casualties and was never convinced that such a small force could hold up his numerically superior army. The caution and delay imposed on the Japanese, who up to that time had enjoyed rapid and comparatively easy victories, may well have saved Australia from the horrors of invasion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion History (E. F. Aitken) — *Pioneer News* March 1982 — September 1982 — April 1990 — Bob Ginnane — Ray Harris — Russ Harrison — Allan McInnes — Bill Robertson.

CALL FOR STORIES

It would be appreciated if former members of the 2/2nd Pioneers would be prepared to supply anecdotes, stories, recollections, memories, poems and any items suitable for inclusion in Parts 2 and 3 of the series which commences in this issue of *Pioneer News*. Please forward all material to Russ Harrison, 39 Norfolk Road, Epping NSW 2121 (phone [02] 876 5880).

GOSFORD REUNION

Applications received to date number 130 and the Galaxy and Rambler Motels were fully booked out in January. However, additional bookings have been arranged at the Gosford Motor Inn, just up the highway from the RSL.

Deposit of \$30 is required for each room booking but it is necessary for catering purposes that ALL persons attending fill out and send in the application form below. Form also applies to persons arranging own accommodation. Cheques for bookings to be made out to P. HERRON, not Association, and posted with application form to Mrs. P. HERRON, 3 ENOGGERA RD., BEVERLY HILLS 2209. Phone (02) 759 5491.

GOSFORD REUNION — SEPT. 26 and 27, 1992

SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME	
LADIES NAME	PHONE	UNIT
ADDRESS		
TICK — NIGHTS: FRI SAT SUN MON CAR TRAIN		
TICK — REUNION DINNER PICNIC FAREWELL LUNCH DINNER		

KAPOOKA CHAPEL APPEAL

Kapooka Army Camp at Wagga Wagga is the point of entry into the Australian Army for all male and female general enlistees.

Sadly, as Kapooka has grown, the state of the Chapels from which the padres work and in which many thousands, including 2/2nd Pioneer Bn in 1942, have worshipped has deteriorated to the extent that they are approaching the end of their useful life. They are, in fact, the last of the World War II buildings still in use in Kapooka.

A group of service personnel and Wagga business people have formed a committee to promote the construction of a new Chapel, dedicated to Australian soldiers who have died in the service of their country. Constructed at Kapooka, the home of the Australian soldier, the Chapel will provide a focus for the spiritual needs of all soldiers.

The Gallipoli spirit will be engendered when the Chapel dream is realised. A block of stone from the scene of the famous World War I battlefield will take a prominent place in the Chapel to signify the sacrifice that is part of soldiering and to preserve the Anzac legend. The rock was brought to Australia on HMAS "Tobruk" after the 75th Anniversary of the Anzac landing at Gallipoli in April, 1990.

The foundation was completed in January, 1992, and work has commenced on the building. The Army will ensure that, wherever appropriate, the special skills of soldiers will be brought to the project. To complete the task, the Chapel Committee need \$1.2 million and at this stage have raised \$780,000 from various sources. Donations have come from the Army, 1st Recruit Training Bn., citizens of Wagga, RSLs, churches, corporate bodies, ROTA Branches and other Associations.

If any members of our Association are willing to make a personal donation to this worthy cause, please send direct and include your Unit with your name and address to:

Australian Soldiers' Chapel Appeal
Kapooka NSW 2661

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

By President LEN PREEDY

The meeting on November 15 was well attended and a happy affair. Apologies were received from Fred Newton, Bill and Hazel Sutton, Norm LeCornu and Bob Bally. Fred and Norm were in Hollywood hospital and Bill was due to go in.

Those attending were Barry and Millie Hunt, Jack and Joan Monger, Ethel and John McDougall, Jack Murray, Syd Abercrombie, Neil Macpherson, Owen Herron, Beth Lee, Freda Due, Joy Butcher, Jack Stewart and Lorna and Mac English from Melbourne. Mac is V/P of the 2/2 over there. It was very nice to have their company. Received a phone call from Dick Holey from Esperance with apologies.

Joan Monger passed on the information about the recent death of an ex-2/1 man by the name of Pryor. He was buried in the Guildford cemetery on November 7. Donations to our expenses were gratefully received from Hazel and Bill Sutton who live in Wongan Hills, J. Murray, D. Holey, J. Butcher, B. Lee, F. Due.

The ladies received a nice little gift from Barry, one of his ornaments made from natural woods, they are really first class Barry, thank you. I rang Hollywood to enquire about Bill Sutton since our meeting, only to find I had missed him by a day, sorry Bill. Received a letter from Ted Hansen, president of the 2/2 advising that the "Back to Java" trip had been dropped owing to lack of support.

I have just rung the Fitzgeralds and spoke to Gwen, she reminded me that Harry is 83 now and not as active as he was, Gwen has some leg problems, this all makes the journey in from Gosnells rather difficult. They send best wishes to all. It was nice to catch up with Nev O'Connor on his recent trip over, it has been a long, long time.

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

The first issue of our paper for 1992 and may we wish all members and their families the very best of good health for the coming year. We are all getting that little bit older, so good health is a very big thing. Now to the letters —

SID ABERCROMBIE 2/1, West Australia, with a letter to the Secretary and an apology for not having written sooner and congratulate all for keeping the flag flying over so many years. Tells that Len Preedy is doing a good job in WA and, although not too many 2/1sts over in the West, they do show up when Len calls a meeting to show their appreciation. Enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and hopes for the continuance of the Association and best wishes for the New Year.

BERT BEATON 2/2, Victoria, per pen of wife Olive, with a cheque for the treasurer and best wishes to all for 1992. It's a while since Olive put pen to paper, as she says Bert keeps telling her to write — so much easier to tell others what they should do, isn't it. Bert has not had a good year, in and out of hospital, and has finished up with a total hip replacement. He has made a very good recovery and manages to do a fair bit of work on the farm.

They both love to hear of our activities but say travelling is a little hard for them. It's a bit risky to get sick so far from your own Dr. and hospital if Bert gets a turn, even though Gosford sounds tempting. Be a big girl, Olive, and take the risk, you won't regret it.

They still enjoy life on the farm, have had good rains and the economy slowly rising — only the two of them there and plenty of family support. Many thanks for the invite for Peg and Max, they will keep it in mind when travelling in your area. Thanks once again for your letter and donation.

KEITH BOYLE 2/1, Moama, with a letter to the Association and a cheque for the treasurer, and the news that healthwise they have not been the best. However, Marj gets about a lot of her scooter and can do so without Keith having to go with her on trips to push the wheel chair.

At the time of writing Keith was having a bad trot with motors — first the motor in the car blew up, then the mower, and the whipper snipper, so had to use up quite a bit of the money saved up for the Gosford trip, but all are going again now. Everyone seems to go through these black spots, Keith, everything gives up the ghost together.

Have been kept on their toes with visitors, but nice to see them and catch up with friends and relatives. Closes with best wishes and hopes to see us at Gosford.

CYRIL AMIES 2/1, Thornleigh, per pen of Doris, with their annual doings and a Xmas card, very nicely painted by Cyril.

Cyril has had two trips to hospital this year firstly with bursitis, then with an ear infection which needed an operation to improve the quality of his hearing. Hope your tests in December showed a big improvement, Cyril.

Travel this year has been minimal — a rushed trip to Brisbane and a few days in Nowra the extent of their travels. Doris is still teaching and with four school terms and so many of the students at the High School where she is teaching of ethnic backgrounds, they require a lot of help. Closes with best wishes to all.

LES BRITT 2/1, Cairns, with a short note enclosing sub for the treasurer and the information that his brother, who had served in the RAAF in the Pacific Campaigns, had passed away in November. Our sympathy to you, Les, and your brother's wife and family.

JACK COATES 2/1, Umina, with a sub for the treasurer and to report that at the November meeting of the Central Coast ROTA Ivor Garnon was in attendance, and slowly recovering from Ena's sudden passing. Also present were Blue and Edna Miller, Harry and Glad Hamer, with Jack Collis in the chair.

Jack was going to Narrabri at the end of November, medical commitments permitting. He was at Concord for treatment on more skin cancers and his eyes. There was a melanoma among the

incisions done last month, so a watch to be kept on that too. Jack quotes that the big one done in May is in remission, so he will play for the Tigers for a few more seasons. Has to see the ortho wallah yet, to see what's cooking there. You must get tired of travelling round the hospitals and doctors, Jack, the Repat need to pay you travelling time, or a cheque in lieu. Closes with best wishes and will see us all Anzac Day.

DICK COBBLE 2/1, Ballina, with a change of address from Loftus. After the death of his wife, he decided to sell up and move north and has settled into a nice three bedroom villa. Has joined the RSL Bowling Club and plays golf — not a bad life, he says, much better than Milne Bay. We have not heard any news of Tom Bye for some time, Dick. Was still in North Queensland at last report.

EUNICE COULON niece of George Brooks 2/1 deceased, with a thank you to all Pioneers for messages of sympathy in the loss of her uncle and for sending her a copy of the *Pioneer News*. Thank you, Eunice, and for the donation forwarded with George Walker.

JACK COLLIS 2/1, Umina, apologises for the lateness of his letter, but said time caught up with him. Reports that Ivor Garnon was operated on early February for a knee replacement and while at Gosford Hospital saw Harry Hamer who was visiting his wife, Glad. She was in hospital for physio treatment for leg problems. Jack is also having treatment on his left shoulder for a muscle which has become detached and looks as if he has left it too late for treatment.

However he's looking forward to the reunion in September. Son William sails for the Gulf again on HMAS Darwin and won't be back until the end of August. All the best, Jack, hope to see you Anzac Day.

RON COYTE 2/1, Wentworthville, with a note and cheque for treasurer. His wife has been in hospital and has had a mitra valve inserted in the heart. Hope she is doing well now, Ron, and that her blood has stabilised. Max has written to you Ron, so you know that you have to register for Gosford for catering at the dinners, even if you don't need accommodation.

BETTY CREASY, widow of George 2/1, Portland, with the news that she too had been in hospital late last year. However, she is now on mend and hopes to make it to Gosford in September. She heard from Bill Wright and Bonnie Snudden over the Xmas period, and said both were well. Has been spending some time with daughter Joy and family at Killarney Vale and said her grandsons had quite a successful school year. Nice to hear they are doing well, Bet.

ALLAN CRUTE 2/1, Woolgoolga, per pen of wife Beulah, have not quite decided on the Gosford trip yet, but wrote to tell of a new grandson, Thomas James, born October, 1991, and weighed in at 9 lb 15oz. It is a second son to their son Dennis and his wife Christine, of Parkes. Congratulations to all and hope all are well.

Both Beulah and Allan were very sad to hear of the passing of Gwen Collis — such a lovely lady. Do hope you can make it to Gosford later in the year and best wishes to both.

JACK GRIFFITHS 2/1, Mayfield, with a letter to Max re Gosford, but not a lot to report from Newcastle. The Newcastle "Rats" are still going strong, although dropping in numbers, and the Gallipoli Legion is going great guns. Jack is still President of both clubs.

He was to attend an interesting function on September 14 to make a speech and unveil a plaque in memory of the Polish Carpathian Brigade at the Polish Hall in Maitland, to mark the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Tobruk Siege. They are a friendly crowd and you can always be assured of a good night. Esme is still keeping fairly well and both are looking forward to seeing us all at Gosford.

TOBY HALE 2/1, Kyogle, with a letter and cheque for the treasurer. He is still keeping well and often sees Jack Shearman. When he attends the Rats meeting he sees Bruce McNaughton, Ted Felton and a few others. Paddy Gray has not been well and Toby has not seen him for quite a while. Toby still exhibits his fowls with some success at the local shows. They need a lot of rain in the area, it is very dry and lots of bushfires. Sends his best regards to all Pioneers, especially to Max and Peg.

IRENE HEPBURN Bankstown, wife of Frank,

with a letter saying that Frank has been discharged late last year from Concord and was now in Woodstock Nursing Home, which was moving to new premises in Padstow in December. Frank has had a bad year with several trips to various hospitals with heart attacks and we hope that 1992 may see an improvement in his health. One thing, Irene, Padstow will be a little closer to you for visiting — it's a long trek from Bankstown to Lady Davidson or the Narrabeen War Vets.

Thank you for your Xmas greetings and our best wishes to you and Frank for the New Year.

BERT HUTTLEY 2/2, Queensland, with a letter thanking us for sending the news so regularly. It's good to be kept in touch, especially when you are so far from most of us. He did not attend the Anzac March at Proserpine this year owing to a bad attack of gout, which he gets two or three times a year.

Bert recently had a trip with his son Bill and his three grandsons west to the Stockmans Hall of Fame at Longreach, back through Emerald where they visited an opal mine, and found it very interesting. Did not have any rain during the trip, but within a few days of arriving home had three inches. A town 50 miles away had 12 inches — when it rains in the North it certainly falls down. (Sydney has had their share at time of writing, Bert, 16 inches recorded for the weekend.)

TED JENSON 2/1, Doonside, with a letter to the Association and his deposit for Gosford. Reports that Don Barraclough was in Sydney in August for a surprise party for his 70th birthday at Rockdale Bowling Club. Ron and Jan Callaghan were also present, as were Ted and Marie. In passing regards to Mick Roberts, Les Gavel and the rest of the Riverina troops, Ted said now they were all on cheap train fares accommodation can be had at Jensions at Doonside so be in it — them's Ted's words, not mine, but I do back him up for what it's worth (Lakey). So book in fellas (free of charge). Ted hopes to hear from you.

BILL JOHNSON 2/1, East Bentleigh, with a thank you for the news and a cheque for the treasurer. He enjoys and appreciates hearing about old mates.

Was especially pleased to read about Don Anderson of Merimbula, an old mate he had not seen since he was discharged. They were in the same platoon. Will look him up when next in Merimbula.

He and Mavis still have fond memories of the reunion of 1990, one of the highlights being meeting up with Bert Sullivan and his wife Edna. Closes with best wishes and special mention for all concerned with the publication of *Pioneer News*.

STAN JONES 2/1, Collaroy, with a letter stating he had not made his yearly donation (asks do we think it is a state of old age). No comment! He was in Queensland over the Anzac period last year, but hopes to grace us with his attendance this time.

Quotes that President Bill's report was a gem and passes his regards on to him and pleased to know that his health is improving.

Nice to hear from you, Stan, your smiling face was noticeable by its absence last Anzac Day, but hope you can remedy that this year.

JACK KEMPNIICH 2/1, Fingal Bay, per pen of wife Maisie, with a nice letter to Max and Peg and a deposit for Gosford. Mais has given away all the razzamataz that goes with the festive season, feels as long as they can see or hear from their family all is well. They see a little more of their younger daughter than they used to, but as she works it is not often. Elder daughter, Lenore, lives in Armidale and Jack has been up a few times the last year to help out with the building of their new home.

They had a call from Jack Bertram to let them know of the death of Ena Garnon, and the Bertrams and Larry Robson were hoping to pop into Fingal Bay shortly. Also had a call from Gert Vickery, widow of "Snow", while on a visit to her daughter at Xmas. Gert had been in hospital for a gallstone operation, done with the modern technique, and said she hadn't felt so well for years.

Jack had also been in hospital in December to have his appendix out, had a few complications and a rather long recuperation because of the mess that had to be cleaned up inside. However, Mais says he's OK now and busy watching for a low tide to get bait for fishing.

Have not had any news of the Sloggets since their last letter to Mail Bag, so cannot fill you in on that

score. Maybe will read this and put pen to paper once again. Thanks for the letters, Mais, and best wishes to you both.

GEOFF LLOYD 2/2, SA, with a brief note and enclosing deposit for Gosford, and sub for treasurer. Ronnie is much better and he's doing fine, and looking forward to the reunion in September. Sends regards to all Pioneers and greatly appreciates the arrival of *Pioneer News*.

SUE MALCOLM 2/5 AGH nursing sister, Coffs Harbour, with a note to get financial seeing that another reunion in the offing. Says having to book so far ahead is like going overseas, but can understand the reason for it. She will be arriving at Gosford late on Friday night, says she could not face up to that 2 am start from Coffs again — claims it was like a nightmare and no help from the railway people. Reckons that Max and Peg are bricks to be taking on another reunion, but she is all for it. Sue suffers from vertigo now, even has a walking stick, which she hates as she keeps losing the dashed thing.

Best wishes, Sue, and Vera has attended to the motel booking at the Galaxy.

JOE MOORE 2/1, Warwick Farm, with a sub for the treasurer and a thank you for the *Pioneer News*. He hopes to be moving to Tasmania, outside Hobart, shortly. His son is looking for a house with a few acres away from the smog and pollution in the area where he now lives. Good luck, Joe, but who is going to look after the few acres for you — you should be trying to cut down on the work load now. However, all the best in your new venture.

HARRY MOWBRAY 2/1, Qld., with a sub for the treasurer and an apology for not sending more cards on their overseas trip. Dot broke her wrist and this caused them some problems. They had a good time, Berlin a very clean and nice city, and walked through the Brandenburg Gate. Bought a Russian fur hat with badge off a Soviet soldier for \$6 and will bring it along to Gosford. Also met some Polish soldiers of WWII who served at El Alamein, but not Tobruk, and had a few scotches with them and a good yarn. Max has sent you on the missing *Pioneer News*. Closes with best wishes to all for the New Year.

JEAN MCINTYRE, widow of Jack 2/2, Warrimoo, writes a few lines in Xmas card to Max and Peg that she took delivery of a new hip last June. She is fine and now walking without a stick and driving her car. Sends best wishes for another successful year. Thanks, Jean, and glad to hear you are doing well.

TOM McNAUGHTON 2/2, Victoria, with a donation to funds and a deposit for Gosford for both he and Joe Kyffin 2/1. They both live in Reservoir and see one another regularly. Tells that Frank Caulfield 2/2 had been in hospital, so he and Joe went up to Benalla to see him. He was looking like a king and jumping out of his skin. They drive down the street for a run and — of course — the car wouldn't pass the pub. All went in for a few snorts, drove Frank home, then he and Joe returned to Melbourne, about 2 hours drive. What a good day!

JOHN PITMAN 2/1, Boomi, with a cheque for the treasurer and said it was about time he honoured the Association with a few dollars. He has not seen any of the old gang for ages, but sends a big thank you for the *Pioneer News* which keeps him in touch and he really enjoys reading.

LEN PREEDY 2/2, WA, with a letter to Max that he had a nice meeting with Nev O'Connor and his wife Betty when they were in Perth for a Legacy Convention. Apologies to Nev for the price of beer in WA. Len's letter was written on Remembrance Day, and he said he still remembers eating cucumbers found in a native garden with another 2/2 Bill Burke. Reckons he can still taste them. Hopes that Nev enjoyed himself in WA, even if you couldn't find Strawberry Hill. Says that with the air fares so cheap, you can slip over for not much more than the drink price and really check it out. Sends his regards to all.

ERIC "BOMBO" REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with cheque for funds and says how he enjoyed the July *Pioneer News* with all the D Coy. names he remembers so well. (Eric's letter arrived too late to include in November *News*.)

Bombo was thinking he was going well until the local doctor sent him for a blood test. That put the cat among the pigeons and he finished up in Macksville Hospital for a prostate operation. Was very pleased with the hospital, good sisters and maids (shame on you) and very good food to top

it off. There are only two Pioneers in the town, he and Ray Horne, and both were in together. Ray was discharged before Eric. Glad you are feeling well.

Eric's brother, a Law Court Judge, received an AO in the Queen's Birthday Honours and naturally the family were very proud.

Hope you had a good trip to Melbourne and enjoyed the company of your granddaughters for the school holidays — the kids of today certainly have a good life, when you fly up to spend holidays with grandparents. All the best, Eric, and keep well.

HARRY SPREADBOROUGH 2/1, Qld., with two letters a couple of months apart. He and Jean enjoyed their trip for the ROTA celebrations, not enough time to do all they wanted to, but Jean had a virus when she arrived home and it was quite a while before she was her chipry self again. Their bush house collapsed completely and when Harry started to rebuild found he wasn't as well as he thought and had to get experts in to finish the job. Found later he had a heart problem and a by-pass was necessary. Operation has been done and he's once more on the mend.

Harry has bought a typewriter (second letter) and enclosed a cheque for treasurer. He said his writing was getting so bad he couldn't read it himself (join the club), and claims it doesn't work very well but in time he hopes to be able to make it spell properly. All the best Harry and Jean and thank you for your good wishes which are passed on to all Pioneers and their families.

HARRY SULLIVAN 2/2, Bourke, with a new address at 6 Glen Street, Bourke. He is keeping reasonably well apart from some eye trouble and wishes all the "boys" the very best for the coming year. Thanks for cheque, Harry, has been handed on to treasurer.

BILL THEILE 2/1, SA, per pen of wife Betty, with a note hoping all are well and a cheque for the treasurer. Bill is still playing golf and fishing when they stay at their holiday home on the York Peninsula. Keeps his body fit by riding his push bike and is keeping his brain active by constantly holding the floor with his love of talking (Betty wrote that Bill, not me). Quotes that they are looking forward to meeting everyone again at Gosford. Still enjoys getting the *Pioneer News* which they both look forward to with interest, and closes with best wishes to all.

JACK TOOKER 2/1, Chatswood, with a nicely typed letter — reckons his hand is too shaky to write any more. Good to hear from you, Jack, and to see you and Kath will be at Gosford, and that Ainsley and Robert may be there again for the Saturday dinner.

Jack and Kath have booked for the El Alamein-Tobruk tour in October and it is possible that daughter Ainsley and her husband will be going with them. Jack says it will be very enjoyable to have them along, Ainsley says it is to see that the "old man" stays on his feet. As you say, they should get a lot out of it all and a wonderful opportunity to see where the 2/1sts spent some pretty harrowing months. It should be a very worthwhile tour. All the best to you both.

BARBARA WILLIAMS 2/7 AGH, former wife of late Geoff Williams 2/1, with a card for the Festive Season and a thank you to Max for the writeup in the last *News*. Sorry we can't improve on the type, Barbara.

She and Geoff had two children, who are now 47 and 46 and five grandchildren. Not bad for an ex-army nursing sister. You would be able to tell them some tales of your travels and experiences during your time in the services. Best wishes and keep well.

NEV WOODHAM 2/1, Thornlands, Qld., with a letter to the Association and a cheque for Victor James. Both he and Betty are keeping well, old age is creeping on but still plenty of memories. Nev has a spur under his right heel, but that is kept in check with injections.

This year a few of the "Rats", headed by a chap named Vic Miller, 2/15th Btn, decided to form a Sub-Branch of ROTA in the Redland Shire, of which Nev's suburb is a part. The inaugural meeting was held in June and was named Redlands Sub-Branch, ROTA, with Neville taking on the job as secretary. Three other Pioneers are also members — Harry Spreadborough, Harry Mowbray and Ken Franks.

Betty and Neville (at time of writing) had just returned from a train trip to Rockhampton and a trip to Great Keppel Island. Wonderful weather all the

way, but the country was very dry. The only greenery was around Bundaberg which is blessed with irrigation.

He still plays bowls and his club, Redlands, won the No. 3 Pennant for 1991, which makes it four Pennant Flags in 10 years, not a bad effort. Keep up the good work, Nev. Hopes to be with us at Gosford — what about Anzac Day also.

ALBERT BARTON 2/1, Gulgong, with a welcome letter and a sub for the treasurer. Glad to hear your move to Gulgong has lived up to all expectations and that both you and Gwen are enjoying the lifestyle and the good country hospitality. Keep well and your good wishes are passed on to the "old" boys.

FRANK CHEAL 2/2, Burwood, Vic., with his deposit for Gosford for himself and Barbara. Will do our best in regard to accommodation. He and Barbara were off to Echuca to see his son and family and sends best regards to all. See you in Gosford.

PETER PEILE 2/1, of Caringbah, with a donation to funds and sends regards to all Pioneers, especially to all those who were in C Coy. Thank you Peter and Ericka.

BOB McTAGGART 2/2 of Rockhampton, called on the Secretary on New Year's Eve while on a visit to his sister in Sydney. He sends regards to Bob Ginnane. Ray Harris and Allan McInnes and said he was so sad to read of the passing of so many 2/2nds in 1991. Thank you Bob for the donation to funds and for your welcome visit.

KEN FRANKS 2/1, of Waterford West, Qld., with a short note to say he will be attending the Gosford Reunion. Ken was in the 2/1 band with Ivor Garnon and sends regards to all bandsmen. Thank you Ken for your donation to Association.

CHARLES KERR 2/1 of Marborough, Qld., writes to say he will be unable to attend the Gosford reunion on September, for health reasons, but sends regards to all Pioneers and in particular to members of the Signals Platoon. Also hopes the Reunion is as friendly and successful as the 1990 Reunion which he really enjoyed. Sends regards also to his room mate of that Reunion, Reg Ward.

JOHN HUNT 2/1 of New Farm, Qld., writes to say their Brisbane Reunion on October 26 was a success with 15 members attending. Travelling the furthest were Dot/Peter Priest, Ballina, and Charlie Kerr and Toby Palin from Maryborough. Apologies were received from Nell and Pat Laughren.

John and Mollie were off to Norfolk Island on November 16 for a well earned holiday. Do hope you enjoyed your stay John.

JOHN McKNIGHT 2/2 of Dundas, with a sub for the treasurer and greetings to all Pioneers especially his mates in D Coy. John states he is in good health and has settled down after retiring as a truck driver. He finds the *Pioneer News* all very interesting reading.

KEN COLLIER 2/1, Essendon, with a newsy letter and a generous donation to Association funds. Healthwise he is not too bad, except for a few aches and pains, and a leg problem which has to be closely watched. Ken said he was reaching the old age bracket when he wrote (67) — why you're only a chicken compared to some of us.

Recently he had the good fortune to catch up with an old mate, Fred Alway, whom Ken had not seen for 46 years. They had both joined the unit together on the Atherton Tableland and were in Don Company. (Ken had seen Fred's address in the *Pioneer News*). Some time after the landing in Borneo, Fred had been flown back to Australia and Ken did not see him again until they met recently. Fred still works as a carpenter and keeps pretty good health. He marched with the 2/2 Pioneers in Melbourne last Anzac Day.

Thanks for your letter, Ken and your good wishes are passed on to all Pioneers.

VINCE CULLEN 2/1, Peakhurst, per pen of wife Eve, with a donation to funds and the news that Vince is still going strong apart from arthritis in his hands. (Eve says she gets a bit of sympathy now.) It is now six years since Vince had the cancer operation and says "thanks to Dr Resch's pilsener he will keep going for another six".

Both he and Eve send all Pioneers their very best wishes for good health and happiness in 1992.

JACK MORGAN 2/2, Wagga, with a long letter to Max re information on the early days of the Kapooka Military Camp. Many thanks, Jack, for your time and trouble and it will be a great help to the 2/2 Pioneer Committee in the articles they are

doing for the *Pioneer News* over the next three issues.

Jack says he sees John Dowd and Dudley Stanforth occasionally and both were keeping well. He and Ev were both looking forward to Gosford later in the year, and send their regards to all.

KIM LATHAM, daughter of the late Jack Howie 2/2, with a donation to funds and a note thanking the Association for the occasional copies of *Pioneer News* which she receives from Gavin Todd. Kim has kept in touch with "Toddy" over the years and mentions that she would like to financially support our efforts by means of the cheque she sent. Your kind gesture is much appreciated, Kim, and your name has been placed on our mailing list for future copies. Kindest regards and many thanks.

● That concludes Mail Bag for this issue. There is not much for me to report on as football hasn't started yet, Australia has done well in the cricket and eight of us are off to Gunning and Canberra early next month for a five day coach tour — it's the only way to see that place, get lost too often otherwise. Hope that all Pioneers, their wives and families continue to enjoy good health and happiness in these later years — and see most of you Anzac Day. So long for now —

Lakey

SA PIONEER ASSOCIATION

By President ALLAN OLSON

Anzac Day 1992 is drawing near again, and Len Norman (Sec.), Stan (Jack) Clarke, our treasurer, myself and Committee are busy arranging our reunion to be held on Anzac Day at the Duke of York Hotel, Currie Street, Adelaide. Any Pioneers who may be visiting Adelaide during the Anzac period would be very welcome at the reunion. A phone call to any of the following would be appreciated. Allan Olson 297 3582 (work), 272 9530 (home), Len Norman 356 0275, Stan (Jack) Clarke 31 1656.

I received an up-dated roll of members from Melbourne Assn. recently and am pleased to advise that we have located another 2/2 Pioneer who had been living in Adelaide for the past 40 years. He is Reg Cranwell of 31 Yorke Tce., Salisbury 5108. Reg informed me that he was in the 2/2nd when it was re-formed and was in the Carrier and later the M.G. Platoon when the Bn. went to W.A. Later he was transferred to 7 Div HQ Sigs and took part in the landing at Balikpapan. He recently had a triple-bypass and doubts if he will be able to join in the march but is a definite starter for the Anzac reunion. Max would you please include Reg's name on the mailing list for future *Pioneer News*.

Had a phone conversation with my mate Ken Wilson of Lismore recently, we often use the phone these days as writing is becoming more and more a problem and talking is much easier. He informs me that a mate of his who was Chas. Richardson's batman, Gordon Buller of Esperance, W.A., does not receive *Pioneer News* and would be pleased if you would include him on your mailing list. (Allan — Gordon is on our mailing list and I cannot understand why he does not receive copies. The address on our list is the same as the one you sent — Max.)

This is all for now, will write and give you an account of Anzac Day at a later date. Looking forward to seeing you and Peg in September, together with all other Pioneers. Kindest regards.

SICK PARADE

ROY LEVY 2/2 returned to Concord Hospital for further operations on his leg in October and was visited by Bill Tasker and Peg and Max.

BILL ROBERTSON 2/2 was back in hospital with heart problems but is now back home and doing well.

HARRY SPREADBOROUGH 2/1 of Alexandra Hills, Qld., went into hospital on November 15, 1991, for a heart bypass operation and we hear from John Hunt that Harry is now recovering well, after having visited him in hospital.

KEITH BOYLE 2/1 of Moama suffered a severe stroke in January and was in Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital for three weeks. He was then moved to Echuca Hospital and at the time of going to press was showing a little improvement. Keith's wife, Marj, is coping on her own as she has now an electric wheel chair and is able to get it into their vehicle and do her own driving.

LAST POST

ENA GARNON wife of Ivor 2/1 passed away suddenly on October 24, 1991. The funeral was held at Northern Suburbs Crematorium on October 30 and was attended by six members of the Pioneers as well as representatives from the Rats of Tobruk Association and members of Ivor's lodge.

The Eulogy was read by Ena's daughter and all present found it very touching.

The Secretary extended sincere sympathy, from the Association to Ivor and the family, and said all Pioneers would sadly miss Ena as she was loved by all who knew her.

MICK BYE 2/2 of Dubbo passed away on October 27, 1991, and the funeral was held on October 29. Thank you to Ern Lunn and Jack Morgan for extending the Association's sympathy to Hilda, wife of Mick, and for passing on the details.

BOB McCLOSKEY 2/1 passed away in November at the Paramatta Nursing Home where he had resided for many years. The funeral was attended by Noel Schomberg, Bill Jollie and Bill Tasker, who read the Eulogy.

Sympathy was extended on behalf of the Association to brother Joe who had notified the Welfare Officer and who had attended to the needs of Bob over the years.

BOB BREWSTER 2/1 of Manly passed away on November 9, 1991, and the funeral was attended by Sam Lewis who had been a close friend of Bob's over many years.

The funeral was conducted at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium and the Poppy Service was carried out by the Manly Warringah RSL. In representing the Association Sam extended sympathy to Bob's family.

PAT LAUGHREN 2/1 of Nambour, Qld., passed away on November 6, 1991, after a heart attack on November 2 and the funeral on November 8 was attended by Phil Cramsie, Bert Beasley, John Hunt and representatives from the RSL and TPI Association.

On behalf of the Association John Hunt sent a sheaf of purple and white flowers to Nell, and extended our sympathy to the family.

Pat was 85 years of age and was very highly thought of due to his many years of work with his church, the St Vincent de Paul and his regular hospital visiting.

In a letter to the Association Nell extends her grateful thanks for the flowers and sympathy and said it was a great consolation having the Pioneers attend the Requiem Mass for Pat. She said the Last Post and the beautiful flowers were very much appreciated.

JOHN DOUGLAS 2/1 of Perth passed away on November 29, 1991, at the age of 80 years, very peacefully in his sleep at the hostel where he has resided since he left West Wyalong a few years ago.

Apparently he still enjoyed life to the fullest even though his sight had nearly gone. Close friends in the unit would remember John as "P38" named after the Lockheed Lightning fighter plane — everywhere John went he was like lightning.

To his daughter Isobelle and family we extended the Association's sympathy in their sad loss, and in return we have received a nice thank you note.

CHARLIE WILBY 2/1 of Moree passed away in October and thanks to Rats of Tobruks Association for passing on the information.

MICK ANSELM 2/1 of Booval, Qld., passed away in November.

I. J. TAYLOR 2/1 of Winchelsea, Victoria, passed away on August 14.

FRANK MARR 2/2 of Goolwa, Victoria, passed away in November and we thank Eric Causer for notifying us of these two members taken from "Mufti".

VIV LE-MESURIER 2/1 of Cowra passed away on January 3, 1992, at the age of 85 years. Viv was formerly of Walgett Road, Katoomba, but lately of Bilgara Retirement Village, Cowra.

The interment took place at the Cowra Lawn Cemetery after prayers at St John's Church on January 7. The Cowra RSL members formed a guard of honour and sounded the Last Post at the graveside.

To his niece, we send sympathy in the family's sad loss.

DICK MARSHALL 2/2 of Queenscliff, Victoria, passed away at Barham Hospital on January 24.

Upon looking back at records, Dick and his wife,

Heather, have never missed an Association Country Reunion. Together with their campervan they were such a familiar sight it is difficult to imagine a Reunion without the cheery face of Dick.

To Heather, daughters Dawn, Ann, Mavis and son Allan, together with the 11 grandchildren, we extend our sincere sympathy in their sad loss.

BILL WELLS C Coy 2/2 of Lismore passed away on February 18, 1992, and the funeral was attended by many friends and relatives as well as representatives from the RSL.

Ken Wilson represented the Association and extended sincere sympathy to Peg, wife of Bill, and her family. Ken also rang Charles Richardson to give him the sad news.

ANZAC FUNCTIONS — 1992

ANNUAL MEETING — Friday, April 24

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Redfern RSL Club, corner of Redfern and Gibbons Street, Redfern, at 3.30 pm and will finish at 5 pm.

Members will then be invited by the President to partake of refreshments before having a snack at the Club and will then proceed by train to Martin Place for the Wreath Laying Service.

WREATH LAYING — Friday, April 24

The Wreath Laying Service will be held at 7.30 pm and assembly will be on the corner of Martin Place and Pitt Street at 7.25 pm.

ANZAC DAY MARCH — Saturday, April 25

The forming up points will be the same as in previous years for both units — 2/1st in Phillip Street, head on King Street and rear of 6th Division, 2/2nds in Phillip Street near Martin Place and rear of 7th Division. Both unit banners will be displayed at their respective assembly points. Please check notice in city newspapers for any change in assembly.

ANZAC REUNION — Saturday, April 25

The Anzac Day Reunion and dinner will be held after the march at Redfern Town Hall, corner of Pitt and Webb Streets, Redfern.

The Town Hall doors will be open at 11.30 am and draught beer, served in jugs will cost \$5.

The dinner will be catered for by Brothers Catering Service and partial cost will be subsidised by the Association while members will only pay at the door the sum of \$7.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

Dear Max,

Shortly after John Douglas' death, I received the following letter from his son — I have never met him, but from the way he writes, he is certainly a "chip off the block" of his father.

I corresponded with John over a number of years and in the latter times, when he could no longer write, I kept him in touch with any happenings of interest to him.

I thought the contents of the son's letter reflected the nature of "P38" as we all knew him, and may be of interest to any who knew him in the battalion.

Kindest regards, **George Nichols**

3/64 Upland Tce NW Washington DC 20015

Dear Mr Nichols,

I am writing this to you on my way back to Indonesia, having left a World Bank mission there to attend the funeral of my father, Jack Douglas.

I wanted to write mainly to express my appreciation to you for writing to Jack so regularly through those hard years after my mother died. He mentioned your name to me often, and always with great appreciation of your loyal friendship.

We had a service for him today, in Perth. His ashes will be sent back to West Wyalong, where they will hold a memorial service and spread his remains on Mum's grave — where he would want to be. At his service today, I read out a fragment of that young soldier's poem he loved so much.

*"Now lie we dead because we did not choose,
To share the land from which he sprang
Life, perhaps, is not so much to lose,
But young men think it is, and we were young."*

He did not die young, and he did not die unhappy, although he had known great grief. He passed away peacefully, in his sleep. His life had worth, and he will be missed. I hope I can say as much when my time comes.

Once again, thank you for being his friend. I wish you all the best.

— **JAMES DOUGLAS**

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THE 2/2nd AUST. PIONEER BATTALION

Part Two of the three part series covering the Battalion from its re-formation in June 1942 to the 50th Anniversary in 1992.

Part 2 — TRAINING AND ACTIVITIES

Lt-Colonel Joe Lang arrived from Darwin on 20th June 1942 to command the unit in formation and he was in time to see the arrival of the reinforcement body from Victoria of five officers and 400 other ranks in the charge of Major Aitken at the newly constructed Kapooka Camp, four miles from Wagga Wagga.

Four officers and 308 other ranks were a new complement from the No. 1 Pioneer Training Battalion of Bathurst in the charge of Captain W. Robertson in the middle of July.

Key appointments were: Battalion second-in-command, Maj. Aitken; Company commanders — Capt. Mitchell, A Company; Maj. Kidd, B Company; Capt. Richardson, C Company; Capt. Robertson, D Company; Maj. Tope, HQ Company; Capt. Garrard, Adjutant. Company second-in-commands — Capt. Bellmaine, Copp, James, Page. Quartermaster, Capt. McInnes.

It became clear very quickly that of its dual Pioneer role — part infantry and part engineers — it was going to be chiefly as infantry that the re-formed Battalion was going to win its spurs.

A newly-constructed 30-yard rifle range (the work of Lt. White and party) rang to the command of Sgt George Paricos, i/c weapon training. Basic training was to occupy the first eight weeks for all personnel. Music to the ears of the other ranks, was to hear the company sergeant-majors parading daily under Capt. Garrard and the Regimental Sergeant-Major, W. O. Waite!

Next leg of the training program for rifle companies was "training in sections"; for HQ Company, specialised training. How the peace of the Kapooka hills was shattered by the medley of orders accounting for weapon instruction, bayonet drill, grenade throwing, etc. And to the welcome revving of transport vehicles, motor-cycles, Bren Gun carriers filling out the long-awaited complement!

Essential services had rapidly to be provided, company latrines appearing courtesy of plumbers Spot Sullivan, Charlie Armstrong, Ron Dunning and Bob Lee. Military initiative, if not military protocol provided materials lacking. The neighbouring Civil Construction Corps could well afford their "contribution".

Around Battalion HQ clustered the "odds and sods" — the Orderly Room, the RAP, the stretcher-bearers-cum-Band, the Intelligence (called Ignorance) Section. The early strangled sounds of cornets at practice were soon refined by Bandleader George Dobson, who composed the Kapooka March for the Battalion parade through Wagga Wagga. Escaping the daily grind of infantry training, the "I" Section marched off into the hills, honing their map-reading skills.

Section training began in earnest and it was decided that the Murrumbidgee River needed reconnoitring! A task for all sections — from Tumbalong (where they were dispatched at hourly intervals) along the 64 miles of river, to Camp. Iron rations were stood down on the menu in favour of wild duck. Welcome supplements in fresh farm eggs, milk-from-the-cow, etc. The honours in the reconnoitre to Corporal J. Lee's Section of A Company.

Route marches with increasing distance built up to 30 miles in "battle order". The chances of the 30-miler becoming a 40-miler were averted when one company march-leader was persuaded from the collective wisdom of some of the "led" to reassess the direction of Camp at a late stage of the march! Back to Camp and sweet relief to the march step provided by the Battalion band; arrival time 2100 hrs.

The Uranquinty Hotel proved to be a half-way house to the RAAF Station as opportunity offered and seemingly, never the pub-with-no-beer or without clients. A likely RV for a BBQ following an evening route march. One night culminated in rain, beer, mud, bloody beef and wet bread! It was rumoured that a mysterious phone call requiring all RAAF personnel to return to base, effectively cleared some refreshment space ("drinking room") for thirsty army foot-sloggers.

Faithfully following the "I" Section on the cross-country homeward leg, a few "minor" obstructions were encountered — sewage earthworks, trenches, deep concrete pits. To the pitch-black confusion, the "I" Section countered: "Clear proof that maps do not show everything!"

Wagga Wagga was proud of its hospitality to soldiers — a first for this city. Pioneers were warmly received into the township activities; while honorary membership of the Riverina Club was extended to officers of the Battalion. So, voices raised to the old theme — "The Pioneers are marching on their way" left a strong sentimental note as, no doubt, many of the locals echoed "They'll be sometimes missed by the girls they've kissed".

The war had moved closer to Aussie shores as 1942 progressed. Back on 15th February, 1942, Singapore had surrendered to the Japanese. So followed New Britain, New Ireland, the Admiralty and Solomon Islands. The fightback was firmly on the way when our forces notched up the Milne Bay victory. By August some of the Seventh Division had landed at Port Moresby and were part of the bloody push to secure the Kokoda trail. Where to, then, for this frisky young, re-formed unit now, by September, stamping at the bit?

On Saturday afternoon of 30th September, 1942, Lt-Col. Joe Lang was proudly marching his Battalion in battle order, Bren Carriers and vehicles in the rear, down the streets of Wagga Wagga. The salute was taken by Brig. W. C. D. Veale, M.C., D.S.M., E.D., Commander of the Engineer Training Centre. Present at the ceremony, too, was Mrs L. O'Malley Wood, a tireless welfare worker for "her" battalion boys. The march was accompanied by the regimental band.

At the showground an athletic carnival followed, the Pioneers winning the aggregate points and still to come, on the Sunday, was the presentation of amassed booty — nine handsome silver cups, to remain in the keeping of Ald. H. E. Gissing, Mayor of Wagga, until the end of the war. Other trophies presented by Brig. Veale included the Shillito Cup won by B Company for the most efficient company; a cup won by Headquarters Company, commanded by Maj. Tope, for the sports championship; and a cup won by 17 Platoon, commanded by Lt Harris, for first place in the platoon drill competition.

Visions of a quick translation to the Middle East where the parent battalions had made their mark faded, as the unit entrained for Melbourne. . . and instead, a long journey to Western Australia to train and shore up defences on the western coastline.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2/2nd Pioneer Battalion History (E. F. Aitken), Jack Allison, Bob Ginnane, Ray Harris, Russ Harrison, Bill Lewis, Bob Lee, Allan McInnes, Bill Robertson, Pioneer News; March and September 1982 and April 1990.

GOSFORD REUNION

WREATH LAYING SERVICE—Sat., Sept. 26, 5 pm.
REUNION DINNER — Saturday 26th — Gosford RSL Club — 6 pm Refreshments; 7 pm Dinner — Per person \$19.

PICNIC LUNCH — Sunday 27th — Mt Penang.
FAREWELL DINNER — Sunday 27th 7 pm — Gosford RSL — Per person \$18.50.

S.A. PIONEER BATTALION

By President ALLAN OLSON

Anzac Day 1992 saw one of the smallest contingent of Pioneers to march. Father time and illness has caught up with several of our Pioneers with the result that only 13 members faced the march from Victoria Square to the Cross of Sacrifice at Pennington Gardens.

Those who couldn't march, lined the route and gave the marchers a good cheerio and then attended the Annual Meeting and Reunion luncheon. This was thoroughly enjoyed by 27 Pioneers and friends held at the Duke of York Hotel in Currie Street.

Members unable to march were — Les Bence, Reg Cranwell, George Sauer and Stan (J. E.) Clarke who is having another rough time having spent two weeks in hospital.

The members marching were: 2/1st — Bill Thiele and Doug Waters. 2/2nds: Cyril Denton, Geoff Lloyd, Len Norman, Joe Robertson, Bruce Scott, Roger Monks and Allan Olson. This was Roger Monks' first march for many years and has assured everyone he hopes to make it an annual event.

Len Norman and Allan Olson attended the Dawn Service and placed a wreath in memory of all fallen Pioneers and those who have departed us since the war.

That is all for this year's Anzac Day in Adelaide and look forward to seeing all the Pioneers at the Gosford Reunion.

RETURN TO ADELAIDE

By RUSS HARRISON, 2/2

Recently Rona and I had a trip to Adelaide after receiving a request to "mind" the home of a friend in St Peters, which is a suburb about two miles north east of the city centre. As a matter of topical interest our friend was attending the World Conference on the Environment in Rio de Janeiro, as a representative of the SA Government and of the Environment Association of Australia of which she is President. We await reports from her of the "inside" story of what happened behind the scenes.

We left Epping on 28th May and travelled via the Mid Western and Stuart Highways with one overnight stay in Balranald. We did the usual tourist bits with trips to Port Pirie (looks a lot different from the way it looked in 1942), Cape Jervis, Victor Harbor, Port Elliott, Goolwa and the Adelaide Hills. We also had a day in Hahndorf and feasted on German beer, German sausage, sauerkraut and fried potatoes.

Travelling on the Adelaide metropolitan transport system was a great experience as we travelled by bus, tram and train for a whole day at a cost of \$1.60 each. Rona has relatives in Adelaide and we enjoyed their hospitality on a number of occasions.

A highlight of our visit was being able to meet up with old army mates, thanks to good organising by Ronnie and Geoff Lloyd, whom we had lunch with on June 2. Then on the following Tuesday we were back at their home for an afternoon with Helen and Ron Pasfield, Len Norman, Bruce Scott and Allan Olson. Joe Robertson had the flu and so could not attend. The old photographs and newspaper clippings were produced and reminiscences exchanged. It was a very pleasant afternoon.

We caught up with Joe Robertson a few days later when we paid a visit to Allan Olson's manufacturing premises in Forestville. This was a most interesting afternoon as we were shown over the works and watched the various operations.

At last we had to depart, and left Adelaide on June 19, arriving home on the 21st after travelling via Murray Bridge, Bordertown, Horsham, Ballarat, Bendigo, Shepparton, Albury and the Hume Highway.

2/1-2/2 ANZAC ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Friday, 24th April, at the Redfern RSL Club at 3.30 pm with an attendance of 29.

Meeting was opened by President Bill Jollie with Ode to the Fallen, followed by a welcome to members especially those who had travelled long distances.

The President read his Annual Report in which he thanked the Executive and Committee for their continued support.

Election of office bearers was conducted by Returning Officer Allan McInnes and the senior appointments were Bill Jollie, President, John Gilchrist (2/1) and John Williams (2/2) co-Patrons.

The highlight of the meeting was the bestowal of Life Membership on Ray Harris 2/2. The presentation was made by our co-Patron John Gilchrist and well applauded by all present.

The income and expenditure and balance sheets of our three accounts were read, received and adopted. Our auditor Mr A. Watson, AASA, drew attention to our dwindling finances which caused lengthy discussion on how to combat this problem and it was left to the Management Committee to look into.

Our Anzac Day prices could increase marginally, but the main concern is our "lifeline" — *The Pioneer News*. You have heard it all before — printing charges up — postal charges up. These are items which we cannot control but we can appeal to those receiving our *News*, who have not contributed for some length of time to do so. To those who donate (many liberally) regularly we applaud and we would like to hear from others on a more regular basis — should you not require the *Pioneer News* let us know.

—Reported by VIC WHITELEY

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

Ray Harris acting as marshal, lined up the 31 members in attendance, and the unit banners were carried by John Hunt 2/1 and Roy Levy 2/2. Wreaths were placed on the Cenotaph by John Gilchrist representing the Association and Mollie Hunt for the Ladies Auxiliary.

Our Patron, John Gilchrist, recited the Ode to the Fallen and Aub Brasier sounded the bugle for the Last Post and Reveille. We do thank you Aub for your effort once again.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

March leaders for the 2/1st were John Gilchrist and Bill Jollie with an attendance of 65 members. The banner was carried by Tim Lloyd.

March leaders for the 2/2nds were Allan McInnes and Ray Harris with Bill Robertson falling in at the march end. The banner was carried by Bill Robertson's grandson, Andrew O'Neill.

2/1 REUNION TABLE TALK

There were the usual familiar faces present at the Anzac Day Reunion at Redfern Town Hall and of course, some missing. Talk of old mates and the good and bad times abounded and the general consensus was that it was another great Reunion.

President Bill Jollie was in charge of his usual table with Patron John Gilchrist, Bill Robertson, Steve Clarke, Ken Stuart, Ray Harris, Allan McInnes.

All his old mates were pleased to see Max Law who attended during the afternoon with his son Craig, and many, particularly the B Coy mob were able to have a few words with him.

Vic Whiteley, Doug Shearston and the cook house assistants and other workers were kept busy, but were able to partake of the refreshments.

Bill Tasker was with B Coy and seated at his table were Len Weyman, Don Barraclough, Noel Trefoni, Ted Jensen, Ron Callaghan, Jack Harvey and son Bob. Also present were A Coy identities Lance Gayden and John Hunt from Brisbane.

C Coy was represented by Beau Hannaford, Clem Cook, Sam Lewis, Snowy Hemmings, Dick Chalmers, Bill Doney, Bill Wright, Jim Law and Ted Wilcox. Conversation at their table was carried along at a rapid pace.

At the D Coy table were the usual occupants, and George Walker appeared to be in charge with others present being Vic Jones, Ken Oliver, Bill Hodges, Percy Fisk, Jack Lamerton, George Tolmie, Jim Gray, Jim Anderson, Peter Craig, Neville Mooney, Gordon Muddle with Max Herron paying his usual visit for drinks and a talk of old times.

9 Platoon appeared to be well represented with

Perc Penrose, Clem Moroney, Jack Green, Laurie Kelly, Wal Parsons, Mick Punton, Joe Kyffin and Clancy Scholes. Jack Kerslake, well known producer of video films was there enjoying the goodies.

Gordon Finlay was OC of a well behaved group which included George Bates, Geoff Robinson, Brian Kybert, Tom Crossman and Dick Blakeney. They were having an enjoyable convivial time swapping experiences of army days.

2/2 REUNION TABLE TALK

Once again there was a pretty good attendance of 2/2 Pioneers and all the old tales were told and re-told. As the day wore on, it was difficult to hear anything with the increasing level of noise. One familiar face absent was that of Jim Field, now in a nursing home and not too well.

Jack McDonagh carried out his duty as seller of beer tickets with his usual efficiency. There were plenty of healthy thirsts to be slaked. Many thanks for the generous donations received for Association funds. Those not caught in Russ Harrison's net at the march were ambushed at the reunion by Vic Whiteley and Doug Shearston.

At the long table near the beer sales were the usual team — a mixture of BHQ, HQ Coy and C and D Coys — Brian Nieberding, Fred Mathews, Don Crawford, Bill Lewis, Ian Willmore, Roy Levy, Bert Beasley, Gavin Todd, Dick Kennewell, Bob McGregor, Ossie Carter, Bluey Locane, Ken Wilson, Bob Lee and Russ Harrison.

Nearby was that great story teller Bob Ginnane with Bruce Metcalf and Matt Elliott who had been AWL for a couple of years. Here also was Jack Henderson with sons-in-law Garry Iredale and Ganny O'Neill, Bill Fallon, Jack Crouch and son John, Clemm McDonald and Ross Dawson who had been AWL for a number of years but the only penalty imposed was for drinks all round.

Others scattered round various locations were Horrie Sedger, who was censured for being late, Padre Jock Steele, Pat Collins, Bill Henry, Charlie Henry, Tibby Knight, Jack Allison, Clive Maddrell, Wally Coe, Andy Beebar and Pat Egan. At President Bill Jollie's table were Bill Robertson, Ray Harris and Allan McInnes.

—Reported by RUSS HARRISON

RAY HARRIS — LIFE MEMBER

At the Annual Meeting, Ray Harris was presented with a Life Membership Certificate for ten years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association.

For many years Ray has acted as marshal at the Wreath Laying Service, as well as being marshal for the 2/2nds at the Anzac Day March. He has also assisted in the conducting of the Wreath Laying service at the Country Reunions.

Ray has been Vice President since 1987 as well as being delegate to the 7th Aust. Division. Congratulations to you Ray on a job well done.

SICK PARADE

JIM FIELD 2/2 is in Brentwood Nursing Home at Parramatta and has had visits from Vic. Whiteley, Gordon Finlay, Bill Jollie, Ray Harris and Roy Levy.

PERCY FISK 2/1 was in Prince Alfred Hospital and had been visited by Bill Tasker.

NOEL TREFONI 2/1 was in Concord Hospital and visits were made by Bill Jollie and Bill Tasker.

LARRY ROBSON 2/1 is in Mater Hospital, Newcastle, and is being visited by Jack Bertram.

JACK COLLIS 2/1 was in Brisbane Waters Hospital and visits were made by Jack Coates.

CLIVE "CASEY" BROWN 2/1 is in Concord Hospital and visited by Bill Tasker and Peg and Max Herron.

TOM WOODS 2/2 was in Nowra Hospital and visited by George Walker and "Bluey" Locane.

TOM McNAUGHTON 2/2 of Reservoir, Vic., was in hospital and visited by Joe Kyffin.

ROY JARDINE 2/1 was in Petersham private hospital and visited by Ivor Garnon.

LEN PREEDY 2/2, of Perth, was in hospital for a hernia operation in May and wife Joy was also in hospital. Good to hear you have both recovered.

PHYL JOLLIE wife of President Bill, is in hospital for an operation at time of going to press.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

This year commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the return of the 2/1st from the Middle East, the capture of the 2/2nd in Java and subsequent incarceration for the duration of the War and finally the re-formation of the 2/2nd at Kapooka in June 1942.

During the past 12 months two committee meetings were held at Redfern RSL Club. The attendance of most members of the Committee was appreciated and conducted in a harmonious atmosphere. Many contentious issues were discussed and resolved in furthering the interests of the Association. A meeting of the Gosford Reunion Organising Committee was also held and an agenda agreed to.

Anzac Day last year was again an outstanding success and the Reunion Dinner well attended. A special vote of thanks must be conveyed to the sons and friends of some of our members on easing the burden in assisting in many ways. Sadly the march preceding the Dinner was minus a few of our regulars, but this is to be expected as the years move on.

I feel sure that all our members will be agreeably surprised to learn that our finances are in good shape, thanks to the efforts of our Treasurer "Scrooge" Whiteley. It's as hard to get blood out of a stone when it comes to spending a few dollars. Nevertheless, Vic, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Bill Tasker and his cohorts for their visitations to the sick and attendances at the funerals of those who have passed on.

I would also like to convey our thanks to Len Preedy of Western Australia and Allan Olson of South Australia in keeping the flag flying in their respective States and again to John and Mollie Hunt of Queensland for making their home available and organising the yearly get-together in that State.

The *Pioneer News* continues to be the life-line of the Association. Three publications have been printed during the past 12 months, the cost of which relies solely on the contributions received from our members, so please dig deep and bring a smile to Vic Whiteley's face. There would be no *News* without your assistance and the editorial geniuses of Bob Lake and Max Herron to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. Thanks also to our *Pioneer News* wrapping committee.

I would like to extend on your behalf, appreciation to the President and Directors of Redfern RSL Club for the use of their facilities, free of charge, for our meetings.

Finally, and in all sincerity, we all owe a debt of gratitude to both Peg and Max Herron for their untiring efforts in furthering the interests of the Association. Max and Peg, we salute you.

— BILL JOLLIE, President

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

By President LEN PREEDY

Our March meeting was well attended with apologies from Jack Murray and John McDougall. Syd Abercrombie reported Bert Woodhouse 2/1 was well and Jack Monger stated DVA had finally agreed to increase his pension. It was good to see Ivy and Fred Newton along. We missed Joy Butcher but pleased to see Beth Lee, Jean Lyford, Joan Monger, Norma Sefton and my Joy. Barry and Milly Hunt had been travelling around since our last meeting.

Joy and I had a holiday to Busselton and had a night out with Norm Le Cornu and his wife. We called in to see Dorothy and Ted Lyon.

Our July meeting was short on numbers because of bad weather but we did welcome Ethel and John McDougall, Virginia Safe, Norm Le Cornu, Barry Hunt, Beth Lee, Owen Heron and Jack Stewart. Apologies received from Joan and Jack Monger, Jack Murray, Syd Abercrombie, Joy Butcher, Jean Lyford, Fred Newton, Ivy Jamieson, Ted and Dorothy Lyon.

John Safe and Arthur Dearden had passed away since our last meeting and sincere sympathy was extended to both widows.

For kind donations I thank the following: F. Newton, N. Le Cornu, J. Monger, S. Abercrombie, J. Lyford, B. Hunt, T. Lyon, J. Stewart, A. Cousins, J. Butcher, H. Fitzgerald, J. McDougall. Kind regards to all Pioneers.

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

Another issue of *Pioneer News* and a fair amount of letters to hand so with a big hello to all I'd better get with it.

DON ANDERSON 2/1, Merimbula, per pen of wife Dora, with a cheque and writes that they both find the paper most interesting, especially when a familiar name appears. Dora tells of a holiday in 1968 when she spent three months in Lae with Don's sister. Very fortunate to visit such places as Wau, Bulolo, Salamau, Madang, Finchaven and Goroka. Also went to Nadzab where the air-strip built during the war was being used as the local Go-kart track. Also visited the Lae War Cemetery and the gardens were a credit to the people who cared for them. Good trip, Dora, just remember it took most of us nearly two years to walk most of those places, and we didn't think it was lovely. Thank you for your best wishes for Anzac Day.

REG ARMSTRONG 2/2, Coonabarabran, with his sub and an apology for his absence on Anzac Day. Reg is enjoying good health at time of writing, but wife Coralie is not the best, still confined to bed most of the time and becoming an addict to cross-word puzzles. He had heard from Jim Field and was sorry to hear of his troubles. Closes with kindest regards to all Pioneers and their ladies, also the paper wrappers — may their shadows never grow smaller.

MAVIS BLANCH widow of Joe 2/1, Beaudesert, with the news that she did not get to Sydney this year as she had not been the best over the last few months — a heart problem that has improved with medication. Will have to continue medication for the rest of her days. Had a week in Tamworth with the bowls and called on Ted and Mary Carter, but they were in NZ on holiday. Mavis has been in touch with Gloria Gray and she is bearing up well with the loss of Paddy who will be sadly missed. Closes with best wishes to all Pioneers and their ladies, and enclosed sub for the *News*.

PHIL BARNETT 2/2, Lismore, with a cheque for the treasurer and Max has assured that you are well and truly financial, so no need to worry. Glad you enjoy the *Pioneer News*, and your best wishes are heartily reciprocated.

AUB BRASIER, our bugler of Dee Why, with an acceptance to attend the wreath laying in Martin Place. Aub had a virus at time of writing and wife Nancy had a short spell in hospital for observation, but going along well. Closes with — remember me to those who remember.

RAY BURROUGHS 2/2, ACT, with a couple of cheques enclosed, one for subs and one to be passed on to Peg for reunion deposit. No other news so things must be all OK down Canberra way. Best wishes, Ray.

COLIN CAMERON 2/1, Campbelltown, with a donation to funds and an apology for Anzac Day. Sends best wishes to all for the "big day".

JACK CLAYPOLE 2/1, Matraville, with his sub and the news that he was not well on Anzac Day so watched the march on TV. Was a bit disappointed with the coverage as he only saw a bit of the banner and none of the boys. Hopes all had a good day and sends special regards to C Coy, and mentions Sam Lewis, Bill Wright and Jack Kerslake.

JACK COLLIS 2/1, Umina, with apology for not keeping in touch for a while owing to a spell in Gosford hospital. His asthma had been playing up, so the Doc thought it might improve with hospitalisation. Jack Coates has been in touch and was also undergoing physio treatment and plenty of visits to hospital. Ivor Garnon had a nasty fall and sprained his ankle and that's after having a knee replacement. Harry Hamer is going along OK, but wife Glad has not been the best. Wouldn't say Manly are having a lot of luck, Jack, more like arse if you ask me. Don't know why one week they play like world beaters and the next week they couldn't beat Christian Brothers D Grade. One thing, though, I still think they will finish in front of Parramatta. Best of luck, old mate.

REG CRANWELL 2/2, Salisbury SA, with a thank you for back numbers of *Pioneer News*. Reg is a new member, his name and address sent in by

Allan Olson and he claims to only recognise a few names and of those a couple have passed on. Allan had just sent him a battalion badge and name clasp, but Reg has to go into hospital for a by-pass and will not be able to attend the Adelaide Anzac Day reunion. Closes with best wishes to all.

BETTY CREASY widow of George 2/1, Portland, with a sub to keep the *News* coming, especially to those who "can't get round much anymore". Attended another Dawn Service and then managed to get home to daughter Joy to see the film on the "Kokoda Track", the word trail came into being later. Bill Wright told Betty of the death of Ray Horne and she mentioned her husband George used to see a lot of Ray when Ray had the pub at Portland some years ago. Her nephew John Dougall of Casino received an AOM for services to army recruiting in the Lismore area, and says he comes across a few *Pioneers* in his travels. Closes with best wishes to all.

BEULAH CRUTE wife of Allan 2/1, Woolgoolga, with a long newsy letter of family doings and a cheque for the treasurer. Both she and Allan are kept busy and see Eric (Bombo) and Joyce Reynolds of Macksville frequently and have a day together. She was sorry that they would not be at the Gosford reunion in September, as they were planning a trip to Canberra and then along the Murray River. However, they both send their best wishes for a great weekend. Nice to hear from you, Beulah, and can understand with your Meals-on-Wheels rosters, VIEW Club meetings and walking the elderly folk from the Aged Hostel you don't get much letter writing time. Keep up the good work, and best wishes to you both.

ALBERT DEAN 2/1, Shepparton, with his sub and the news that apart from a spot of fishing and a few days away now and then, life goes on much the same. Has just finished playing host to his son and wife who are on their second working holiday around Australia. As Alby says he had to join the Army to satisfy his travel bug. Sends best wishes to all Pioneers.

DAVE DENNY 2/1, Lismore, with a donation and the news of the passing of Paddy Gray, and that Alec George was on the grounded list. Alec fell off the roof (what the bloody hell was he doing up there in the first place — we are all getting too old for that now) and ended up with quite a few broken bones, and lots of bruises. Dave wishes all the boys the best and hopes to make Sydney this year.

JOHN DOWD 2/2, Wagga, with his sub for *Pioneer News* which he enjoys receiving. His wife, Daph, reads it to him as John's eyesight is not the best. Due to hip trouble John was unable to march at Wagga, but joined Jack Morgan at the RSL for a few light refreshments afterwards.

JOHN FLOOD 2/1, Penrith, with a cheque and thank you for the *News* and he really appreciates the amount of work that goes into its production. John does not attend our functions (don't know what you are missing mate), but is always interested in the activities of the Association. Just once you want to make the effort, John, you'd be ever so pleased you did.

BILL GAMBLE 2/1, Cherriside, with a sub and his thanks for *News* but saddened to read of the passing of old mates and of those not enjoying good health. Sends his best regards to Bill Jollie and hopes he is fighting fit once again. Also thoroughly enjoys the Mail Bag.

Last year Bill received a pleasant surprise when he received an enlarged photo of Jim Law and himself taken in Balikpapan and sent by Ray (Jim's son). Ray had received the original from Bill Wright. I am pleased to be able to tell you that both Jim and Ray attend our reunions now, Ray to keep an eye on the old bloke, and he also helps with the chores that such functions entail. Bill met Bruce Chambers and his wife on their way to Rockhampton to visit family, and spoke to Bill Wright on the phone for a good chat.

Bill mentions a couple of trips to Greenslopes on a number of occasions, but says they are fine and growing old with as much grace as possible and enjoying their children and grandchildren. The little ankle biters can get a bit rough on you, Bill. Lahey has six of them, eldest 24 and youngest 18, and they can be a problem, especially when birthdays come around.

NOEL HIBBARD 2/1, Meadowbank, with a donation to funds and the news that his bowls team were the Runners-up in the 1992 Pennant season

in the Zone 9 Competition. It was the No. 7 Pennant side and he plays for Denistone Bowling Club. Nice work, Noel, keep it up.

STELLA GRANGER widow of Bill 2/1, Schofields, with a welcome cheque and her best wishes for Anzac Day. Thanks, Stella, and all the best to you too.

JACK HUMPHREY 2/1, Casino, with a cheque and a thank you for the November issue of the *News*, posted to his new address in Casino. He is quite happy in his new home, a nice backyard with a big mango tree to sit under on hot days, and only 2 km from town. Has a nice vegetable garden with good soil and warmer weather to make the plants grow. Jack thinks there would be only a few Pioneers who would remember him, all the others have passed on, but he likes reading the *News* and still remembers a lot of the names.

JACK KEMPNIICH 2/1, Fingal Bay, per pen of wife Maisie, with a cheque and the news that they have been doing a fair bit of tripping around and little time at home. You make me feel tired and worn out, Mais, writing of washing curtains, walls and windows before it rains — why not let the rain do the job for you. Why don't you be like Jack, just sit there with a paper and fishing line and watch the fish get on the hook. Both are looking forward to September and prior to that their grandson's 21st birthday. The Lakes' youngest grandson was 21 on July 8, so we know how you feel, but knowing Nans, I reckon you got through the celebrations OK. The 2/1sts do not have a special tie, Mais, they are special enough.

NELL LAUGHREN widow of Pat 2/1, Nambour, with her sub. Anzac Day was very dear to Pat and she will be thinking of us all. Sends many thanks for the *News* — just puts her feet up and reads when postie delivers. Nice to hear from you, Nell, and our best wishes.

TOM MANUEL 2/1, Glen Innes, with the cheque for subs from Col Noon, Bob Donald, and himself, and Ernie Lee 2/2. Bob, Ernie and Tom are active in Glen Innes RSL Sub-Branch and Ernie had the honour of leading the local march on Anzac Day, the first Pioneer to do this. He did a top job on short notice from dawn to dusk. They are all in reasonable health and quite active in their interests. Also pleased to report that the 2/1 Pioneer widows Mesdames Rogers, O'Hara and Marshall are well and Tom never ceases to be amazed at the courage and spirit of these ladies and how they carry on.

RON MORLEY 2/1, Yarraville, with a letter of apology for his lateness, and a cheque for funds. Ron has been in hospital for an operation and hopes to be as good as new in a few months. This year he was invited to the 2/2 Pioneers reunion at the Maribyrnong RSL on Anzac Eve and had a good time. He met Ted Hansen, their President, and he wished to be remembered to all in Sydney.

JACK MCGREGOR 2/2, Shortland, with a sub and the news that he attended the Dawn Service with the local RSL and arrived home in time to watch the Sydney march on TV. Says the coverage on 2/1sts was poor, but 2/2nds fared a little better. Regards to all and looking forward to Gosford.

ROY MCGREGOR 2/2, Maitland, with a short note with his sub. He and Marion still plugging along with usual minor complaints of age, otherwise OK. Also looking forward to Gosford in September.

TOM MCGUINNESS 2/1, Laurieton, with a cheque to Association funds and says he looks forward to arrival of *News*. It is good to keep in touch. Unfortunately will not be able to make it on Anzac Day and the Gosford reunion also in doubt. Keep trying Tom, you can do a lot if you put your mind to it.

GEORGE NICHOLS 2/1, Cronulla, with a note to say that a trip to hospital and having to get stitches out forced him to watch the march on TV for the first time in many years. It was certainly not the same and, all being well, a starter for sure next year. George is pleased to report he is A1 again — thinks the knife must have been on the dull side because he wasn't "carved up" nearly as much as other years. He enclosed a cheque for Vic and hopes all had a really good day.

EVIE NOAKES widow of Syd 2/1, sent along a welcome donation and thanked the Committee for continuing to send her the *News* which she is thrilled to receive and reads from cover to cover. Nice to hear from you and many thanks.

ALLAN OLSON 2/2, SA, with a letter to Max re a new recruit for the mailing list, Ray Stidfird 2/2, of Berri, SA, and Ray has expressed interest in the

Gosford reunion. (Max has sent back issues of the *News* and hopes they will be of interest.) Thanks, Allan, for Ray's name and address.

NEVILLE O'CONNOR 2/2, Tintenbar, with a newsy letter, as he says long overdue, but admits that he hates writing and getting worse. Has a lot to do looking after the home on an acre block, goes on trips with the Probus Club, attends his Legacy duties and still loves to go out to "Athenry" — the property where he was born and bred — and after 130 years still in the O'Connor name. He and Bet are in fairly good health and looking forward to Gosford.

Max has passed on parts of your letter to Russ Harrison for the 2/2nd articles and mention of Darcy Chapman and Jim Taylor have been dealt with in Last Post.

Many thanks Nev for the all the news and Peg says she will bring the New Guinea book along to Gosford. Cheque for subs has been handed to worthy treasurer. All the best to you both.

WAL PAGE 2/1, Cudgen, with a quick short note to wish us all a great Anzac Day. Wal keeps well apart from a few aches and pains that come with age. "Desso", why don't you visit occasionally.

JACK PAINTER 2/1, Narrandera, with a short note for Max and a cheque for funds. Had a great day meeting lots of friends on Anzac Day. Was sorry to hear of the death of John Douglas and he extends sympathy to wives and families of all Pioneers who have passed on recently. Jack has seen Mick Roberts of Leeton and said he is going well. They have had a long hot summer with not much rain, but that week of writing had over three inches, which was great for the farmers and gardens. Sends kindest regards to all.

MONTE REID 2/1, Cessnock, with a welcome letter and cheque and on behalf of Max and myself must say many thanks for your kind words — put it down to a labour of love, Monte. He writes that 52 years ago he landed at Greta as a hopeful recruit looking forward to being of some assistance in stemming the advance of the Nazi forces. One of the men he met on that first night turned out to be a great bloke called Viv Le Mesurier. Monte says he can still feel the frustration of our sergeant as each morning he tried to come to terms with that awkward name.

Once again many thanks for your kind words, Monte, and nice to hear from you again.

BRUCE RICH 2/1, Narrandera, with a very short note enclosing his sub to the *News* and his best wishes. Not much I can make out of that, Bruce!

ERIC REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with news of a trip he and Joyce did recently to the Murray and Barossa Valley. They saw a lot of country — Dog on the Tucker Box, Eureka Stockade, Sovereign Hill, Bendigo and Mt Gambier. Were in Adelaide and Barossa Valley on Anzac Day and did a little wine tasting. Saw the Murray, Darling and Murrumbidgee Rivers, the Australian and Jap War Cemetery at Cowra and when they got to Bathurst their coach driver took them for a run around Mount Panorama where the driver rode bikes in his younger days.

Were expecting their two granddaughters up for holidays during July, so would be kept busy for a few weeks. The kids get it good in the Reynolds family — Eric's words, not mine. He and Joyce won't be attending the reunion this year, so we'll hear from you at a later date, Eric. All the best.

CEC SLOGGETT 2/2, Gunnedah, per pen of wife May, a welcome note and cheque for treasurer. They are both well and have had a few trips away to Toowoomba, Lismore and Deepwater and hope to go again before it gets cold. May said it was nice to read of Maisie and Jack Kemprich and they often talk about funny things that happened when they were together. Cec had a few days in hospital with pneumonia which took the spark out of him for a few weeks.

He had a good Anzac Day. With a couple of other fellows he had done a few days work on their local Memorial, painting and such like and it looked nice and fresh for the big day.

Cec has added a PS on the bottom of the letter. Quotes that his secretary has done a good job (so she should she's well paid) — he said that, May, not me. Closes with best wishes to all.

NORM SUNDERLAND 2/2, Hermitdale, with a thank you for the *News* and enclosed a cheque for treasurer. Says a lot of names crop up from time to time which brings back old memories. Norm will try to make the Gosford reunion and wishes all

members the best of luck for the future. Signs off with Norm (2 metre) Sunderland — what's that Norm, your height or waist measurement.

DANNY SPROUSTER 2/1, Dundas, with welcome sub and the news that he has been away on his yearly visits to his daughter's, which certainly keep you on the move. Sees "Shaky" Bill Arthur on the odd occasion and he's turning into a lucky punter according to Danny. It's a bit late in life for that, isn't it.

TED WILCOX 2/1, Yanderra, with a letter telling of his ankle problems and hope you have some luck in your application to Veteran Affairs. Ted had been to OPSM in Wollongong to get new glasses and was given the choice of two metal frames — easy choice, Ted, one or the other. Not much news from Yanderra — Jim Law lives that way, but he only see him on Anzac Day. Sends best wishes to all.

COLONEL JOHN WILLIAMS 2/2, Sefton, with a sub and the news that he is back on his two feet again and hopes to be marching in Melbourne on Anzac Day. (Never in doubt I would say John.) Passes on kindest regards to all Pioneers.

TEMPLE WOOD 2/2, Terrigal, with his sub and a change of address from Kingsgrove to their daughter's residence at Terrigal. Looks forward to receiving the *News* and hearing of old Btn. friends. Due to health reasons he has been unable to attend any Pioneer functions for many years. He has had one unsuccessful knee replacement and is now waiting for the second one to be done.

Temple was with the Carrier Platoon when they moved from Bathurst to Kapooka and was with the 2/2 until they left Balikpapan in 1946. Seeing 1992 is 50th anniversary of re-formed 2/2nds and reunion is at Gosford, you might be able to make it from Terrigal if knee problems permit. Pleased to hear from you and good luck with your operation.

BILL WRIGHT 2/1, Wyoming, telling of his good day on Anzac Day. All the joy of a day together with good mates and lots of memories of those who are no longer with us and those suffering ill health, all go toward making it a day to remember. Bill quotes how memories come flooding back at this time and mentions a certain night in the quarry. He was allotted the job of freeing the odd rock that jammed in the crusher jaws, when around 11 pm he noticed Bill Doney coming around attending to the oil requirements on the machine. He was under where Bill was sitting, when a load was emptied at the mouth of the crusher. One large rock over-rode the rest and spilled over the chute and Bill Doney collected this rock between the shoulders and drove him into the ground. Although at least ten feet below where Bill Wright was sitting he jumped down and felt sure that Bill Doney would never survive such a blow, but he came to and able to finish his shift. Bill Doney was there with Bill on Anzac Day, now 80 years old.

Another chap from C Coy was also injured in the Quarry and Bill would like to know if anyone remembers his name. His leg was badly mutilated in a crusher and they never saw him again. Bill hopes some C Coy bloke can remember his name, he remembers the incident well but cannot put a name to the injured man.

Bill asked after Jack Claypole and George Nichols — as you will read elsewhere Bill both have written and given apologies for their absence. Closes with see you at Gosford.

JEAN MONTAGUE widow of Monty 2/1, with a change of address from Homebush to Penrith. Good to hear from you, Jean, and glad you still look forward to receiving the *News*. All the best in your new home.

BERN REINERS 2/1, Corryong, with a long newsy letter to say how pleased he and Mona were to have the Herrons and Kerslakes call in for a visit on their recent trip to Victoria and hopes they can make it longer next time. (You may be sorry for that remark, Bern.)

Has been very cold in their neck of the woods and been close to snowing on several days. Bern says the weather in Corryong can be beautiful, but when its bad it's b__y awful.

Good to hear from you, Bern, and keep that home brew in storage — may have some thirsty visitors pass again later in the year.

MARJ BOYLE wife of Keith 2/1, Moama, with a very welcome letter and great news of a wonderful improvement in Keith's condition. He had been admitted to a nursing home in March and was told by a specialist he would never be able to come

home. However, he has started to show signs of improvement and Marj says he can now stand for a short time on his own and take a few steps. (Keith had suffered a stroke early in the year.) Now Marj expects to have him home by Christmas and with the aid of an electric chair and modifications to their home, she hopes to be able to manage. As Marj herself is in a wheelchair, it is amazing what spirit they both have and we wish them all the luck in the world. Thanks for your good wishes for the reunion, Marj, we will miss you both.

DOUG SHEARSTON 2/1, of Forster, with a donation and with the news that his disability pension had been accepted — good news Doug.

RON EDWARDS 2/1 of Wantirna, Vic., with a sub and news that he has moved into a retirement village and is very happy.

BARBARA WILLIAMS 2/1 former wife of Geoff with news she had recently been in hospital but is now recovered and looking forward to viewing the Games. Regards to all Pioneers.

That's about all for Mail Bag this issue. My football team is very perhaps, but so are quite a few of the others. Balmain is doing it tough (Coatsey) and Parramatta with the Poos (Collis), but what the hell. The only trouble is the hill is getting so much harder to sit on when they are losing, either that or the padding on the backside is getting poorer. All the best to all members, their wives and offspring.

See you at Gosford — LAKEY

LAST POST

MARCUS BERNHARDT 2/1 of Woollahra passed away on January 20, at the age of 79 years and the funeral was conducted by the Woollahra RSL. Mark had served with the unit in Tobruk and New Guinea.

To his widow Myrtle the Association extends their deepest sympathy.

FRANK HEPBURN 2/2 of Bankstown passed away on March 17 after a long stay in hospital and the funeral was attended by Bill Tasker who extended sincere sympathy to Irene Hepburn.

BRIAN (PADDY) GRAY 2/1 of Brunswick Heads passed away on April 2, and the funeral was attended by Ted Felton, Jack Shearman, Jack Martin, Len O'Connor, Lyle Butcher and Ron Cross, who extend sincere sympathy to Gloria and her family on behalf of the Association.

RAY HORNE 2/1 of Macksville passed away on April 4, at Gosford Hospital and the funeral at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium was attended by 17 Pioneers and their wives. The Eulogy was read by President Bill Jollie and the Poppy service was conducted by Bill Tasker.

Ray is survived by his daughter Judy who wishes to express her thanks to all those who packed the Chapel and for the many expressions of sympathy extended to her.

DARCY CHAPMAN 2/1 of Lismore, passed away on May 8 after a long illness. The funeral conducted at Lismore Crematorium and was attended by Alec George, Jack Bryant, Ron Cross and Neville O'Connor. Representatives from Probus, local golf club and Bridge Club and the Moree Shire Council were also in attendance.

Nev O'Connor 2/2 grew up with Darcy and Nev's late wife, Mary, and Darcy's wife went to school together. Darcy originally served locally as Shire Clerk then after the war was Moree Shire Clerk. Sincere sympathy was extended to all the family by Ron Cross and Nev O'Connor.

BRIAN NEIBERDING 2/2 of Parramatta passed away on May 15 at Lady Davidson Hospital after an operation at Concord Hospital. The funeral was attended by Ray Harris, Roy Levy, Bill Tasker and Chris and Marea McKay. Sympathy was extended by Bill Tasker to Marion and family.

JIM TAYLOR 2/2 of Urunga passed away on May 20 after having his leg amputated at Coffs Harbour Hospital. Nev O'Connor attended the funeral and extended Association sympathy to Jim's widow and family.

JOHN VODIKA 2/1 of Villawood passed away on June 30 after an accident at home and the funeral was attended by Gordon Finlay who extended Association sympathy to the family.

MUFTI, the RSL magazine of Victoria published in June the following deaths: D. P. Jones 2/1, Dick Marshall 2/2, A. Martin 2/2 and F. L. Hunt 2/2. Many thanks to Eric Causer for ringing in the above information.

PIONEER NEWS

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THE 2/2nd AUST. PIONEER BATTALION

Part Three of the series covering the Battalion from its re-formation in June 1942 to the 50th Anniversary in 1992.

Part 3 — MOVE TO STRAWBERRY, WA

Late in September, 1942, a small advance party, under the command of Major E. F. Aitken, left Wagga Wagga for Western Australia. In early October, "HQ" and "A" Companies followed and by 8th October, the whole battalion was on the way, eventually being concentrated at Strawberry some 60 miles south west of Geraldton.

The purpose of the move to Strawberry soon became evident when the battalion took part in the ambitious "Robber" exercise directed by Lt. General Gordon Bennett and involving 4th Division, elements of an armoured regiment and other units. Soon townships such as Mingenew, Moora and Dongara became familiar to the troops. A route march to Dongara where surfing beaches were available was a highlight of the battalion's stay in the Strawberry area. A vast bushfire moving through the area was, over a period of a few days, brought under control with much loss of sweat and sleep. Only six weeks after arriving at Strawberry, the battalion was on the move again and by mid-November had occupied a camp-site at Bellevue, a Perth suburb about 15 miles east of the city centre. Six weeks of primitive conditions in the Strawberry area had wrought havoc with uniforms and battalion equipment, and re-issue of various items, particularly hats, was organised. The troops soon availed themselves of the amenities on offer in Perth and liberal leave conditions applied. Here the battalion received reinforcements from the Infantry Training Battalion at Northam. The 2/2 Pioneers' third Christmas was celebrated at Bellevue in more or less a traditional manner. Beer at 10 shillings and 6 pence a dozen and red or white wine at 4 shillings and 6 pence per 4 gallon can seems attractive these days.

In January 1943 a 4th Division sports meeting was held at Gloucester Park in the presence of Sir James Mitchell, Governor of Western Australia. Capt W. Mitchell commanded the guard of honour which received favourable comment. The battalion band under Sgt G. Dobson won the music competition, Jack Tolley the 880 yards event and Jim McFadden the hop, step and jump. Lectures on living off the land, the crossing of creek-beds by various uses of ropes helped to amplify training. Bellevue was regarded as a home away from home and the contentedness it engendered in the troops soon came to the Army's attention, so that it was not long before the battalion was on the move again. It will be noted by students of military history that no attempt was made by Japanese forces to invade north western Australia and many authorities believe that this was due in large measure to the presence of the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion.

In early February 1942, Maj H. Tope and a small advance party had arrived in Mangalore a few miles north of Victoria's military town of Seymour. Capts A. J. McInnes, H. Huggard and Lieut. D. A. Williamson joined the battalion which was concentrated in the new camp by mid-February.

Soon it was on again — another move that is. Maj Kidd and an advance party, followed by the main body had proceeded to Woodford in Southern Queensland by the end of March, 1943. This was obviously a staging camp and just two days after the battalion's arrival, orders were received for another move, this time to Ravenshoe on the Atherton Tablelands to rejoin 7th Division, where the battalion was concentrated by late April. The divisional commander Maj Gen G. Vasey allotted the battalion to 21st Brigade for training purposes.

Jungle training was commenced in earnest and it was not long before the troops were experienc-

ing the difficulties in operating in such terrain. The fiasco of the exercise at Tully Falls caused by heavy rain comes to mind. The perils of encounters with the wait-a-while vine and the Gympie bush were ever present and were even experienced by Joe Lang, the CO. Ernie Jones of "D" Coy spent one very painful period of about 12 hours as a result of contact with the Gympie bush. There were also the mosquitoes and all sorts of creepy-crawlies to contend with.

Training was interspersed with sporting events and race meetings. In June 1943 at the 21st Brigade Sports the Pioneers had success in individual and team events. L/Cpl Carroll won the 100 yards sprint, Tom Bye the 220 yards, Tom Clarke the 440 yards, Jack Tolley the mile and Jim McFadden the hop, step and jump. A team led by Joe White won the tank attack gun competition and the battalion team won the tug-of-war. In other activities, a visit to the 2/3rd Pioneer Battalion at Kairi resulted in wins by the 2/2nd teams at hockey and rugby league.

On 22nd June, 1943, the battalion celebrated the first anniversary of its being re-formed at Kapooka.

As well as the sporting events, entertainment for the troops was provided by the 5th, 6th and 7th Division Concert Parties.

RODEO AT MOUNT GARNET

The last exercise involving the battalion was exercise "Rodeo" in the Mount Garnet area. "C" company was given the job of making the Mount Garnet racecourse ready for a rodeo and race meeting. The purpose of exercise "Rodeo" was to gain experience of operating with the presence of American paratroopers, of 503rd Parachute Regiment, a precursor to the battalions involvement in the capture of Nadzab in New Guinea. As the main body of the battalion watched the rodeo, Capt A. McInnes and Lieut Stevenson and 150 troops filed on board the troopship "Canberra" at Townsville and sailed for Port Moresby on 11th July, 1943. The remainder of the battalion boarded the "Duntroon" at Townsville on 25th July and sailed for Port Moresby the next morning.

The move to Port Moresby was the seventh since being re-formed, and the "Duntroon" arrived there on 28th July. As she moved to her berth most of the Pioneers on board experienced the real war. The ship "Macdhui" lay in shallow waters having some months earlier been sunk during a Japanese raid. This was followed by the crash of a Kittyhawk fighter which showed signs of severe damage to its wings.

Movement of the troops to Seven Mile Gully took place without incident. The advance party had prepared the camp-site and by late afternoon the companies had settled in their areas.

During the morning of the second day, an air-raid warning was sounded. Bren guns were quickly mounted and air sentries posted. No enemy aircraft appeared. The camp site was within a couple of miles of Jacksons and Wards airfields and there was an almost continuous coming and going of aircraft involved in operations against the Japanese.

Training resumed without delay, with a deal of practice in the use of the Owen sub-machine gun, leaving little time for recreation. American "movies" and the inevitable gambling schools functioned in abundance but heavy tropical showers often spoiled these activities. Training included the role of small sub-units and river crossings of the Laloki River. Prior to the move to Tisli Tisli for the battalion's participation in the assault on Nadzab, Maj Kidd, Lieut D. O. Smith and Pte P. Robinson were flown there to carry out patrolling the Watut River, tracks to Kirklands Dump and crossings of the Markham River. On 23rd August, 1943, the battalion was flown to Tisli Tisli. The left-out-of-battle group under Maj E. Aitken and the support group under WO(II) Wellington remained in Port Moresby. Tisli Tisli was a for-

ward fighter base occupied by the United States Air Force. Contact was maintained with the Papuan Infantry Battalion which was manning observation posts at the junction of the Watut and Markham Rivers and on Mount Ngaraneno.

The move to Kirklands Dump involved a march of about 50 miles. As well as the Pioneers, the force included Engineers, small parties from 2/4th Field Regiment and 7th Division Signals and a Field Security Section. For the portage of reserve rations, ammunition and other stores, 800 New Guinean people were employed. For the transport of heavy equipment, 60 Pioneers and a part of Engineers using 12 large folding boats sailed the Watut River to the Markham to arrive opposite Kirklands Dump on the night preceding the attack on Nadzab Airfield. The movement by river was most difficult due to fast flowing sections and shoals and unfortunately one man and three boats were lost. The remaining nine boats arrived just after midnight on 5th September. The force moving overland, comprising 780 troops and 800 carriers, moved out on 1st September, each man carrying between 60 to 80 pounds of arms and equipment. Extremely arduous conditions were encountered all the way. On the first day only seven miles were covered. Third day was long and very tiring, commencing with a steep climb of 1200 feet. Then followed a stretch of swampy country followed by more stiff climbing. Camp for the night was at Kunai Patch. The fourth day offered no relief and to traverse one ridge the column of men climbed 1800 feet. Native bees were a constant source of annoyance. They did not sting but appeared to be seeking salt from the men's perspiration and were most persistent. The laying up area at Kirklands Dump was eventually reached later than scheduled and night had fallen when the stragglers, assisted by their mates, arrived exhausted. No fires were permitted and only cold rations were available. There were not many who had the stomach for food in such conditions as the weary men settled down for the night mostly sleeping fitfully if at all.

ADVANCE ACROSS MARKHAM RIVER

Through the night individual boats arrived and by 3.15 am on 5th September seven had been unloaded and concealed. By about 8 am the drone of aircraft could be heard. These soon appeared flying 12 abreast and began discharging the paratroopers of the 503rd US Army Paratroop Regiment, "umbrella men" to the New Guinea carriers. This was the signal for the Pioneers and their support groups to begin the advance across the Markham River. "A" company was the first to move. Using the folding boats a crossing was made and a bridgehead established to protect the crossing by the remainder of the land force. One platoon of "B" company also crossed and moved out to the Erap River to establish a post to give any warning of any enemy approach from that flank. The Engineers constructed a bridge and ropeway over the last four channels. While these activities proceeded the other companies dug in on the sandbanks or waited in the jungle cover on the river banks. By 2.15 pm the whole group had crossed the Markham River and was in enemy territory. To put it in Eddie Aitken's words as he wrote in the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion History — perhaps there were more gruelling marches in the Pacific War, but there was never one so well-timed over such rugged country. Major H. Duchatel and Lieut E. Snook from New Guinea Force Headquarters proved invaluable as guides and the loss of Maj Duchatel some weeks after the capture of Nadzab came as a great shock to all. The first of the Pioneers reached the southern edge of the airfield by late afternoon. Capt Putland and his RAP staff attended to the casualties which were mainly paratroopers' broken legs and arms. Many landed in trees and could only be released with great difficulty. The sight of the paratroops dropping

from their aircraft was one of the great events of the battalion's operations in New Guinea. Some 1500 men were dropped and fortunately casualties were very light. Those who witnessed the operations carry vivid memories of it. Volunteers from the 2/4th Australian Field Regiment dropped with them and they were the first Australian troops to make an operational descent. Two short 25 pounders were also dropped. They were in pieces and one was assembled only after a jeep track had been cut through the jungle to assemble its parts. They were quickly brought to the task of providing artillery support.

Thus Nadzab Airfield was secured and the troops spent an uneasy night awaiting the arrival of another dawn and what the new day would bring forth.

(Part Four continues next issue)

2/2 PIONEER BN INSERT

The insert enclosed with this issue of *Pioneer News* has been printed as a follow up to the 2/2 Pioneer Bn history. The printing has been organised and kindly donated by Ian Willmore 2/2.

PIONEER NEWS REDUCED

In order to cut costs the Committee have agreed to reduce the number of issues of *Pioneer News* from three to two per year as from 1993.

This decision was taken because of the increased cost of printing as well as postage and the reduction of donations as the following figures indicate:

	Printing/Postage	Subs by Letter
1989	\$2541	\$1680
1991	\$3039	\$1508

There is no fee to belong to the Association and unlike some other organisations we do not conduct raffles each year, so our only source of income is donations to the *Pioneer News*, for printing at \$648 and postage at \$365 (45 cents per copy) for each issue.

It is now also necessary for an appeal to be made to over 400 members of the total 813 posted out, who according to our records show they have not made a donation over the past six years, to come forward and assist in keeping the *Pioneer News* alive. Perhaps some of these people are not interested in receiving the *Pioneer News*, in which case they can return the wrapper marked "Not Required", place in an envelope and return to M. Herron, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills 2209.

An appeal was made in the August issue of *Pioneer News* to those who have not contributed to our "news" in years but as the response was less than gratifying we are appealing again hoping for more encouraging results.

This appeal is not directed at all those 400 hundred members who have made donations regularly and we do thank them for their support and we know they realise no *Pioneer News* means no Association. Also the Committee do not expect donations from the widows of our members, so they too can ignore this appeal.

At the October Committee meeting one member summed up our lengthy discussion on this subject by saying —

**IF YOU WANT THE NEWS —
PAY YOUR DUES**

THE DUTCH MEDAL

The official title of this award is the Netherlands War Commemorative Cross 1940/45 and is officially recognised with a foreign award classification.

Those eligible to have the cross are those who served in Dutch New Guinea, Java, Tarakan, Borneo and other Dutch territories in East Asia and South Pacific areas.

The cross may be worn on the left breast following all other decorations and campaign awards. It is only available from recognised medal dealers.

INFORMATION REQUIRED

The secretary recently had a call from Richard McIntyre, who is the son of the late William Thomas McIntyre, requesting information about his father, a member of the 2/1st Pioneer Bn., NX90563.

If any member of the unit can supply any particulars please contact Richard McIntyre, 4 Tornado Avenue, Hallett Cove, SA 5158.

Also Jeff Richards seeks information on his grandfather, John William James Richards NX23575 2/1, so please contact him at 55 Cantrell Street, Yagoona 2199.

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

A short comment on the Gosford Reunion. A really good show well attended by 168 people and I think everyone enjoyed themselves. Speaking from a personal point of view to be with old mates, to enjoy their company and to see those that one only sees periodically, is well worth any effort that one puts into attending.

WES BENNETT 2/2, Albury, with a letter enclosing a cut out from the local paper regarding an avenue of trees at Albury-Wodonga to commemorate the 2/2 Pioneer Bn. Max has passed on the addresses of the NSW and Vic. Associations and as Wes remarks would be nice if a few of the old members could be present at the official opening.

ALF BENTLEY 2/1, WA, with a letter and a donation for the treasurer. He has sent some photos to Max that included Sid Jopson at Kairi and Moratai and comments that he was sorry to hear of the death of Sid's wife, Myrtle. Also met Len Preedy in hospital a couple of months ago and has since heard from him with date of their next meeting. He and his wife hope to be in Sydney for next Anzac Day and hope to contact some of the old Tank Attack Platoon. The photos you sent to Max taken at Kairi in 1945 were of Tom Chrystall, Frank Pawley, Max Cutler, Fred Baldock, Alf Bentley, Sid Jopson, and Phil Ruby and this photo with be placed in the Pioneer's album. Many thanks for your letter, Alf, and looking forward to seeing you in 1993.

JACK BERTRAM 2/1, Hamilton, with a letter to say he had visited Larry Robson and reports that Larry was a little better. He still has his infection and swollen legs, but was able to walk round his bed, and is very cheerful. His Life Membership Badge and Certificate gives him a terrific sense of satisfaction. Larry passed on his thanks to Mary Lloyd for her card of good wishes and sends his regards to all as he is unable to write. He receives lots of visitors and Jack says he has bumped into Jack and Esme Griffiths twice at the hospital.

Thanks for your letter and caring visits to Larry, Jack. I'm sure they are appreciated.

JACK COATES 2/1, Umina, with a long newsy letter and a big thank you to all for the efforts of the Gosford Reunion. Mentions that Canon Heuston's service at the Memorial was splendid and Jack pleased to see so many of his old B Coy represented — John Gilchrist, Bluey Miller, Noel Trefoni and Harry Mowbray — took Jack back to old Greta days. Says he will be passing through Greta on his way to Narrabri later in the month on the XPT and will give the ghosts a silent salute at Silver City.

Thank you, Jack, for your good wishes and for your many visits to Jack Collis while in Brisbane Waters Hospital and your phone calls to us on his progress — all very much appreciated.

Have passed on your donation to worthy treasurer and a big thank you from Peg for your gift of the First Day cover. Sends regards to all hands — and for Lakey, "Tigers to roar in 93 and 94".

KEITH BOYLE 2/1, Moama, was unable to attend Gosford because of a stroke suffered earlier in the year, but was home on "weekend leave" on the evening of the reunion. His good wife, Marj, rang Peg Herron during the evening with their good wishes for a great weekend and Keith was able to speak with Peg for a few minutes. It was good to hear from you both and your kind wishes were passed on to all during the evening.

Glad you are making progress, Keith, and sincerely hope you will be "home for Christmas".

REBECCA CLOGG, widow of Bill 2/1, with a cheque for the treasurer and a change of address. Enjoys reading the *News* and meeting mates of Bills that she had met through the "Rats of Tobruk". Had a visit from Ivor Garnon but after just completing her move to new home was too tired to go the meeting with him. Hope you are now settled in Rebecca and all the best in your new surroundings.

PAT COLLINS 2/1-2/2 Glenfield, with an apology for not being present at Gosford. He and Edna were attending a reunion of a different kind on the same date — namely their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They were married in Canberra on 30th Septem-

ber, 1942, the same day the 2/2nds made their march through Wagga. Edna was able to manage seven days leave, so they were able to have a couple of days together before Pat had to board the train for WA.

Your apologies accepted Pat and, as you say, 50 years is very short when you are having fun. All the best to you both, and thanks for photos.

RON CROSS 2/1, Ballina, with a short note to Max and a sub for the treasurer. Ron says that Alex Cameron has now been admitted to the Ex-Servicemen's Complex at Ballina after a fall. His Dr at Maclean would not let him out of hospital, as he could not look after himself. Ron has visited him and while he is not the best has settled into the home well. Thanks for the information, Ron, and it is good that you can visit him occasionally.

JIM GRAY 2/1, Warrawong, with a letter and few quips for the *News*, a walk down Memory Lane — Bromide never did serve the purpose for which it was drunk, due to its shocking taste. A Pallase was never a spring mattress. A Kit-bag was never a dream pillow. Burgoon was just a cartoon character. In all those years I never heard the cook called a B_____ to his face — dehydrated eggs and potatoes were probably the fast foods of that era. A Rose Bowl was never meant to put flowers in and a "back up" had nothing to do with patrols.

But one thing we did have was mateship — when someone received parcels from home it was shared around, excerpts from letters were also shared when they had not been chopped to pieces by the Censor — it all went to knocking that boredom on the head.

Wishes all Pioneers and their ladies good health and happiness.

JACK GRIFFITH 2/2, Frankston, sends a short note with kind regards to all, especially his old mates of 2/2, and a donation to the *News*. Says he is not much of a letter writer, but a short note is better than none at all, Jack.

CLIFF HILL 2/1, Murwillumbah, with an apology for not keeping in touch more often. He has not been in the best of health over the years, with a list that makes the eyes pop — bad nerves, stomach ulcers, hiatus hernia and a cancer removed from his leg and the skin graft did not take. Do hope you can improve on that list, Cliff, and enjoy a few good years.

He often sees Lyle Butcher and Len O'Connor and has a chat with them. Enjoys reading the *News* and enclosed a welcome donation for the treasurer.

IAN HODGE 2/1, Evans Head, with a cheque enclosed for the treasurer and a change of address from number 11 to 14 due to some council stupidity. Had no other news of other Pioneers, as he hasn't seen anyone for years. Seems strange, Ian, as there are plenty of blokes up around that area. It is seven years since Ian retired and he still enjoys good health with plenty of golf, gardening, mud crabbing and fishing. When do you get time to rest. He spent a week in Sydney lately and shivered all the time and was quite glad to get back to God's own country.

JACK HUMPHREY 2/1, Casino, with a letter telling how his *Pioneer News* was not arriving. He was walking his dog down the street and passed a lady looking in her letter box. Taking the *Pioneer News* out she asked him if by any chance did it belong to him, as she had also received earlier copies. Somehow the "gremlins" had got into the secretary's addressing system and instead of going to number 39, they were being delivered to 29. Anyway, all has been sorted out and Jack is now looking forward to further issues of the *News*.

Jack was sorry to hear of the death of John Douglas and pleased to see that Max Law was able to attend the Anzac Day reunion — how lucky to have a wonderful wife and son to look after him. Closes with best wishes to all.

PHILL JACKSON 2/2, Dongara, WA, with a thank you for *Pioneer News* and a welcome sub for the treasurer. Phill derives great pleasure in hearing of his old mates and sends regards to Stan Rixon, Jack Hocking and Charlie Vickery (known as Father). Also his best wishes to Colonel Williams, whose help and advice never forgotten.

He spends quite a lot of time in his garden these days and, although war blinded, with his wife's help can still potter about. Apart from a few twinges of gout, life is treating him pretty well for a 70-year-old. They live in a coastal town, Dongara, with a flourishing fishing fleet (crayfish) with good sheep and

wheat growing very strong. Is a good spot for tourists and a stop-over for many. Closes with best wishes to all.

MARY LLOYD widow of Jack 2/1, with a very nice thank you card for a wonderful reunion at Gosford. Says she has lots of memories to look back on and remembers it is 20 years since the Pioneers last marched the Greta Road — how the years have flown since that reunion. Many thanks, Mary.

DORRIE LONG widow of Bob 2/1, with a letter to the Association and an apology for the lateness of a cheque for Vic. Always enjoys reading the *News* and lots of names familiar through hearing Bob speak of old friends. Her time passes quickly as she spends a lot of time with her grandchildren. They certainly keep you on your toes, Dorrie. Closes with best wishes to all.

GLEN MORISH, nephew of Jack 2/2, with a letter to Max saying that his uncle died many years ago and the *News* has been received by Glen's father ever since. Recently his father gave these copies to Glen and he has found them most interesting and informative. In forwarding his congratulations to our Association members who keep the magazine going, he has asked to be put on the mailing list for future copies and enclosed a cheque to help towards printing costs. Many thanks, Glen, and for your kind wishes for the future. Max has added your name to our mailing list.

CLEMM McDONALD 2/2, Port Macquarie, with a letter per typewriter of Norma, and a very generous donation to funds. Clemm decided to have a punt and if he could back a winner, could get more funds for the Association. He wasn't sure how good a punter Vic was, even though he's a good treasurer (the reference to Lakey I will ignore thank you) so decided to have a bet himself and the result was a good donation to our funds. A further letter, since received, also contained another healthy cheque, but Clemm claims that's the last because he got smart and lost his stakes on the last bet. Still, two wins from three bets wasn't bad punting! Many thanks, Clemm, we appreciate your kind gesture and assure you it will be put to good use.

We were sorry you and Norma could not make it to Gosford and hope that the treatment here in Sydney has been of benefit. We missed your smiling face. All the best.

LLOYD (PORKY) GRAHAM 2/1, Gold Coast, with a letter of congratulations to the Committee on the Gosford Reunion and must commend those who over the years have kept the old purple and white all together. It is good to see and feel the fellowship that still exists in both battalions. Sends his best wishes and hopes to see all again on Anzac Day.

CHARLES RICHARDSON 2/2, Queensland, with a letter and cheque for the treasurer. As he is somewhat isolated up there in Brisbane, he looks forward to receiving the *News*, although it is not always good. The passing of Ray Horne was a shock to him as he was remarking to Ray on Anzac Day 1991 how young and fit he looked. Also the passing of Frank Hepburn, who was a stalwart of C Coy 2/2, and Charles wishes to offer his condolences to Frank's widow, Irene, and to Judy, Ray's daughter.

ERIC REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with a letter and cheque that he meant to include in his last note. All is well in the Reynolds establishment, weather is lovely between 10 am and 4 pm most days cooling down in the evening. They had a visit from Allan and Beulah Crute from Woolgoolga which was much appreciated, and also visit them on occasions. Sends best wishes to all Pioneers and their families.

NOEL SMITH 2/1, Bathurst, with a short letter and a sub for the treasurer, plus a cutting from the TPI "Salute". What are Seniors Worth?

"Remember, old folks are worth a fortune, with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomach."

"Frankly, I have become a frivolous old girl. I am seeing seven gentlemen every day. As soon as I wake up, Will Power helps me out of bed . . . then I visit John. Next it's time for Uncle Toby to come along, followed by Billy T.

"They leave me and Arthur Ritis shows up and stays the rest of the day . . . he doesn't like to stay in one place very long so he takes me from joint to joint . . . after such a busy day I am really tired and glad to go to bed with Johnny Walker.

"The preacher came to call the other day. He said

that at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. . . . I told him, oh I do that all the time . . . no matter where I am, whether I am in the parlour, upstairs, in the kitchen or down in the basement, I ask myself . . . now what am I here after?" Well done, Noel.

JEAN STAFFORD widow of George, 2/1, with a thank you for the *News* and enclosed a cheque towards expenses. Max has written to you personally re the medals, Jean, and given you the respective gentlemen to contact. I am sure they will be able to help you. Best wishes and thank you for your letter.

ALLAN STONE 2/2, Raymond Terrace, with a few lines to say Hello and a belated sub for the treasurer. Allan still enjoys good health and manages to keep the garden and lawns in good shape and with the occasional bit of painting helps him "keep in shape". Closes with best wishes to all.

KEN STUART 2/1, Turramurra, with a letter telling of the fact that some 12 years ago Humphrey (Pasha) Jackson and his wife moved to Norfolk Island. Recently Ken's wife who regularly visits patients at Lady Davidson Home at Turramurra told him that Pasha was a patient there. Some years ago Pasha had his leg amputated below the knee and had been fitted with a prosthesis which now required to be adjusted. Ken was pleased to visit him and talked over old times. Pasha asked to be remembered to all members of the 2/1 Pioneers and sent his best wishes.

NOEL TREFONI 2/1, Toongabbie, with a letter of thanks to Max and Peg for visiting him at Concord during his stay there and apologised for not being there at the time, as he had been granted weekend leave. Would also like to thank Bill Jollie and Jack Coates for their visitations too. Unfortunately the report was not good, but it's nice to know that he has friends like the Pioneers. Noel also passed on many thanks to Jim Gray for his kind letter which was much appreciated. Keep up the good work, Noel, we are all plugging for you and wish you well.

GWEN STRODE, sister of Keith Jones 2/1, KIA Borneo, with a short note and a donation to funds. Sorry to hear of your husband's passing, Gwen, also the news of the death of Lena, Keith's widow. (Max and Peg had a long association with Lena's mother and aunt, Hannah Jocelyn, and thank you for the news.) Pleased to hear you are back on track and getting on with life, Gwen, and we send you our best wishes. Nice to hear from you.

FRANK WHITE 2/2, ACT, with a note saying that he had been receiving the *Pioneer News* for years and enjoying same, so enclosed a substantial cheque to help with expenses. Thanks, Frank, and for your good wishes.

BONNIE SNUDDEN, widow of Cecil 2/2, Dubbo, with a welcome letter enclosing a cutting from the local paper in reference to the late Mick Bye 2/2. Mick passed away last year and in recognition of his years of service to the Dubbo and Community Retirement Village, the Committee decided to name the drive into the village the "Mick Bye Memorial Drive" in his honour.

Many thanks, Bonnie, for passing on the news and for your good wishes.

That's all of Mail Bag for this issue. Football is finished, so have nothing to say really. The Broncos were too good for the Sydney teams, but if Brisbane get a second team in the comp. this will bring them back to the field. After all, it's city clubs versus Queensland at the present time. Will have to rely on the cricket for something to argue on. Wishing all Pioneers, their wives and families all the best of health, wealth and happiness for the coming Festive Season and a very prosperous and Happy New Year.

So long and keep sober,

LAKEY

LARRY ROBSON, Life Member

At the Gosford Reunion Larry was to be presented with his Life Membership Certificate but owing to being in hospital he was unable to attend, so President Bill Jollie made the presentation to Vice-President Jack Bertram, who was the proposer. On the day following the reunion, Jack and Jack Griffiths visited Larry and presented the Life Certificate and have informed the Association Larry was very thrilled with the award.

Congratulations, Larry, on a job well done and kindest regards to you from all Pioneers.

LAST POST

ROBERT JOHN ALISON, CMG, 2/1 of Dungog passed away on 26th August at the age of 82 years.

A sympathy card was sent to Mrs Alison and in return we have received thanks from her. We thank Steve Clarke for supplying us with the details.

BILL HUTCHINSON 2/1 of Caringbah passed away on 22nd September. The funeral service was conducted at the Woronora Crematorium and the Association was represented by Peg and Max Herron. Bill was a member of the Signals Platoon with Max.

Sympathy was extended to wife Gloria on behalf of the Association.

ALLAN GEORGE BAUER 2/2 of Castlemaine Vic., passed away on 6th October at Mt Alexander Hospital.

GORDON MAGNER 2/2 formerly of NSW then New Zealand passed away in August. We thank Jack McDonagh for this information.

JACK CLARKE 2/1 of Rockdale passed away on 22nd October after a long stay in a nursing home where he had been visited by numerous Pioneers.

On 23rd October a mass was held at St Joseph's Catholic Church at Rockdale and Pioneers in attendance were Bill Tasker, Jack Stone, Pat Noonan, Peg/Max Herron and Joe Kyffin, who travelled up from Melbourne to pay his respect to his very good mate. Maurie McEvoy attended as representing the Rats of Tobruk Association.

Sincere sympathy was extended to Jean from President Bill and his Committee. Jack has been a very keen Committeeman for the past 30 years and he will be sadly missed by all his mates.

SICK PARADE

JACK SPOTTISWOODE 2/1 was in Macquarie Hospital in September and was visited by Roy Jardine.

CLEMM McDONALD 2/2 was being treated at a Sydney hospital during late September and was visited by Russ Harrison.

PHYL JOLLIE wife of President Bill is still in Westmead Hospital and has been visited by Peg Herron and Rita Trefoni.

LARRY ROBSON 2/1 is still in hospital as is Max Law 2/1 and Jim Field 2/2.

JACK COLLIS 2/1 is in and out of hospital at Gosford and has been regularly visited by Jack Coates.

HUMPHREY JACKSON 2/1 of Norfolk Island was in Lady Davidson Hospital in July, for adjustment of his artificial leg and was visited by Ken Stuart.

DON LINTON 2/2 of Tuncurry was in hospital at Taree and was visited by Don McClelland.

TOM McGUINNES 2/1 of Laurieton went into Prince Alfred Hospital for a by-pass operation in October and was visited by Bill Tasker.

REUNION AT ATHERTON

For one short period all three operational Divisions, 6th, 7th and 9th were together on the Atherton Tableland at Ravenshoe, Wondecla and Kairi.

Lae and Borneo landings were rehearsed on beaches north of Cairns and naval, air force and other army units, including the US troops, were scattered in the region.

Sir Sydney Williams is co-ordinating and planning a reunion in the Atherton region in October 1993 to celebrate the 50th year of the military activity on the Tableland.

Among the events being considered for October 1993 include returns by "old soldiers" to Atherton Tableland camp sites, a simulated camp as in 1943, including hospital, mammoth sports/race meeting as in 1943 complete with army bands; actual lake and river crossings using the military and amphibious landings on the beaches to recapture training for operations.

Editor's note: For supplying the above information I thank Vera Bradley of Cairns. Vera and husband Ron have been working for five years on researching the story of the Services in the Cairns region and I wish them every success in the publication of their book.

— M. HERRON

2/1-2/2 PIONEER GOSFORD REUNION

Visitors to Gosford for the reunion began arriving on Friday, 25th September, and before long began gathering in the RSL Club for thirst quenchers and lots of talk. Frank Caulfield from Benalla turned up about 10 am, maybe the first to arrive.

As Friday progressed and during Saturday, others had arrived and soon there was a buzz of activity and talking. It seemed to those, not the least bit interested in the footie, that the main topics were West Coast Eagles or Geelong, St George or the Broncos.

Some took the opportunity to have a look around the Gosford area and some made purchases for the Sunday barbecue.

As the shadows lengthened on Saturday afternoon, preparations for dressing up for the evening's official activities began and soon it was time to attend the Wreath Laying Ceremony and then the Reunion Dinner.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

The wreath laying ceremony proceeded with due solemnity and spirit of remembrance and was conducted under the direction of Ray Harris commencing at 5 pm, at the War Memorial in Gosford Park. The standard bearers were Phil Cramsie 2/1st and Tom Brabin 2/2nd. Proceedings began with the prologue by John Gilchrist. The religious service was carried out by Canon K. J. Heuston, who gave introductory words followed by the singing of the Recessional by the assembled visitors. Canon Heuston delivered the Commemoration Prayer, followed by the Lords Prayer and his address.

Wreaths were laid by Bob Sturgeon and Ralph Mortimer for the Gosford RSL, Vera Hamilton representing nursing sisters and Bill Jollie on behalf of the 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneer Battalions Associations.

The assembly was called to attention and called on Bill Jollie to deliver the Ode to the Fallen. The bugle calls The Last Post, and Reveille were sounded, followed by the singing of Advance Australia Fair.

Canon Heuston pronounced Benediction and for a few moments those present stood in silence, each with his or her own thoughts before moving off to meet again at the Gosford RSL for the Reunion Dinner.

THE REUNION DINNER

Those attending the dinner began arriving at the Auditorium entrance a little before 6 pm. Peg and Vic Whiteley ambushed those who still had to pay and Joyce Walker, Maree McKay, Ruth Rhodes and Mary Lloyd were issuing name tags. Seating arrangements were carried out with a minimum of fuss and all was set for an enjoyable evening. Roy Levy and Reg Ward served the ladies with pre-dinner drinks while the gentlemen obtained their requirements from the bar.

Jack Griffiths was MC for the evening and made his introductory remarks in his usual jocular manner, amid good natured jibes from the visitors. Jack introduced those seated at the King Table, who included Barbara and John Gilchrist, Bill Jollie, Esme Griffiths, Olga and Bob Sturgeon, Zita and Ralph Mortimer. Allan Olson, President of the South Australian Pioneers Association was asked to say Grace. The MC then called on Joe Robertson, also from South Australia, to propose the Loyal Toast. The first course was then served.

The Toast to the guests was proposed by Bill Jollie and Ralph Mortimer, Gosford RSL, gave the response. This was followed by a talk by Charles Richardson whose subject was the 50th Anniversary of the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion being re-formed at Kapooka in July 1942. His talk was well received and those present showed their appreciation by acclamation. The main course followed.

Jack Griffiths then called on John Gilchrist to deliver an address. His theme was the birth of Australia as a nation after the Gallipoli campaign in 1915, its political and economic problems over the years, the participation of Australian Forces in World War II and their fine achievement. John's address was also well received and applauded. Dessert and coffee were then served.

The formal proceedings having been completed, it was time to sit and talk and reminisce over good and bad old days. People began moving from table to table and in no time there was animated conversation around the auditorium.

The MC then asked Bill Jollie to speak in appreciation of those visitors from country areas and interstate. Bill called on the interstate visitors to stand as he called their names. They included:

Victoria — George Murphy (Secretary 2/2 Pioneer Battalion Association in Melbourne), Bob and Joyce Adolphson, Frank Caulfield, George and Nell Kelly (well equipped to tackle the fish along the NSW South Coast on their way home), Joe Kyffin, Tom and Joan Brabin and Frank Cheal (wife Barbara could not attend due to hip surgery).

South Australia — Allan Olson (President Pioneers Association in Adelaide) and Joe Robertson.

ACT — Ray and Merle Burroughs, Gordon and Noela Sheen.

Queensland — Don and Mona Barraclough, Phil Cramsie, Ken Franks, Lloyd Graham, Harry and Dorothy Mowbray, Bob McTaggart, Winston and Letty McKibbin, Charles Richardson (with daughter Jane and son-in-law Adrian Lane-Mullins and their children at the Sunday picnic) and Nev and Betty Woodham.

Thanks for their attendance also to nursing sisters Vera Hamilton, Sue Malcolm and Nessie Spence, also John and Barbara Gilchrist.

The Association awarded Life Membership to Larry Robson (2/1st) for services rendered over a number of years and Jack Bertram undertook to hand the badge and citation to Larry, who was in hospital.

The lucky door prize of a set of lovely bathroom accessories, very kindly made and donated by Glad Allan, widow of Jack Allan 2/1, was won by Shirley Lewis wife of Bill Lewis 2/2.

The evening drew to a close about 11 pm with the visitors looking forward to the Sunday and a pleasant day at the Picnic Grounds at Mt Penang.

PICNIC AT MT PENANG

Sunday dawned with prospect of a fine day which fortunately continued and gave good conditions for the picnic at Mt Penang Centre at Kariong a few kilometres south of Gosford.

The advance party was on the job early and a little after 10 am when the Gosford visitors began arriving the barbecue cooker was being prepared, traffic direction was in place and refreshment facilities just about ready for business.

Soon tables were being set up around the picnic area and groups were forming, all ready for a pleasant day in the outdoors. While many favoured the barbecue, others produced their packs of sandwiches and at some tables there appeared chicken and cold meats and salads. Cakes and other goodies were produced and it was obvious there were a lot of healthy appetites to be satisfied.

Signs of an end to the day's activities became evident around 2.30 pm. The area was cleaned up and movement back to the various motels in preparation for the farewell dinner began. Also there was something called the Rugby League Grand Final being shown on TV which seemed to be enticing many to make an early departure.

The facilities at Mt Penang are ideal and the day was enjoyed by all.

FAREWELL DINNER

Visitors began arriving at the auditorium for the farewell dinner from 6 pm, pre-dinner drinks being available from the bar.

George Walker was OC Mess Parade and about 7 pm he began calling the visitors to the serving area, table by table.

The farewell evening being informal, speech making was kept to a minimum. Bill Jollie spoke and affirmed the success of the weekend. George Murphy, Secretary of the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion Association in Melbourne was called upon to speak in appreciation of the weekend's activities. He said he was pleased to have been able to attend and praised the various helpers who made the weekend so successful. George conveyed the best wishes of 2/2 Pioneers in Victoria. He was accompanied to the dinner by his sister Gwynne Sweet and her husband Kevin.

George, on behalf of those present, conveyed thanks to Ray Harris for organising the wreath laying ceremony together with Roy Levy and for their good deeds at the picnic. He mentioned Vic Whiteley, assisted by his wife Peg, as collector of fees; George Walker as OC Mess Parade and Transport Officer;

Russ Harrison for directing traffic and as reporter for *Pioneer News*; Reg Ward (a scout friend of Max Herron) who performed numerous duties; David Herron (son of Peg and Max) who organised the setting up and printing of the Reunion programme; Peg and Max Herron for all those matters they handle so efficiently and have done over many years and Bill Jollie for the manner in which he carried out the duties of chairman for the weekend. Special thanks also to Jack Griffiths for his duties as MC at the reunion dinner.

The visitors sat around in groups and eventually it was time to depart. There was general agreement that a great weekend had been enjoyed by all.

Reported by RUSS HARRISON

BALIKPAPAN SURRENDER

The 2/1st Pioneer Bn encounter with the Japanese force at Tempadeong on 2nd September, 1945, prior to the official surrender of the Japanese was not recorded in the War Diary.

On page 172 of the 2/1st history book, "The Pioneers" appears an article taken from "Table Tops", the army newspaper, and even this is not correct as it states Lieut Ray Smith, on his way up Balikpapan Bay had with him two privates, whereas it should have read a corporal and a private. The full encounter is now told by Bill Hodges:

"On the morning of 2nd September 1945 an American launch arrived at Tempadeong beach with two American Servicemen on board who sought permission to head up the Bay to take photographs. Lieut Ray Smith passed on the request to Colonel Buckley who readily agreed providing an escort of an NCO and a Bren gunner were included.

"Lieut Ray Smith, Corporal Ray Horne and Bill Hodges, with a Bren gun, made up the party and proceeded up the Bay and encountered many barriers, consisting of sunken barges and large trees tied together with wire, blocking the river except for a channel, 20 feet wide, mainly along the right hand bank.

"After the final barrier was negotiated we rounded a bend and saw a cleared spit of land with a long barrelled gun with a 2" bore, aimed in the air. There was a hut in the background and several Japanese soldiers standing around in the area.

"Lieut Smith remarked, 'I hope these Japs know the war is over'. We agreed, as there was no chance of us turning back. As we neared the shore a plank was pushed out from the bank for us to disembark.

"On coming ashore we noticed the gun had been dismantled and all rifles piled in front of the hut and as there did not appear to be any other weapons around or with the Japs, we breathed a sigh of relief.

"A Japanese then said, in broken English, 'Wait, wait he come', and pointed up the track leading into the bush. Fifteen minutes later a Japanese came down the track, and we noticed he was not in military uniform but wearing a brown cotton jacket and a black fez type cap and carried a walking cane. He appeared to be a person of authority as the Japs sprang to attention as he passed and one Jap said he was the Admiral.

"A table and chairs were produced and the Admiral and Lieut Smith sat down and arrangements were made for formal talks to be carried out the next day. The Jap interpreter who spoke to us said, 'Me been in Australia, me cook two years in Melbourne', but beyond that he said nothing.

"The Jap soldiers kept some distance from Ray Horne and myself, while we retained our guns and would not let us get behind them, and they also stood across the track so we could not see beyond the clearing.

"We spent an hour there before embarking for Tempadeong and reporting back to Colonel Buckley with the news we had encountered the Japs and made arrangements for their surrender."

Following the encounter, on 10th September a Japanese delegation of senior officers, led by Rear Admiral Nomiya, came down by barge from Semoi and Sepakoe to Battalion Headquarters at Tempadeong for a conference with Brigadier F. G. Wood, Commander of 25th Brigade and Colonel Buckley. The Japanese surrendered their swords and disclosed the disposition of their forces, through the aid of maps and other records.

— Reported by BILL HODGES