

PIONEER NEWS

Phone: 759 5491 Official Organ of 2/1 and 2/2 PIONEER BATTALIONS ASSOCIATION

Per Annum: \$5

Registered under the Charitable Collections Act, 1934-41 — Certificate No. 10462

Printed by Principal Press, 19 Grey Street, Carlton

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Vol. 38, No. 1

APRIL, 1993

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THE 2/2nd AUST PIONEER BATTALION

Part Four of the series covering the Battalion from the formation in June 1940 to the 50th anniversary in 1992.

PART 4 —

THE CAPTURE OF LAE

On the morning of the 6th September, the Pioneers began clearing the airstrip of kunai grass, using flame throwers and incendiary bombs provided by the Americans. Before long those engaged were filthy dirty with soot. After four hours the airstrip was ready to receive the first aircraft, which soon arrived and began disgorging the advance elements of the 7th Division infantry and their support groups.

C and D companies worked on improving the landing strip and unloading the aircraft and the remainder of the battalion moved to Narrakapor to relieve the paratroopers. It was estimated that there were three companies of the enemy in the area. On the afternoon of the third day a patrol from the 2/25th Battalion clashed with an enemy patrol and from then on the advance towards Lae was to be contested with vigour by the enemy forces.

The American paratroopers were withdrawn at that time and returned to Moresby. They always referred to the 2/2nd Pioneers as the Two-bar-two Combat Engineers.

The first contact along the Lae road took place when Tom Hulse's platoon was fired on. The patrol pressed home its attack, routing a numerically superior force. The Support Group arrived at Nadzab on the seventh day and the Pioneers were close to full strength.

Platoon cooking was carried out for a time and many innovations to make life easier were noted. Jack Henderson and Len Hope, D Coy, made bush ovens from flour containers and were soon producing good quality dampers. These were much appreciated by the troops seeing as the Field Bakery providing bread rolls was hit by a bomb from an enemy aircraft on a night raid.

After probing patrols had established the location of a number of enemy positions, Brig. K. Eather decided to launch an attack on Heath's plantation which began on 13th September. A and B companies were placed under brigade control and given the role of flank protection. These troops were soon actively engaged in the area where the 2/33rd Battalion was now engaged. For his outstanding leadership Tom Hulse was awarded the Military Cross and Pat Egan was awarded the Military Medal for courage and audacity under fire. During these actions, Pte. Hatchard of A company was wounded.

The battalion was engaged in much patrolling and A company was placed under the command of 2/33rd Battalion, B company being under 2/25th Battalion command. Heath's plantation fell in the afternoon of 12th September. Within 15 minutes of its fall, A company was ambushed and in a fierce fight eight enemy were killed. Ptes. W. Green, N. Prior, R. Tout and C. Irwin were wounded. Attacks against C and D company positions were repulsed.

On 15th September the decisive battle for Lae began. A company was engaged in the Edwards plantation area. Tom Hulse's platoon attacked when the forward company of the 2/33rd Battalion came under heavy fire. Unfortunately, Mick Eddy — Battalion welter weight champion boxer — was killed. Pte. T. Byrne was wounded and later died. Corporal Stan "Bluey" Hucker was awarded the Military Medal. The 7th Division's advance continued and on 16th September, Lae fell. It was during this time Joe Lang sent his now famous signal — "2/2nd Pioneer Battalion less 4 rifle companies will advance on Lae".

The Japanese forces in Lae were caught in the movement of the 9th Division along the coast and

the 7th Division's drive from Nadzab and the enemy suffered very heavy casualties. Lae having been secured, the 7th Division turned to the advance up the Markham and Ramu Valleys in which the Pioneers were to be actively involved.

By 23rd September the detached companies had rejoined the battalion which moved to Camp Diddy about 10 miles from Nadzab to give protection against any threat by the direction of Boana. Constant patrolling was carried out, Lieut. R. B. White and 12 men from C company along the track leading to Boana, Sgt. French's patrol of six men and two New Guineans went to the Busu River near Gumbuk, and a patrol under Lieut. R. Harris covered the higher ground.

THE RAMU RIVER VALLEY CAMPAIGN

Operations by the 7th Division along the Ramu Valley were now to commence. In late September, 1943, the 2/6th Independent Company had moved up the Markham Valley, crossed the Ramu Valley and captured Kaiapit. Aircraft carrying elements of the 21st Brigade arrived the following day. Lieut. C. L. Fraser and a small party of Pioneers left Nadzab for Kaiapit on 29th September. The Pioneers were concentrated there two days later taking responsibility for the area.

Patrolling was carried out but the battalion had become far removed from the scene of operations. Evacuation of casualties became a problem and men having to live on edge of the air strip awaiting arrival of the few aircraft now arriving. Lieut. J. Drummond carried out the only long distance patrol, the purpose being to establish an Air Wireless Warning Post at Wantoot. The patrol consisted of Cpl. Mathews, 12 other ranks, two police boys and 100 New Guinean carriers with 6 months supply of rations for the post. This patrol took 14 days and arrived back at Kaiapit to find that the battalion had been airlifted to the Dumpu area. Major Tope was waiting at the Kaiapit Airfield with one aircraft standing by. After a night's rest they rejoined the battalion the following day.

Kaipit village was voted by the troops as one of the most comfortable areas occupied during the New Guinea operations. It was flat and clean and there was plenty of water.

The battalion again resumed engineering tasks, D company in the Dumpu area with the 2/6th Field Company, C company working on a road between the Faria and Mosia River and B company constructing a bridge across the Mosia River and A company making a cutting adjacent to the Uria River.

On 28th October the battalion was placed under command of 21st Brigade and moved to Kumburum. The following day the battalion set out for Levett's Post. In one of those military mishaps, the wrong course was followed, which took the troops through the 2/16th Battalion's lines, and Levett's Post was reached late in the afternoon with the men exhausted. The 2/16 did not appreciate the enemy shelling which followed these troop movements.

Some patrolling was carried out and the names of the various posts in the area — Moto's, Levett's, Sam's, Tom's are still talked about. On 5th November, Lieut. R. Harris and a patrol composed of members of 17 Platoon covered the Gurumbu-Berringe-Mungu track and at Berringe village a clash with the enemy occurred. This was a close contact encounter with the opposing groups being as close as 6 feet from each other for a short time. The enemy left two dead and probably carried away others. At an elevation of 8000 feet a grand stand view was occasionally afforded of fighter and bombing missions, chiefly US aircraft, to destroy Japanese lines of communications from Madang.

The battalion moved on 8th November to a spur above Moto's Post. It was from here that Lieut. R.

White's patrol clashed with an enemy group. He fell wounded and attempts to recover him proved unsuccessful and he was posted missing presumed dead.

Towards the end of November, C company at Tom's Post was attacked in the area occupied by Lieut. J. Drummond's platoon. The attack was repulsed, the enemy withdrawing in haste leaving an officer's sword as a trophy.

The battalion then moved back to Kumburum. It was officially regarded as a rest area, the major activity for the troops being road construction.

THE ATTACK ON SHAGGY RIDGE

On 11th December the battalion moved to the Lakes area and eventually occupied the high ridge overlooking the Mene River and a tall feature which was to become famous as Shaggy Ridge. Patrolling continued, Lieut. Sam Coles and his platoon along the Uria River, Lieut. D. O. Smith's rations party to Levett's Post. It was on the basis of Lt. Col. Joe Lang's proposals that the attack on Shaggy Ridge was planned.

It was obvious that the enemy's forces were being concentrated in the Shaggy Ridge area. Left flank protection became the responsibility of the Pioneers, with Bert's Post, the Pines, Brian's Hill and Herald Hill being occupied. Patrolling continued with Lieut. P. Scholtz's party reaching a wired area at the northern end of Shaggy Ridge, and withdrawing undetected.

Christmas Day 1943, the battalion's fourth, saw the dinner consisting of turkey and potatoes being served and packs of tobacco and cigarettes dropped by parachute being the Christmas presents.

On 27th December the 2/16 Battalion attacked the Pimple supported by guns of the 2/4th Field Regiment and air attacks by allied aircraft. The Pioneers had a good view of these activities from their positions.

As part of the preparation for the attack on Shaggy Ridge, intensive patrolling was carried out, Capt. A. McInnes and his party carrying stocks of rations to a cache at Canning's Saddle. Because of the terrain, the going on these patrols was hard work. Lieut. H. Conley with 8 men from C company patrolled the Mene River. Other patrols under Lieut. D. Williamson, Lieut. Coles and Capt. McInnes were carried out.

It was at this time that a major event causing great sadness occurred when the C.O., Lt. Col. Joe Lang was transferred to Buna Base Area. A giant of a man in all ways was he. Command passed to Maj. E. F. Aitken.

As plans for the attack on Shaggy Ridge proceeded, intensive patrolling continued including observation of the enemy's activities, carrying rations and laying cable.

(Part Five continues next issue)

SICK PARADE

JACK COLLIS, Welfare Officer, reports as follows: **John Gibson** of Dungog in hospital in December. **Larry Robson** on the improve in Westcott Nursing Home, Stockton. **Noel Trefoni** in Concord Hospital in February. **Ivor Garnon** in North Gosford Hospital for his second knee replacement in February. **Bill Jollie** for an operation on his hand in March. **Jack Collis** in Royal North Shore for vascular treatment in February. **Jim McDonald** in Newcastle Hospital for treatment. **Jack Kempnich** in hospital for appendicitis. **Maisie Kempnich** in hospital for an operation on her ear. **Cliff Secombe** having treatment for eye problem.

ATHERTON TREK BACK

OCTOBER 16-24, 1993

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MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

First issue of Mail Bag for 1993 and a good response of letters, plus the appeal for funds. Donations were very generous and please accept our thanks.

FRED ALWAY 2/1, Beaumaris, with his apologies for being out of touch for so long and a donation to funds. Fred retired a few months ago (at 67) as a contract carpenter with Channel 9, Melbourne, and supposed he'd be only a lad compared to most Pioneers. Spends some of his leisure time fishing in Port Phillip Bay, a hobby that started in his young days.

Fred mentions he had recently been speaking on the phone to Ken Collier 2/1, who has been battling a bit after a recent operation on his leg. He and Ken both send their best wishes to all Pioneers.

PHIL BAWDEN 2/2, Catani, Vic., with a donation to the treasurer and a change of address, has not moved but said his council likes a change. Has had a bit of trouble with his eyes, but still manages to read his *Pioneer News*. Apologises for his lateness with sub, but it's never too late Phil.

KEITH BOYLE 2/1, Moama, per pen of wife Marj, to say that Keith is home again after a long spell in a nursing home and is gradually improving. They are managing very well from their wheel-chairs, and although Marj gets very tired of their being together more than makes up for that. Enclosed a cheque for subs and sends best wishes to all.

BILL BRENNAN 2/1, Vic., with his subs and states it is quite a while since he was in touch. However, looks forward to the *News*, although he cannot place a lot of the names, was more into A Coy., especially 9 Platoon. Bill has had breathing problems, and the last couple of Anzac Days has had to get a ride to the Cenotaph. Has also had to give up bowls, but says there are a lot worse off than he.

Bill says the last issue with the news of 2/2 Pioneers in the West brought back memories as he was driving over there in 42-43 with A.A.S.C.

Hope your family from Rockhampton were able to spend Xmas with you both and the Anniversary Crock opened for the occasion. Closes with best wishes to all for 1993 from both he and wife Teresa.

LES BRITT 2/1, Cairns, with a very short note and a cheque for the treasurer. No writer's cramp where you are concerned, Les, but it's the thought that counts mate.

FRED CALLAWAY 2/1, Wahroonga, with a letter telling of his return to the Parade Ground. He and wife Aileen were invited to the "Pass Out" of their grandson, Shane, at Kapooka. All visiting servicemen were asked to wear medals and after the ceremony were invited to the Sergeant's Mess for meals and drinks, together with their wives. Fred met Jack Morgan 2/2 at the parade, also Thelma Kelly, wife of the late Bill Kelly 2/1.

It was a good day for the family and plenty of pride on offer. Most of us have attended one of these "passing outs", as a matter of fact we were at a reunion in Wagga on the 50th Anniversary of the 2/2 Pioneers and invited to Kapooka to view the parade. We also were very proud of the boys and their precision marching was something to remember. Closes with best wishes to all.

BRUCE CHAMBERS 2/1, Turrumurra, with a generous donation to funds. Says he is grateful for the *News* and has found the articles on the 2/2 very interesting. Max has written to you personally, Bruce, so I will not reiterate but also my personal thanks and the same on behalf of the Association.

MICK CLIFFORD 2/1, Yagoona, who states that if everyone was like him there would be no news for the paper, claims he has written about a dozen letters since the war years. Guess you don't get much time either with the hours you have to spend on exercises with your daughter. (Apparently Mick and his wife have a daughter who has been in a coma for eight years.) Some job and I don't envy you your task. Thanks for writing Mick, and for your donation, and we hope for your sakes that in time your daughter's health improves.

VINCE CULLEN 2/1, Peakhurst, with a sub for the treasurer and best wishes to all Pioneers, particularly his mates in H.Q. Coy.

BOB DONALD 2/1, Glen Innes, with subs for himself, Ern Lee 2/2 and Tom Manuel 2/1. Ern has had a spell in Concord where he had an operation to clear a vein in his neck. Tommy has had a bit of muscular and joint trouble and Bob some gall bladder problems, but nothing serious and hopes to remedy same without surgery. All appreciate the *News* as it helps to keep track of those that are left. Bob's brother, Vic, is still going strong, will be 80 years young this year, and does the cooking for himself and son. Bob and his wife were off to Canberra to pay their son a visit and then on to Wollongong to see their daughter on the way back. Sends his best regards to all and a healthy New Year to all Pioneers.

JACK FRENCH 2/2, Vic., with a letter apologising for not writing very often, but does enjoy reading the *News*. He enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and says he still gets a kick out of reading a name here and there that is familiar. Comments on the job Len Preedy is doing over in the West and still sees a few of his Geelong mates from time to time. He heard from Fred Craig once then he disappeared. Still exchanges Xmas greetings with Jean Dixon, widow of Bob 2/2. Closes with best wishes to all.

DON GALVIN 2/1, Gloucester, with a hefty cheque for the treasurer and apologises for long overdue subs, but says that having a foot in both camps (2/1 and 2/3 Pnr Btms) would have some effect. Quite a few of the 2/1 and 2/2 were in the same boat. However, he has rectified the situation and hopes to be receiving the *News* for some time to come. Many thanks, Don.

SAM GARDINER 2/1, Oak Flats, with a letter saying "late again", but is thankful to see he is not the only one. Claims his head is getting like a scrap pile, some other person's eyes, hearing aids and it won't be long before he has a mouth full of false teeth. Sends his regards to the greatest bunch of men he has ever met, 2/1 Pioneer Btn., especially the Sigs and C Coy. Sam had something else written for the men, but his wife didn't like it so he had to re-write it. Sends a cheque to the treasurer and kind regards to all.

IVOR GARNON 2/1, Charmhaven, with a donation to the treasurer and best wishes to all members with special mention of H.Q. Coy and the band of which he was a member. Ivor has been in hospital for his second knee replacement and at time of going to press was still in North Gosford Hospital. All the best old mate, hope you'll soon be out and about.

STAN GAVAN 2/2, Greystanes, with a thank you for *Pioneer News* as it reminded him of overdue subs which he enclosed. He also enclosed a couple of photos of Tarakan/Balikpapan which may be of some interest. The "guard" does not click with me and I certainly don't recognise the Japs. Will include them in our battalions photos. Closes with best wishes to all for the New Year.

JACK HAYDEN 2/1, Orange, per pen of wife Wyn, with an apology for their long silence and neglect with overdue fees — have been putting off correspondence "until tomorrow" and then some. The last two years have been a bit rough on John — both knees replaced and then a gall bladder operation.

Wyn also reports that Perce Dutton is a patient in the Orange Base Hospital. He has been ill for some time, at the moment in remission but has to go to Sydney for further treatment. She does not think that Perce will be allowed to live alone when he comes home, but has a daughter who lives in Orange who will help him to the best of her ability. (Perce will be 80 years young in August.) John will visit him regularly and will keep us posted. Many thanks to you both and for your good wishes for the New Year. Hope your health has improved too, John.

FRED KILLEN 2/1, Warners Bay, with sub for the *News* which he is always glad to receive. Not much news up his way as he does not get around very much. Says he's too old for long drives, but manages to get to bowls a couple of times a week. Closes with best wishes to all for the New Year.

JIM LAW 2/1, Tahmoor, with a cheque for his subs and best wishes to the committee and all members for the coming year.

JACK MARTIN 2/1, Casino, per pen of wife Joyce, with a letter telling of Jack's misfortunes over the last couple of years. He took a tumble from a horse and broke a collarbone and also suffers from

emphysema and on home oxygen. On the whole "he is pretty good" says Joyce, the understatement of the year, and not able to do very much. There was an article on "Banjo" in ROTA recently showing Jack on a jumper at the Cairns Show in 1946. Hope you are able to stir yourself up a bit mate, and you cheque in the treasurer's hot little hand.

KEITH MEDARIS 2/1, Mortdale, with a thank you for the reminder that subs are due, and enclosed a cheque for Vic. Used to see Vic at Penshurst RSL on occasions, but does not get around much any more due to asthma and arthritis. Keith mentions he came from Bathurst and thinks he went to school with Noel Smith — "Wot a memory".

CLIVE MEEK 2/1, Glen Innes, per pen of his good wife, with a sub for the treasurer, apologies for it being late, and their thanks for the *News* which they both enjoy reading. Clive was an original of the battalion, enlisted 5-6-1940 and discharged 12-11-45 — can't do much better than that. Max has written to you personally about the Netherlands Medal and we hope to hear from you both more often in the future with some news from your part of the country.

NORM MOANE 2/1, Curl Curl, with an apology for late payment of dues, and promised to be more prompt in future. "Bindi" rang me (Lakey) at home and promised to meet me on Anzac Day at the march — he had better be there or I'll have his guts for garters. That's a threat too! It will be the only march he has attended. We shall roll out the red carpet and all stand to attention when you enter the hall. Only joking "Bindi", but will be really glad to see you.

JACK MORGAN 2/2, Wagga, with two letters, the first containing the news that he attended the ceremony at Kapooka on the laying of the foundation stone of the Chapel and that John Dowd 2/2 was not well enough to attend. John was very pleased with the Gosford reunion menu that Jack took home for him — all members of D Coy present had signed it, plus a few others to fill up the blank spaces. On a more personal basis Jack expressed his thanks to both Max and Peg for their efforts in regard to the reunion.

The second letter enclosed a cutting telling of the progress of the Chapel at Kapooka. Jack has had a look at the stained glass windows which are on display at Grace Bros. and they are really beautiful. The 7th Division reunion will be held on 15, 16, 17th October this year at Wagga, just two weeks before the opening of the Chapel.

Jack says John Dowd is coming along fine after his operation just before Christmas. Also mentions he met Fred Callaway 2/1 at the passing out parade at Kapooka recently. Jack was there at the invitation of the "Rats" Branch and Fred was there because of his grandson. They had a good yarn and Fred mentioned many names known to Jack.

HARRY MOWBRAY 2/1, Queensland, with Christmas wishes and many thanks to all for a wonderful reunion at Gosford, especially to Max and Peg. He has promised to be here in Sydney for the march in 1994 — what's wrong with '93, Harry?

Now, what's this about being down-hearted over the Winfield Cup. We were robbed — they were lucky — and they were the better team. Bloody Broncos! However, I notice that they are not doing so well at the moment, beaten again last night by Souths, one of our weaker sides. However, we shall see, there's still a long way to go.

Harry mentions having a yarn to Harry Spedborough at the last meeting of local ROTA and he was well but taking things easy.

Hope your holiday to Caloundra was restful and the fishing was good. Need a break now and again to re-charge the batteries. Closes with best wishes to all for the New Year.

GEORGE MURPHY 2/2, Mitcham, and secretary of the 2/2 Pioneers in Victoria, with a letter of congratulations to Max and Peg for a very memorable reunion in Gosford, and his thanks to all those who helped to make it a great weekend.

George said he thoroughly enjoyed meeting up with some of the troops he had not seen since the war finished, and sincerely hoped that somewhere along the line we could arrange another function. Thanks for the photos, George, and your kind thoughts. They were very much appreciated.

DON MURRAY 2/2, Tinonee, with a letter expressing many thanks for a wonderful reunion at Gosford and a big thank you to Ken and Ida Wilson

for being so good to him over the weekend. It came as a surprise to Don to learn that Ken played football for Newtown in his younger days and was their best goal kicker. Don doesn't know if other Battalion members knew of this. This news leaked out when they all went for a walk on the Saturday morning.

Allan Stone is still in contact with us Don, and lives at 6 Murulla Crescent, Raymond Terrace. We hear from him every now and then. Your subs handed on to treasurer and many thanks for your letter and best wishes.

OSSIE MCCURTAYNE 2/1, Laurieton, with a cheque for subs and hopes that we keep up the good work as he says its nice to read a name you remember from time to time. No doubt, Ossie, and it is surprising how some things that seem just ordinary become of interest when it relates to someone you know. Closes with best wishes and good luck to all.

JOYCE MCGREGOR widow of Bob 2/1, Kingsgrove, with a letter she enclosed with a Christmas greeting to Max and Peg. It was of a true story in verse by Jim Bell called "The Tin Hat and Os", and won for him first prize in a recent RSL writing competition sponsored by Veterans Affairs. Joyce had the pleasure of meeting and congratulating the author who was very modest and said he had written it years ago and was finally persuaded to enter it in the competition. It's a good story, Joyce, and we are sorry it is too long for us to reprint. Perhaps we may be able to at some future date.

It was good to hear from you, must be years, how have you been getting along. I (Lakey) met Linda at a funeral for Bob's brother at Collaroy and must say I would not have known her, but she made herself known to me. Now you have broken the ice, Joyce, keep it up and be in touch again.

JOHN MCKNIGHT 2/2, Dundas, with a welcome donation to funds and his very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Many thanks, John.

ROY PARRETT 2/2, Scarness, with best wishes to all Pioneers and his sub for the *News*. No chance of writer's cramp with you Roy.

JACK PURCELL 2/1, Inverell, writes that like many of the Pioneers he has become a bit lax in letter writing, but certainly likes to get the *News*. However, he enclosed a very generous cheque for the treasurer and passes on the following news. A couple of years ago he had the good fortune to travel around Australia and met up with a lot of mates, including the late George Hobley and his brother Dick in the West. In a trip to Leeton in October met up with Mick Roberts, who was also in 12 Platoon. Jack had quite a few mates in 12 Platoon and says they are now scattered in all States. He notched up his 75th birthday in February, so Happy Birthday mate and all you wish yourself for the future.

BERN REINERS 2/1, Corryong, with a letter hoping all are well and enjoying the best of health. Has not had a round of golf since the visit of Max and Peg, but has managed a game or two of bowls. Wishes to be remembered to all and a special mention for the Kerslakes. Good to hear from you, Bern.

RAY ROBBINS 2/2, Ballina, with a change of address and a cheque for the treasurer. Has seen a bit of Neville O'Connor who has been in hospital at Southport for a back operation and doing well. Ray wishes the Association members all the best for the coming year.

CHAS RYALL 2/2, Cowan, with a donation to funds and his best wishes to all. He has found the series on 2/2 history very interesting and recalls an incident on the *Sea Barb*. He remembers being on the wrong side of a certain Padre when he was seasick over the ship's rail. Chas told said Padre what a rotten shot he was — aimed at the ocean, missed and hit Chas. He remembers the incident well, because cleaning up afterwards was a problem, the ship's water supply being limited.

PERC SCHÖLZ 2/2, Torquay, with a very welcome cheque for the treasurer and little else. Another of our boys that will never suffer from writer's cramp, but grateful for the cheque Perce and many thanks.

CLIFF SECOMBE 2/1, Thirlmere, with a donation per Jack Collis, and says how he always enjoys reading the *News* and wants to make sure it keeps going. Sends regards to all his mates, with special mention to those of the RAP who toiled with him so many years ago. All the best Cliff and hope your eyes are improving.

BRYAN SMALLHORN 2/1, Armidale, with a sub

enclosed and an apology for the delay. A pre-retirement (after 58 years) trip overseas took his mind off such "minor" things as subs. How about a note sometime on your trip Bryan — you should have time now to pen a few lines. Closes with best wishes and says to keep up the good work.

HARRY SPREADBOROUGH 2/1, Alexandra Hills, with a long letter and a sub for the treasurer. He has finally recovered from his by-pass operation of last year and most of his other complaints, but cataracts giving him trouble so decided to type his letter. (It's much easier to read too, Harry, if I may say so.) Healthwise he is pretty good, but he usually cracks up after lunch and has a bit of a camp in the afternoon.

Attending a local ROTA meeting, Jean had a fall hurting her ankle and sundry bruises. It happened at 0900 hours so they were not sloshed at the time.

He and Jean have had a couple of trips away. Last May took a plane trip to Biloela, south east of Rockhampton, to visit their younger daughter and family who have a small property in Thangool and early in December were off to Caloundra for two weeks for a rest, fish or sighsee as the mood takes them.

At the last meeting of the ROTA met a John Keegan, ex 2/1, who wanted Max's address, so hopefully another sheep to the fold. Surprising to meet old mates after so many years.

Closes with best wishes to all, a special mention to Max and Peg and good health and happiness for the year ahead. Good letter, Harry, and all the best to both Jean and yourself — keep well.

MICK SMITH 2/2, Bateau Bay, with a letter telling of his first letter to the Association. Mick explains that he does not attend reunions due to the fact that his first loyalties are to his original battalion, 2/22 Inf. 8 Div. He was in Rabaul when the Japs landed in 1942 and was "missing" for three months before they made it back to Australia. He was then posted to the 2/2 Pioneers at Kapooka and served with them until war ended in Borneo.

Mick would like to send regards to members of B Coy. 2/2 Pioneers, in particular Perc Robinson of Forster and Ben Hughes of Melbourne.

He admires greatly the work being done by executive and committee of the Association and those who produce such a fine newspaper.

Many thanks, Mick, and trust that you can make it sometime to a reunion just to meet up with some of your old mates from 2/2, even after the turn out of the 2/22 Btn.

JACK SUMMERVILLE 2/1, Castle Hill, per pen of wife, Peg, who enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and the news that Jack is unable to write, as he suffers from Parkinsons Disease. Thank you, Peg, for your note and I'm sure Jack is in very good hands.

CHAS. URWIN 2/2, Wye River, with a letter to say he is always delighted to receive the *Pioneer News* and certainly wants to keep it alive. He is keeping reasonably well and leading a quiet life. Encloses a cheque for funds and sends his regards to all.

HUGH VINCENT 2/2, WA, with a thank you for the last interesting newsletter. He served with the unit for 2½ years and long enough to remember many of the names mentioned. Hugh was saddened to read of the death of Vic Renwick, CSM of C Coy, and a good soldier. He enclosed a photo of the trophy won by the Bn. drill platoon at the 9th Div. Gymkhana at Wondecla.

Max has forwarded your stamped, addressed envelope to Charles Richardson and enclosed copy of your writings. Many thanks for your good wishes and the treasurer always pleased to receive cheques.

BILL WADE 2/1, Bulahdelah, with a cheque to try and make sure we do not have to stop the publication of *Pioneer News*. There are no other Pioneers in the district, so Bill has no one to meet with for a yarn about old times. He came to a couple of reunions and at the last one had such a good time could not remember where he was booked in to stay. Thank goodness Sammy Lewis took pity on him and put him up for the night. Closes with best wishes to all and special mention of members of C Coy.

JACK WILLIAMS 2/2, Victoria, enclosed a cheque for the treasurer and says he really looks forward to getting the *News* in the mail. Sends best wishes to all.

BOB WILSON 2/1, Kiama, with a note to say the mention of fees in last issue reminded him that he

must be overdue with his subs, so was enclosing a cheque. Claims it would be a pity for the *News* to be discontinued and was sure that all members would respond to our appeal to see that it did not happen. Bob also congratulates all those who work so hard to produce same — their efforts are greatly appreciated.

NEV WOODHAM 2/1, Thornlands, with a letter of appreciation for the Gosford reunion. For the first time in about 25 years he met up with Bill Chisholm as they had never been to either Anzac Day or a reunion at the same time. Betty said they were worse then old women. Nev and Betty have had a wonderful trip over to the West, the wildflowers were a picture brought about by the wet weather, but they did strike some really cold weather, which was a bit tough on Betty. They travelled nearly 2000 kms in three bus trips, long days on the road, but well worth it. Lakey and Kerslakes did the same thing in 1991 but we had a car and 22 days, so were able to take a little more time. Glad you had a great time, Nev, and as you say perhaps there may be another reunion — if so we will be in it for sure.

TOM CULKIN 2/1, Geurie, writes in reference to the Dutch medal that was mentioned in the *Pioneer News*. Max has written to you personally with the information re this so I hope that you take advantage of his advice in the matter.

JOHN HUNT 2/1, Qld., with a few lines to let us know of the happenings in the Sunshine State and trying to work out some arrangements for April. On Australia Day they visited Nell Laughren of Nambour — her broken leg has healed up OK, but shingles developed and they are still giving some trouble. Nell told them that Nell Davenport had suffered a stroke before Christmas so Mollie and John had also been to see her. She still has problems with her right arm and side and some speech difficulty and is in the Hibernian Nursing Home, Oyster Point Esplanade, Scarborough, Qld.

Phil Cramsie has sold his house and is moving to Buderin Retirement Village, Buderim, Qld., on 27th April. He reckons the worst part of moving is getting rid of things he has accumulated over the years, but as a bonus will be close to his daughter who is on the Sunshine Coast.

John closes with best wishes to all and with the saying "Old age is not so bad when you consider the alternative".

NEIL MCPHERSON 2/2, WA, with a letter and a cheque for the treasurer. Fellow members of A Coy, Java, might be interested to hear that fellow POW and 3 Platoon member Philip Cook of Rushton, Vic., will be 93 years of age next May and is still hale and hearty. Neil says Phil had his 42nd birthday in Java in '42, he had his 20th.

Neil lives with his brother at Mandurah from October to May, but during the winter months moves north. Should any Pioneer be travelling through Mandurah please drop a line and he would love to meet up with them. Closes with best wishes to all, especially those beyond the rabbit proof fence.

PETER PEILE 2/1, Caringbah, with a note per pen of wife Erika, with a donation to funds and good wishes to all.

ART LEIGH 2/2, Rockhampton, with a cheque for treasurer and some information on the Dutch medal obtained from the Dutch Embassy. The main core of the matter is "buying the crosses either here or in the Netherlands is not an offence, but the wearing of same is an offence, even as false advertising and false information". The letter also stated that more than 10,000 Dutch and Netherlands East Indies veterans who served in Australia during the 1942/45 period did not receive any Australian War Medals. Thank you, Art, for this information.

LARRY ROBSON 2/1, Stockton, with a letter of thanks to all those friends that sent letters and cards throughout his long illness — Max and Peg, Mary Lloyd, Muriel Spence, John and Mollie Hunt, and visitors Jack and Jean Bertram, Jack and Esme Griffiths, Geoff Bray, Ivan and May Pepper. He expresses his heartfelt thanks through the *Pioneer News* for their good wishes and also to all that signed the Gosford reunion menu. To top it off the awarding of Life Membership helped to speed up his recovery. Glad to know that you are still with us for a long time yet — I can put up with anything that you want to write. Always glad to hear from the Road Runner and very pleased to know that you are feeling better.

ALF BENTLEY 2/1, Yokine, WA, with the news

that he and his wife will be in Sydney for Anzac Day and requesting particulars from Max in regard to arrangements for march and reunion. They are really looking forward to the trip and Alf is keen to meet as many of his old Tank Attack platoon as possible, but guesses their ranks are thinning out. They will be staying at "Studio Gardens", Cnr Bourke and Plunkett Streets, Woolloomooloo, on 22nd April. They are then going on to Darwin for the National Australian swimming titles, in which they will be competing. Max will be in touch Alf, and fill you in on the details. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

LES GAVEL 2/1, Leeton, with a very short note with donation to *News* enclosed. Many thanks, Les.

GEORGE SCHOLES 2/1, Kyogle, with a short note and a very generous donation to keep the *News* alive. In his own words, George says what a b_____ to be unfortunate to have a conscience. Has often said as he's plugged through life, it's one thing you don't want in this system. Many thanks, mate, and jolly good luck to you too.

LIONEL FULLARTON 2/2, Vic., letter received too late for this issue — reply next issue.

That's all for the Mail Bag for this issue. Our cricketers did not do so well and so far the football is still very early with some mixed bags coming through. My NZ sea eagles are very scratchy, too much water between the players I think, but we can only hope they will improve. We can't let those Bloody Broncos take it out again that's for sure. Will close now with best wishes to all members and wives, hoping that you keep on enjoying good health and looking after one another. Seems to me the wives do a lot more looking after than us blokes, but then we are very lucky for having such good ladies by our sides. Hope to see a lot of old mates at Redfern on the 24 and 25th April.

So long for now

— Lakey

ALAMEIN/TOBRUK TOUR

Jack Tooker wrote in to say he and Kath had a wonderful time on their tour of Tobruk and Alamein 13-28 October, 1992. Kath also sent us a copy of her diary of the trip which we will publish when space permits.

At the February Committee meeting, Jack gave the members an informative talk on his trip and then presented the Association with a copy of the book specially produced to cover the trip named "Desert Journey — Tobruk and El Alamein Revisited".

Many thanks Jack for your excellent talk and also for the privilege of having custody of such a fine record of your trip.

— MAX HERRON

"I WASN'T THERE"

I wasn't there when you boarded ship,
For that trip across the foam,
I wasn't there when you said goodbye
To the loved ones left at home.

I wasn't there when they landed you
In that strange and barren land,
I wasn't there when you lived like rats
And burrowed in the sand.

I wasn't there when, gun in hand,
You bravely stood your ground,
I wasn't there when despite all odds
You turned the foe around.

I wasn't there when you climbed that track,
In the jungles steam and heat,
I wasn't there when you laboured on,
Despite your weary feet.

I wasn't there in that landing craft
When you took that hostile bay,
I wasn't there when, under fire,
You showed the world the way.

But I try to know the pain you feel
For the mates you left behind.
And I try to sense the thoughts you think
When the war plays on your mind.

And I'll be sure, as my boys grow up,
That they know the price you paid
For the freedom that we know and love
And the sacrifice you've made.

For you're the strong, the brave, the true,
The best Australia had.
And yet much more to all of us,
We know you as our Dad.

— RAY LAW, 1992 (Son of Jim Law 2/1st)

2/1-2/2 PIONEERS, WA

By President LEN PREEDY

Our November meeting was attended by the usual group of supporters. Jack and Joan Monger — Jack has had a spell in hospital and is off the amber fluid. John and Ethel McDougall both looked fit and happy. Norm Le Cornu was his usual bright self. Jack Stewart keeping his end of the conversation going well. Syd Abercrombie has been having health problems and wife is also on the sick list. Barry and Millie Hunt did their trek down from Geraldton and Barry gave each of the ladies at the meeting a wooden bowl he had made. Freda Due, Beth Lee and Jean Lyford are three ladies who came along on their own and are very good supporters.

Apologies were received from Bob and Norma Sefton, Virginia Safe, Fred Newton, Ivy and Joy Butcher, and Neil McPherson.

Correspondence was received from the following: Bill Sutton 2/2 of Wongan Hills per pen of wife Hazel. Bill Farrer 2/2 of Burwood, Vic., with the suggestion that members read the book "Those Ragged Bloody Heroes" by Peter Brune as it is an excellent story of the battle along the Kokoda Trail. Tom Cream 2/2 of Geraldton who states he is the last surviving member of his platoon who were in Java. John Ure 2/2 of Meltham. Russ Harrison 2/2 of NSW. Fred Newton 2/2 of Wanneroo who states he is not enjoying good health. Brian Guhl 2/1 of Floreat. Hazel Sutton and Jack Murray 2/2 of Halls Head who was on his way to our meeting but the bus broke down.

Vic Tyrrell, 60 Evandale Street, Floreat, would like to hear from anyone who knew his father Rex of the 2/2 Pioneers.

Apart from the donations received by mail would like to also thank the following: N. Le Cornu, J. McDougall, B. Hunt, F. Due and J. Monger.

Best wishes to all from Joy and myself.

ANZAC FUNCTIONS — 1993

ANNUAL MEETING — Saturday, 24th April at 3.30 pm

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Redfern RSL Club, corner of Redfern and Gibbons Streets, Redfern, at 3.30 pm and 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 the Wreath Laying Service in Martin Place.

WREATH LAYING — Saturday, 24th April, at 7.30 pm

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

ANZAC DAY MARCH — Sunday, 25th April

The forming up will be the same as 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 city newspapers for any change in assembly.

ANZAC REUNION — Sunday, 25th April

The Anzac Day Reunion 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 the dinner will commence about 12.45 pm.

The catering will be carried out by Brothers Catering Service of Sans Souci and the Committee are grateful to Cliff and Bob Hallett for keeping their price down to \$9.50 as in the past two years.

The Committee resolved at their February meeting to increase the cost of the meal charge to members from \$7 in 1992 by \$3 to \$10.

The cost of a jug of beer will be \$5 purchased by ticket in the hall, whereas the meal charge of \$10 will be collected on entry to the hall.

APPEAL RESPONSE

We thank all those members who heeded our appeal for funds in the November issue. We received a total of 50 letters containing subs which was double the figure received after the July issue. This was very gratifying and will mean our funds for producing the *Pioneer News* for 1993 are assured.

PADRE ALBERT PITT-OWEN

On Sunday, 20th December, Albert Pitt-Owen celebrated his 80th birthday at a service and luncheon at the Saint Mary's Anglican Church at Waverley.

Albert was Padre to the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion and served with the unit in Tobruk and New Guinea. After New Guinea he had a short term with the unit on the Atherton Tableland before being transferred to another posting. He served nearly three years with the unit and stated in the book "The Pioneers" that the time he spent with the unit held many happy memories for him.

Peg and Max Herron, representing the Association, were delighted to attend as Albert's guests as they had a long association with the Pitt-Owen family since 1943 when Albert's father, Rector of St David's Arncliffe performed their wedding ceremony.

The following is a resume of the life of the Reverend Albert Pitt-Owen as printed in the Saint Mary's Church newsletter.

"It was a pleasure to join with the Blue Mountains Grammar Old Boys, their families, friends old and new, and the Pitt-Owen extended family, in celebrating Albert Pitt-Owen's 80th birthday.

At the service Albert preached an excellent sermon to a fully packed church and all without a microphone or notes of any kind. His older brother Reg (also a 2/1st Pioneer) gave a short organ recital and Albert's son David, organist of St Mary's, accompanied the service as well as singing in the choir.

Canon Newth led the assembly in the prayer for the church and Reverend Ralph Ogden read the Epistle while Dr Neville Babbage read the Old Testament.

Albert was the son of the Rector at St David's Arncliffe; Choir boy at St Andrews; Curate to his father; Army Chaplain to the 2nd AIF in the Middle East (2/1st Pioneer Battalion); Rehabilitation Chaplain CNEF Memorial Centre; Chaplain to Cranbrook; Rector at Dural; Headmaster of Blue Mountains Grammar School 1953-67; Rector of St Oswalds Haberfield; Acting Rector of St Judes Bowral and St John's Ashfield as well as the parish of Picton."

The birthday celebration was a high occasion in a life that's been full of many such high occasions, and on behalf of all Pioneers we would like to extend our hearty congratulations to Albert on such a full and wonderful life and it was a pleasure to be with you on such a memorable day.

— PEG AND MAX HERRON

LAST POST

GORDON SHEEN 2/2 of Canberra passed away suddenly 19th November and the funeral on 23rd November was attended by Bill Lewis and Ray Burroughs of the 2/2 Pioneers.

The RSL President carried out the Poppy Service and the chapel was packed with mourners including Gordon's friends from the Federal Golf Club and the Customs Department.

The suddenness of Gordon's passing accentuates the sense of loss felt by all and sympathy was extended to his wife Merle by Bill Lewis on behalf of the Association.

CLEMM McDONALD 2/2 of Port Macquarie passed away on 8th January 1993 and the service was held at St Judes Church on 14th January.

Randwick RSL President conducted the Poppy Service and the Eulogy. Bill Robertson 2/2 who was Clemm's Company Commander gave a short talk on his association with Clemm.

Many 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneers were present and Bill Tasker extended sympathy to the family on behalf of the Association.

TOM McNAUGHTON 2/2 of Victoria passed away on 11th January, 1993, and the funeral service was attended by Joe Kyffin who extended sympathy to the family on behalf of the Association.

NOEL TREFONI 2/1 of Toongabbie passed away on March 14 at the age of 68 years and a funeral mass was held on March 17 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church at Wentworthville.

At the conclusion of mass the cortege proceeded to Pine Grove Crematorium where Bill Jollie read the Eulogy and Bill Tasker conducted the Poppy Service. Pioneers in attendance were Dick Chalmers, Percy Fisk, Brian Kybert, Dick Wakeley, Frank Gillian, Bill and Win Tasker, Joyce Law, Win Dwyer, Peg and Max Herron and Bill Jollie.

PIONEER NEWS

Phone: 759 5491

Official Organ of 2/1 and 2/2 PIONEER BATTALIONS ASSOCIATION

Per Annum: \$5

Registered under the Charitable Collections Act, 1934-41 — Certificate No. 10462

Printed by Principal Press, 19 Grey Street, Carlton

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Vol. 38, No. 2

JULY, 1993

Welfare: **BILL TASKER**, phone 718 6658

THE 2/2nd AUST PIONEER BATTALION

Part Five of the series covering the Battalion from the formation in June 1940 to the 50th anniversary in 1992.

PART 5 — ATTACK ON SHAGGY RIDGE

The plan for the attack on Shaggy Ridge called for a three pronged attack. On the right flank, the 2/10th Battalion to attack Cam's Saddle, 2/9th along the crest of Shaggy Ridge, 2/12th with B and D companies 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion to carry out a wide encircling movement on the left flank. D company 2/2nd Pioneers, under Capt. G. Bellmaine, on the 19th January, 1944, led the way from Lang's Junction. At Canning's Saddle this company took up a position to prevent enemy interference with troops which were to carry out the attack. No. 17 platoon was sited in a position 200 yards from the forward Japanese position and spent the night there. Next morning, B company under Capt. T. James moved down the track with 2/12th Battalion and established a perimeter defence. There they spent the night. At dawn the approach to the objective began, B company being fourth company in the order of march. The going was difficult, with D company rendering assistance to the troops clambering up the final slope. First contact with the enemy occurred about 200 yards below the crest. Resistance was brushed aside and just below the crest the leading troops had come under heavy machine gun and rifle fire. Nearby a 75mm gun which was shelling the 2/9th Battalion on the ridge was swung around and began firing point blank at nearby tree tops and trunks. It was not until late afternoon that B company silenced the gun which was captured intact after an encounter involving hand to hand fighting. The 2/12th had 10 killed and 47 wounded, their C.O., Lt. Col. Bourne being seriously wounded. Evacuation of the casualties was a major problem. Most were stretcher cases and had to be carried down slippery tracks to the aid post. D Coy 2/2nd Pioneers were involved in these duties. Also involved were locally recruited New Guinean porters — the Fuzzy Wuzzies. Night fell and the troops spent a sleepless night due to enemy infiltration which had to be repulsed. When daylight came there was no sign of the enemy and the advance was resumed, B company 2/2nd Pioneers with the 2/12th and D company recovering and carrying to the forward areas the supplies dropped by parachute. Lieut. Drummond's and Lieut. H. Liston's platoons (C company) were also carrying rations and evacuating casualties.

MORESBY AND RETURN TO AUSTRALIA

On 23rd January, 1944 with the capture of Mt. Prothero and Kankiryo Saddle, the Pioneers' participation in the Shaggy Ridge campaign was concluded and D company was ordered to withdraw and move to Dumpu. B company remained in defensive positions and during patrolling, had more clashes with the Japanese. Eventually they made their way to Dumpu. By 31st January most of the battalion had been flown out to Port Moresby via Nadzab where a complete re-outfitting from hats to boots was carried out. A and C companies with elements of Battalion H.Q. returned to Port Moresby on 3rd February.

The battalion, with tiredness very evident, and wracked with tropical diseases, embarked on H.M.A.S. Kanimbla on 8th February, 1944. The troops lined the deck to farewell Port Moresby. They were homeward bound for Townsville. Medical examinations prior to departing revealed more than 60 percent were suffering from skin conditions and malaria was prevalent.

First unit to be committed to action, the Pioneers had served with each of the 3 infantry brigades of the 7th Division. The battalion enjoyed the confidence of senior commanders and the troops had constructed roads, cleared airstrips, traversed

jungle trails, endured the mud and the insects and fought the Japanese. The troops had great cause for satisfaction and leave.

ATHERTON TABLELAND AND CAIRNS

The battalion arrived in Townsville on 10th February, 1944 and the Army moved quickly to ensure a minimum of delay in making arrangements for the troops to proceed on leave. Over the next few days all personnel were on their way home. The pleasures of life at home were enjoyed but soon return to army life was necessary and the battalion began concentrating at Wongabel in North Queensland in the area allocated to 2nd Australian Beach Group, commander being Colonel C.R. Hodgson.

Command of the battalion was given to Lt. Col. Clayton E. Davis D.S.O. M.C. who had been commander of 1st Australian Engineer Centre at Kapooka and therefore was no stranger to the 2/2nd Pioneers. He had a distinguished record including service in World War I.

(Part Six continued next issue)

NEWS ITEMS

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL Canberra advise that they will be undertaking the entombment of an Unknown Australian Soldier on Remembrance Day 11th November 1993. The Unknown Soldier will be returned to Australia from a battlefield cemetery in France or Belgium.

ATHERTON TREK BACK October 16-24, 1993 and for programme and details contact RSL Travel.

SICK PARADE

BILL TASKER, Welfare Officer, reports on the following hospital visitations: **GORDON FINLAY** who took a turn on Anzac Day and was in R.P.A. but is now home. **ALLAN McINNES** in hospital at Hornsby — now under treatment. **RAY HARRIS** in Lismore Hospital for an operation. **BOB LAKE** in Manly Hospital for an operation on his neck. **CHARLIE HENRY** in Concord Hospital for hernia operation. **JACK DOLOGHAN** in Concord Hospital, now at home under treatment. **JACK TOOKER** in Concord Hospital and now doing well. **WAL SMITH** was in hospital in April with back problems.

JACK COATES Welfare Officer Central Coast reports that **EDNA MILLER** has been in hospital for a kidney operation, now at home being looked after by Bluey. **HARRY HAMER** and **IVOR GARNON** looking well after being in hospital.

CONSTITUTION ALTERED

It was moved as a notice of motion at the Annual Meeting April 24, that a Special Meeting be convened on Friday 13th August 1993 at Redfern RSL Club at 1pm for the purpose of altering the Associations Constitution:

Clause 8. MEETINGS — Delete:

Sub Clause (d). A quorum for an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting shall be at least thirty (30) members.

Insert: A quorum for an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting shall be at least fifteen (15) members.

Clause 10. ACCOUNTS — Delete:

Sub Clause (c). The funds from all functions to be paid into a General Fund Account — the name of this account to be 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bns Assoc. General Fund.

(d) That a separate account be known as Pioneer News Account.

(e) That a separate account be known as Welfare Fund account.

Insert: (c) The funds be paid into an account known as 2/1-2/2 Bns Assoc. General and Welfare Account.

LARRY ROBSON REPORT

Being confined to restricted outings I prepared myself on Anzac Day to watch the Sydney Parade of our Pioneers on television. I saw them alright but if I had blinked I would have missed seeing them altogether. It is the worst commentary I have heard of the Anzac March. Who wants to hear music and all the talk about bands. One can see them any-time, but it is only once a year people like me in the country areas, particularly those unable to get about, can see our mates of yesteryear.

When our Secretary goes to so much effort in sending a letter with all the particulars to the television channel for the announcer to read out, I think Channel Two should be taken to task.

Since my last report I have had visits from John and Mollie Hunt, Jack and Jean Bertam, Jack (Glido) Griffiths, Max (Slim) Wilson who calls in every Wednesday for an hour and a surprise visit from Bob and Joan Lake. Bob was on his way home from Nelson Bay and as I was in the process of having a shower we had a good talk in the "Furphy Room". Sorry I missed seeing you Joan.

I am slowly picking up and expecting my electric wheel chair shortly, which Veteran Affairs will supply, so this will enable me to get about and be more independent.

The sad passing of Jack Collis was very upsetting as he had only visited me three days before he died. Also very sorry to hear of the passing of Noel Trefoni. I hope Gordon Finlay is improving and I wish him all the best. Congratulations to Bill Tasker on being presented with his Life Membership, well done Bill. It was great to read in the Pioneer News about Jack Monger and he would remember the late Bluey Eather calling out "Unger-Unger, Mr Munger".

Will end this scribble now and maybe by my next report I will have a typewriter so that the Editor will find it easier to read.

Best wishes to all Pioneers, **LARRY ROBSON**.

THANK YOU

GORDON FINLAY wishes to say thank you, on behalf of Olive and himself, for all those people who phoned, sent get well cards, and visited him while in R.P.A. hospital.

Each day Olive brought several names, written down of people who had phoned and although Olive did not know the people, Gordon certainly did, and says thank you from them both.

S.A. PIONEER BATTALIONS

Together with Russ Harrison and Ken Wilson, Bluey Locane attended the Anzac weekend in Adelaide and their host President Allan Olson with his family gave them a wonderful time.

Bluey reports that the following, who attended wished to be remembered to all Pioneers: "D" Coy. 2/2nds — **Cyril Denton** sends regards to Snowy Dodd and Allan McInnes. **Joe Robertson** sends regards to Bob Ginnane, Roy McGregor, Bill Fallon and Bruce Scott. **Geoff Lloyd** with regards to Bill Robertson, Ray Harris, Jack Henderson, Bill Lewis and Bob Ginnane. **Len Norman's** regards to Ross Dawson, Bill Fallon and Ray Harris.

"C" Coy. 2/2nds — **Roger Monks** sends regards to Gordon Walker, George Smith and Don Linton, also invites anyone visiting S.A. to call on him by phone (086) 35 2213.

2/1sts, **Bill Thiele** and **Noel Grant** send regards to Brian Smallhorn, Bill Wright, Laurie Kelly, "Hoot" Gibson and "Doc" McKibbin.

Bluey Locane had the pleasure of meeting Bill McIntyre, son of the late Richard McIntyre, and Bill sends regards to George Nichols and Gordon Finlay. Bluey also met up with George Sauer 2/2 who left the unit at Cairns to go to O.T.S. and finished up with a Captaincy in 2/1sts.

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

Another issue of Mail Bag, some 40 odd letters and more than pleased to receive same. Anzac Day has passed for another year and a good roll up at Redfern and I think everyone had a great day. A bit of trouble when we had to get an ambulance to take Gordon Finlay to hospital but he is now well on the road to recovery. On with the letters.

REG ARMSTRONG 2/2, Coonabarabran, with a donation to the treasurer and an apology for non-attendance on Anzac Day. The young lady who used to stay with Coralie has married and lives some distance away so that put the kybosh on Reg coming to Sydney. He will try and turn out with the local R.S.L. Also has a diploma which he would like to present to the Association, but afraid to post it, so will keep until his next trip to Sydney. Closes with best wishes to all.

DON ANDERSON 2/1, Merimbula, per pen of wife Dora, with his yearly donation and the news that, through the pages of Pioneer News, Don had been able to meet up with Bill Johnston of Melbourne whom he had not seen since 1946. Bill had seen Don's name in the news and made contact and they were able to spend some pleasant hours together when Bill was en route to his home in Victoria. As Dora says, thanks to those who publish and work on the News, another old friendship had been renewed. Best wishes to you both.

BOB BALLY 2/1, West Aust., with apologies for not having been in touch previously, but no excuse except for laziness and hates letter writing. Has made himself known to the gang in the West and caught up with Jack Monger and Syd Abercrombie (we have just heard that Sydney passed away on 24/6/93) and the only chance of attending the social get-together always seems to coincide with some other activity. Encloses a cheque for the treasurer and best wishes to all.

PHIL BARNETT 2/2, Lismore, with best wishes to all and a cheque for the treasurer. Also many thanks to the committee for helping all the country cousins to keep in touch.

ALBY BARTON 2/1, Gulgong, with a welcome donation and the news that Gulgong is a good place to retire to. Says everything is old so they fit in well. He works, among other things, at the Pioneer Museum and it's amazing the people you meet passing through. Max and Peg Herron, together with Jack and Marj Kerslake spent the day there last November and voted it the best they had seen. Sorry they missed you, but will catch up next time. Thanks for your good wishes for Anzac Day and best wishes to Gwen and yourself.

ALF BENTLEY 2/1, West Aust., with a letter of appreciation to all who made their stay in the "big smoke" so memorable — they are home now after one of the best holidays they have ever had. Alf carried the banner at the wreath laying ceremony then marched in the front line with "Bindi" Moane on the big day. Only wishes they were closer so that they could become more involved. He would like to say a special thank you to all members who were at the Annual Meeting for making him so welcome, to Bill Tasker for the front line medal and the likes of Clem Moroney, Alec George, Clancy Scholes and Lakey for making names become a reality again.

Their trip to Darwin was all they hoped it would be, went everywhere, saw as much as they could and swam like mad. Had a lot of fun and even managed a modest triumph each in the Vets section of the national Aussie swimming titles. Alfie won a silver medal for 50m backstroke and Pat a bronze in 50m freestyle. Congrats to you both.

Alf has not been in touch with Len Preedy yet, but will do so as soon as possible. Closes with best wishes to all and should anyone be over in the west hopes that they will get in touch with he and Pat so that they may show the same kindness in return.

MAVIS BLANCH, widow of Joe 2/1, Beau Desert, with a letter to Max and Peg with the news that she would be attending the local Anzac Day in the town which is always well patronised. Max has replied to you regarding the Dutch Medal so won't go into details. She still does a few bowls trips — has been to Toowoomba, Warwick, Killarney and

has booked for Evans Head, Lismore and Grafton. Enjoys the trips away and gets to see a lot of good friends around the Northern Rivers area, also pretty active with charity work. At the ROTA Xmas luncheon at Ballina she met up with Ted Felton, Jack Martin, Jack Shearman, Ron Cross and their wives, but Bruce McNaughton was away baby-sitting.

Closes with best wishes to all those that remember her and to those that don't, don't know what they missed. I'll never forget the incident at Dubbo when she nearly wrecked the washing machine. Wot a girl!!

COLIN CAMERON 2/1, Campbelltown, with a cheque for the treasurer and apologies for not making the reunion as he is having trouble with his legs. Stay with it, Col, and all the best to you.

RON CLARK 2/1, Kingsford, with a letter telling of his heart problems last year, four by-passes, but is O.K. now and not over-doing things. Enclosed a donation and his best wishes to all.

JACK CLAYPOLE 2/1, Matraville, with a note wishing all good things for Anzac Day. He rang the Town Hall on Anzac Day and asked for Sam Lewis, but whoever answered the phone left the door open and there was plenty of noise. Jack gets terrific headaches and his feet are the same, but O.K. in the middle. Keep sober, Jack, old mate!

JACK COATES 2/1, Umina, with a letter following the death of Rebecca Clogg, which will be covered in Last Post. The Rats Group on the Central Coast is still very strong but as Jack says there are more wives and widows than Rats. They have lost a lot of members and what are left are like Jack, bumbling along. Tigers are not going very well, my team (Manly) not doing a great deal better and poor old Collis' team had the dick. Good pickers, aren't we. Gordon Finlay is progressing well and Lakey on the improve. Thank you for the enquiry and keep smiling. Coatesy.

PHIL CRAMSIE 2/1, Buderim, with his new address as from 27th April. Will not be down for Anzac Day this year on account of the move, but sends best wishes for the big day. He has moved into a retirement village at Buderim on the Sunshine Coast and as his daughter is a physiotherapist at Maroochydore it was a good move to make while he was able to do so. Phil has had a lot of trouble with arthritis and passing his cure on to Max — cod liver oil in milk. The cure is nearly as bad as the disease. Don't you think a few glasses of beer would do more good Phil. I do.

ALBY DEAN 2/1, Shepparton, with a letter enclosing subs for the treasurer and the news that he and his wife are keeping quite well. The local RSL has had poker machines installed, so with the pokies and two-up Anzac Day will be top shot. Good luck, Alby, you will probably need it after the first couple of goes on the bandits.

BOB DONALD 2/1, Glen Innes, with a letter telling us that it is 48 years since he had contact with the Pioneers in person and as he will be in Sydney in April writes for information on the set up. Max has already been in touch with you with the info. Bob says he is sorry to hear of Max Law and his problems. Max was Bob's sergeant in 12 Platoon and he had quite a bit to do with him. Did you enjoy yourself Anzac Day?

JOHN DOWD 2/2, Wagga, with a sub for the treasurer and says it is always good to receive the News. His wife Daphne has to read it to him as he has macula degeneration in both eyes, no central vision, only peripheral. Wish you wouldn't use such big words, John, it's alright for you as you say you can't see what you have written. John was picked up by a Red Cross car to take him to the local march and service then on to the RSL. He hoped everyone present in Sydney had a good day — we did John, although down a bit in numbers.

BILL FLEMING 2/1, Mittagong, with the briefest of notes to the secretary — please find enclosed sub for the Association and News — yours faithfully. Surely you can do better than that Bill, even a bit of bull is better than nothing. All the best.

LIONEL FULLARTON 2/2, Orbost, Vic., with a sub for the treasurer and an apology for the time lapse between letters. Lionel has quite a bit to do with Legacy and has met two widows of ex-2/2nds — Rita Bailey (widow of Bill) and Annie Morgan (whose husband was Eddie Morgan). On another occasion a widow asked him if he knew a Keith Jones who was killed in action in Balikpapan. Lionel did not recall the name, but then out of the blue a letter appeared in the News from Gwen Strode,

sister of Keith Jones, 2/1, K.I.A. Borneo. This Legacy widow was nursing at a hospital in Melbourne and met Keith, wrote a few letters to him and they were returned to her as he had been killed. If Gwen would like to contact this lady, she could write to Lionel, P.O. Box 506, Orbost, Vic., and he will give her the details. It's a small world!!

He finds the News really great and names pop up of blokes he knew. Over Xmas he received cards from ex-2/2nds Bill Hansen, Geoff Barwick, Bob Sefton, John Hore-Lacey and Jean Dixon (widow of Bob) so the Pioneer spirit lives on. Closes with best wishes and promises not to be so long between letters next time.

STELLA GRANGER, widow of Bill 2/1, Schofields, with a generous donation to our News and best wishes for another successful year. Many thanks and our best wishes to you.

NOEL GRANT 2/1, Vic., with a cheque for the treasurer and apologies for not being at Redfern this year. It is five years since his last visit, but family commitments take their toll. However, will be in Adelaide on the 25th so will try and pick up the 2/1sts there for the march. Wishes to be remembered to the Lakes, Whiteleys, McKibbins, Three-Course-Kelly and a special mention to Peg and hopes to see us all in 1994.

JIM GRAY 2/1, Warrawong, with an item on History of Milne Bay. Jim could not see any mention of D Coy 2/1, only because there was no one to give the authors the necessary information. Books are available direct from the Researchers, 13 Veronica Place, Loftus 2232. Jim makes enquiries after the ankle of Max, and his regards to Gordon Finlay and George Walker and wishes them a speedy recovery.

IRENE HEPBURN, widow of Frank 2/2, Bankstown, with a newsy letter and a donation to funds. The T.P.I. have put a plaque in the Garden of Remembrance for Frank and she says it is very nice. Since Frank passed on Irene has had her share of troubles — was in a car accident after Frank passed away and was lucky she wasn't badly injured. Then had a fall on Mt Tambourine in Qld and ended up in Greenslopes Hospital for three weeks and eight weeks outpatient for a compound fracture in the left ankle and a skin graft. Is home at Bankstown now under treatment, but it will take time. Irene was in Queensland for her grand-daughters 21st when she fell, now has found out she is getting married next Easter — all we can say is congratulations to the bride-to-be and keep away, Irene from that bloody mountain. All the best and keep well.

NOEL HIBBARD 2/1, Meadowbank, with donation to funds and trusts that Max is on the improve after his ankle problems. Noel was in Concord recently for tests on his heart and lungs and now on 100% disability pension. Says the RSL were more than helpful when he applied for the pension and was very thankful for their efforts on his behalf. Good to hear, Noel, and take care.

JACK HUMPHREY 2/1, Casino, with a note to say that he had read about Jack Martin in the last Pioneer News and asked his next door neighbour did she know him. Turns out Jack lives in the next street, so they have spent a few hours catching up on old times. Jack Martin has emphysema and finds it hard to get about. His wife, Joyce, is a good lady and a hard worker and looks after him very well. They have a lovely garden with flowers, vegetables and trees. I guess Joyce would do the garden, couldn't imagine Banjo digging the soil, unless it was something to do with horses. (That's only Lakey's impression old mate). Nice to hear from you, Jack, and glad you have settled well in your new home.

JOHN HUNT 2/1, Queensland, per pen of Mollie-Jean, with a letter saying they were sorry to see Peg looking so tired on Anzac Eve and hoped it was nothing more than "just too much muchness". They have been home just over a month and plenty to catch up with. They have been to see Nell Davenport who is only just starting speech therapy after her stroke. They met Mavis Blanch one day at the museum where she was on duty working for a friend and Mavis looks well. Harry and Jean Spreadborough came for lunch one day — Harry's Leukemia has worsened and Jean has problems, but they are good company and it was a nice visit. John has been feeling sorry for himself with leg problems, but has finally seen a specialist and is much happier now.

Mollie has been meaning to write to the Finlays

but hasn't got round to it, but hopes that Gordon is O.K. again. (Dr Lake reports that Gordon is improving all the time and by the time this goes to print could be getting to the dangerous stage). Many thanks for all the news, Mollie, and keep up the good work. Keep sober, John.

PHILL JACKSON 2/2, West Aust., per pen of Yvonne, with a short note expressing best regards to all members from Phill and a cheque for the treasurer to keep him smiling. Phil does not say much, but he was in Japan as a P.O.W.

JACK KEMPNIH 2/1, Fingal Bay, per pen of wife Maisie, with a letter she has been promising to write since X-mas. They called on Larry Robson before X-mas but he was put into isolation while they were there (wrong decision) which caused him great distress. However, while visiting Jim and Cynthia McDonald there they called on Larry again, this time at Stockton, and he was very happy to be in his home away from home. Jim McDonald has had a very rough time with chemotherapy and Mais and Jack will continue to visit him when he goes home.

You must be an awkward bugger Maisie catching your finger in a door, what would you do to ours? As she says 1992 was not a good year for them and '93 does not look so much better so far. Jack has been getting the van ready for re-registration — reckons they may do one more trip in it then sell it. Fish are not very plentiful at the moment (if Jack can't catch them there's none there) and she says he is finding it hard to get blood worms, so is trying to find some other kind of bait. Thank you for a newsy letter, Maisie, will pass on your good wishes to all the good wives and in return we wish you and Jack all the best. How is the home brew going, Jack, still keeping up with production?

DICK KENNEWELL 2/2, Brighton-Le-Sands, with a cheque for the treasurer for subs for himself and Alf Ballard. They were both sorry they could not make Anzac Day this year. Alf has had a few trips to St George Hospital recently and now on the mend, but "off the beer", (change your doctor) and Dick says so is he — well nearly!! Dick still goes to Concord every three months for check-ups and with luck they both may be on deck next year.

NELL LAUGHREN, widow of Pat 2/1, Nambour says could not let the great day pass without a note wishing all the "boys" the very best — the memories, the mateships, all ANZAC stands for. Pat always regretted not being with us on account of ill-health. Thank you for the donation, Nell, and our best wishes to you.

RAY LAW, son of Jim 2/1, Yanderra, with a note of thanks to the Committee for allowing him to carry "Our Flag" on Anzac Day and to say how proud and thrilled he was to do so. Our thanks to you, Ray, for your help at the reunion and the afternoon tea you provided. It was very much appreciated.

BOB LEHMANN 2/1, Miami, with a cheque for the treasurer and said it had just dawned on him that Max and Peg Herron were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in March and passed on his congratulations. How well he remembers Anzac Day, 1943!! (Thanks for your good wishes, Bob, and all the best to you and your good wife for your 50th in May — Max).

DON LINTON 2/2, Tuncurry, with a cheque for the treasurer and that he is still in the land of the living. Had a couple of bouts of pneumonia and now avoiding hills and keeping in the slow lane. That way he hopes to enjoy life for a few more years. He was sorry to miss out on the Gosford reunion and not seeing Gordon Sheen before he passed away. However, pays tribute to the Pioneer News for a great job of reporting these occasions and thanks to those in office who help to make this possible.

ERNIE LUNN 2/2, Dubbo, with a donation to funds and the news that he may be able to attend the annual meeting in April. Closes with best wishes to all.

GEOFF LUVIS 2/1, Dorrig, with a first letter to the Association and requiring some info from Max, which he has given you in detail. Mighty nice to hear from you after all these years. I (Lahey) was in Dorrig some years ago, saw Fred Wheaton and Merv Rees, but they did not know where you were — I think they said you worked out in the bush. However, welcome to the Association and I sincerely hope that you will attend some of the functions in future.

STAN MARSTON 2/1, Buderim, with a cheque and a change of address. Early this year Stan and his wife sold their farm at Hanwood and decided

to retire to Buderim in Queensland. It's catching, you're the second this mail. Best of luck to you both and you should look up Phil Cramsie in the future — it's nice to know someone when you move to a new area.

JACK MORGAN 2/2, Wagga, with a cutting from the local paper re the chapel at Kapooka which looks good and progressing well. Jack saw John Dowd and Dud Stanforth on Anzac Day. Dud did not attend the dinner afterwards but Jack and John did and were later joined by Evelyn and Daph. Closes with best wishes to all.

TOM MORGAN 2/2, Forster, with a sub for the News and how he enjoys receiving and reading it. Tom takes things very quietly these days, hears occasionally from a few of the boys from Don Coy. and sends a big thank you to the committee for keeping things alive and going.

DON MCCLELLAND 2/2, Bundaberg, with a note enclosing a cheque for the treasurer and his thanks for copies of the News. Once he thought it was all 2/1st News, but now has had a change of heart. I think you will have found a lot of 2/2nd news in the last few issues, Don, especially since the series on the Battalion has been published. Best wishes and many thanks for your donation.

GEORGE MURPHY secretary 2/2, Victoria, with a list of names to be registered for Pioneer News, and how sorry he was to hear of the passing of Bill Jollie's wife. Also sorry to hear that Allan McInnes, Ray Harris and Bill Robertson were hospitalised and ill for the Anzac Day functions and wished them a speedy recovery.

The 2/2 in Melbourne had a good attendance at the Annual Reunion held on 24th April and a great roll up on Anzac Day for the march which was headed by Colonel John Williams who came down from Sydney. Afterwards they all adjourned to a hotel in the city where all who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Their annual meeting was held on 4th May and Frank Cheal was duly elected to the committee — there were no other changes. Closes with best regards to Max and Peg and all Pioneers.

WALLY PAGE 2/1, Cudgen, with a short note to say how much he enjoyed Anzac Day and many thanks to all who organised the show at Redfern Town Hall. Also enclosed a cutting from a local paper on Barbara Williams, wife of the late Geoff Williams 2/1, who served with 2/7 A.G.H. All the best to you, Wal, don't leave it so long to come again.

LEN PREEDY 2/2, West Aust., sends some changes of addresses in case we have not been notified, and that Fred Newton 2/2 was in Hollywood Hospital at time of writing. Says to tell Jack French that "Pee Wee" Craig is still on deck but, like the rest of us, not quite as spritely as he used to be. Len went past the old campsite at Bellevue recently, hardly recognisable but the vineyard across the road is still going. Closes with best wishes to all for Anzac Day.

MICK ROBERTS 2/1, Leeton, with a cheque for subs and congratulations on the Pioneer News. He had a visit from Jack Purcell from Inverell and sees Les Gavel quite often. Also had a card from Joyce Law at Christmas and would love to see them again, but distance beats us all. Mick played bowls over at West Wyalong and was reminded of John Douglass — a great guy and always mentioned when a group of B Coy. get together. None of these section fellows you mentioned are on our lists, Mick, and Trevor Beckett died some years ago. Sends his best regards to all friends in 2/1st.

BILL ROBERTSON 2/2, Randwick, with a short note and a sub from Padre Jock Steele and himself. Closes with love to Peg and best wishes to all from he and Toss. Many thanks, Bill, and keep well.

JACK ROBINSON 2/1, Woy Woy, with a cheque for subs and an apology for not being able to make the march this year. Sends best wishes to all.

CHARLES RICHARDSON 2/2, Qld., with a note and a cheque for the treasurer, also best wishes for Anzac Day. Charles will be in Kuranda during the Atherton Trek Back, so hopefully will catch up with some of the activities. His youngest son lives in Kuranda and over the last two years they have visited Mareeba and had a drink at the local RSL. They also had a meal at Cairns RSL which is really top class. Finds Lahey's Mail Bag very interesting, but putting names to faces becomes difficult — you are not alone by any means — but says Bob does a good job.

JOHN RYAN 2/1, Narooma, with a very brief note

with a cheque and says he is enjoying reasonable health at the moment. Always looks forward to receiving Pioneer News.

FRED SCANES 2/1, Cooma, with a donation to funds and a few words for the News. Thanks all who contribute to its production and always looks forward to its arrival. Makes special mention of Allan McInnes and hopes he is now on the mend as he had heard Mac wasn't the best. Fred still does a bit of gardening, had quite a good show last year, but cold weather on the way now and gardens in Cooma just about finished. (Herron has put a special red mark on the bottom of Fred's letter to say a big cheerio from Peg and your old D Coy mate Max).

NEV SCHAFER 2/1, Ryde, per pen of daughter Lois, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that Nev has lost the use of his right hand and cannot write. Otherwise he feels well and for a man his age couldn't be better. Max Herron sends his regards to you personally as he was with you at Dubbo. Thanks, Lois, for helping with the "old man".

NOEL SMITH 2/1, Bathurst, with a note apologising for his non-attendance on Anzac Day and encloses a cheque for subs. Also received a note from his good wife, Mavis, to say Noel had been in hospital for five weeks but was now home. Do hope everything goes well with him, Mavis, and many thanks also for your donation. Rest assured it will be put to good use.

BONNIE SNUDDEN, widow of Cec 2/2, Dubbo, with a donation to funds and good wishes to all as Anzac day was just around the corner. Hopes that the weather will be kind for the special day. All the best, Bonnie, and keep well.

DANNY SPROUSTER 2/1, Dundas, with a sub to treasurer to keep the Pioneer News afloat. Not much to report from his part of the world, just a few aches and pains as winter creeps on — join the mob. Closes with best wishes to all 'til next time.

REV. JOCK STEELE 2/2, Cardiff, with a letter to Robbie saying he would not be with us on Anzac Day. It's a "working day" for the Padre and as there are not enough of the young ones to go round will have to man the pumps himself. Sends his best wishes to men of both 2/1 and 2/2 and may they have a dry and happy day — at time of writing was pouring at Cardiff. Thanks for the donation, which Robbie has posted on.

HARRY SULLIVAN 2/2, Dubbo, with a sub and the news that he had moved from Bourke to Dubbo — the reason for him not receiving the last few issues of Pioneer News. (Max has since posted them on). Harry has had a total hip replacement since he has been in Dubbo and going along nicely now, and without a walking stick. Also has troubles with his eyes, glaucoma, has lost the sight in one but coping O.K. Expresses his best wishes and said not too many "little middies" on Anzac Day.

MICK TASSELL 2/1, Hay, with a very short note and a sub to keep the News alive. Says he enjoys reading the paper and closes with best wishes to all. We all said more than that when we called you from the RSL when we were down that way, but maybe hear more from you at a later date.

RON WEBSTER 2/1, North Ryde, with a cheque for the treasurer and an apology for missing the collection on Anzac Day. Congratulates the committee on the fine job they are doing and he really enjoys the News.

BARBARA WILLIAMS 2/7th A.G.H., and widow of Geoff 2/1, with her usual greeting for Anzac Day and informs us that she will be doing the march at Ipswich, Qld., by jeep this year. Reminisces of old times in Palestine and sends loving thoughts to all. Barbara is writing a book about her experiences called "Never a Dull Moment" and has submitted this in the Queensland RSL literary competition. Good luck and best wishes.

COLONEL JOHN WILLIAMS 2/2, Sefton, with a cheque for the treasurer and says he has just finished reading the April issue of the News and appreciates the effort that goes into it. Now that he can march again with his new knees is off to Melbourne to attend the 2/2 reunion and march on Anzac Day. John was C.O. of the 2/2 in Java as a P.O.W. which makes Anzac Day just that little bit more special to march in front of your boys. Hope you had a great day, John.

That completes the mail bag for this issue — the football is going along steady, Whiteley's mob are leading at the moment, but we will try and adjust

that later. I had to knock off smoking to have an operation on the carotid artery in my neck. By-passed the artery but on coming out of the big sleep had another slight stroke which resulted in my left arm and hand pretty near useless. Now I am waiting to go to the table again for a biopsy of the throat, only a two day affair. (Results of this are good). Anzac Day was a successful operation and the working staff at Redfern did a wonderful job. To Pam Herrick, David Herron, Geoff Finlay, Craig and Darren Reynolds, Ray Law, Tim and Anthony Lloyd, Stephen and Matthew Cole and Ray Brennan all our thanks and hopefully next year it will be a little easier as we are working towards holding the reunion in a pub. So long for now, Lakey.

BILL TASKER — LIFE MEMBER

At the Annual Meeting, John Gilchrist presented Bill Tasker with his Life Membership Certificate for many years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association.

Bill has been Welfare Officer for the Association since taking over from Max Law and had also taken on the task of organising the Front Line Medal. Congratulations to you Bill on a fine job well done.

LAST POST

JACK COLLIS 2/1, passed away on March 23. Late of Umina, husband of Gwen (deceased), father of Brian and William and grandfather of Tracy and Cindy.

The funeral service on March 26 was conducted at the graveside Point Claire Cemetery. Fifteen Pioneers, including ladies were in attendance, as well as members from the Rats of Tobruk Association.

Jack was President of the Central Coast Sub-Branch of the Rats of Tobruk Association and Association Welfare Officer for the Central Coast.

Tom Lavery of the Rats of Tobruk Association gave the Eulogy and spoke of Jack's pre-war days then called upon President Bill Jollie who spoke of Jack's life with the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion as a stretcher bearer and R.A.P. attendant. Tom Lavery concluded by giving a run down on Jack's post-war days as a great family man and sportsman.

Welfare officer Bill Tasker conducted the Poppy Service after which he extended the sincere sympathy of the Association to sons Brian and William and family.

JAMES REILLY 2/2 of Blacktown passed away on April 13 and the funeral at Pinegrove Lawn Cemetery on April 16 was attended by Roy Levy and Bill Tasker who conducted the Poppy Service.

Sincere sympathy was extended to the family from the Association by Bill Tasker.

PHYL JOLLIE 2/1 of Castle Hill, wife of President Bill Jollie, passed away on April 22 at Westmead Hospital after a long illness.

The funeral on April 27 was held at Castlebrook Crematorium and Pioneers in attendance were Bill Tasker, Joe Kyffin, Frank Gillian, Steve Clarke, Jack Tooker, Ruth Rhodes, David Herron, Rita Trefoni, Doris and Cyril Amies and Peg and Vic Whiteley. In total there were one hundred and fifty people attending.

The Eulogy was read by John Tyler, son-in-law, and it was most impressive, outlining the life of a wonderful lady who will be sadly missed by all.

HORRIE SEDGER 2/2, Qld., passed away on 7th May and the funeral was attended by Bob Lehmann 2/1 who recited the Ode. Thank you Bob for passing on the details.

REG GWYNNE 2/1 passed away on 5th May while in hospital at Gwynneville. Reg was with the 6th Machine Gun Battalion before transferring to the Pioneers. Thanks to Jim Gray for the details.

SYD ABERCROMBIE 2/1 of W.A. passed away on June 24 and the funeral was attended by Len and Joy Preedy as well as 200 people from Mossman Park Bowling Club and RSL.

REBECCA CLOGG, widow of William 2/1 and of Chittaway Point, passed away on 17th May and the funeral was attended by Ivor Garnon.

JOCK RUSSELL 2/1 of Nursing Home at Dudley passed away on 2nd July and funeral was attended by Jack Bertram and Jack Griffith who conducted the Eulogy. Jock was 81 years old.

PERC DUTTON 2/1 of Orange passed away on 4th July and the funeral was attended by Wyn and Jack Hayden. Thank you Jack for the details.

2/1-2/2 ANZAC ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Saturday, 24th April at the Redfern RSL Club at 3.30 pm with an attendance of 26.

Meeting was opened by Chairman Doug Shearston who stood in for President Bill Jollie whose wife Phyl had passed away two days before. After the Ode to the Fallen, the Chairman welcomed members with a special mention to those who had travelled long distances and in particular Alf Bentley who had come over from W.A.

Election of Office Bearers was conducted by Doug Shearston and the senior appointments were Bill Jollie, President, John Gilchrist (2/1) and John Williams (2/2) co-patrons. Additional new faces were Gordon Finlay as Vice President and Jack Coates as Welfare Officer Central Coast.

In order to alter our Constitution a notice of motion was moved that a Special Meeting to be convened — see separate article.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

Bill Tasker acting as marshal lined up the 12 members in attendance and the unit banners were carried by Alf Bentley 2/1 and Pat Egan 2/2. Wreaths were placed on the Cenotaph by John Gilchrist representing the Association and Pat Bentley from W.A. for the Ladies Auxiliary.

John Gilchrist recited the Ode to the Fallen and Jim Robson standing in for Aub Brasier sounded the bugle for the Last Post and Reveille.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

March leaders for the 2/1st were John Gilchrist and Bill Jollie with an attendance of 62 members. March leader for the 2/2nds was Ian Willmore with an attendance of 21 members.

2/1 REUNION TABLE TALK

Alf Bentley came all the way from Yokine in W.A. for his first Anzac Day and as he served in the 2/1st Tank Attack Platoon he had gathered at his table members of that Platoon in the form of Casey Brown, Clem Moroney, Neville Moane and Tom Chrystall of Molong. He met his sergeant, Jack Griffiths the night before at the meal table. Others who came to Alf's table during the day were Clancy Scholes, Sergeant Major of H.Q. Coy. and Ken Stuart who was his officer.

Laurie "Three Course" Kelly was at the same table, and yes you guessed it, with his usual bottle of whisky on the table, and his heart pills in his pocket. At the 1992 Reunion he made the statement to Ray Law while he was serving the afternoon tea goodies, that he was not used to such luxuries like this — just bully beef and biscuits. So this year Ray served Laurie lunch with a plate of bully beef, biscuits and a mug of black tea. Well, you can imagine the roar of laughter from the boys. Late in the afternoon Laurie was seen going off with the plate of bully beef and biscuits in his bag — probably taking it home to his wife for tea.

Jack Coates was sitting at a table with Albert Brown, who mentioned that his son Ray had passed away last year. We are very sorry to hear this Albert so please accept our sympathy.

Frank Gillian was moving around from table to table and it was easy to find him as you only had to listen for his hearty laugh.

George Nichols was in good spirit as his old mate Lloyd "Porky" Graham was at his table and they were busy catching up on old times.

Peter Craig, Jim Gray, Percy Fisk, Bill Hodges and Pat Murphy were all at the Don Company table at the door entrance. It was nice to see Pat Murphy as he had not been for a couple of years.

Sam Lewis was in good form and passed on regards from Jack Claypole. Alec George who was seen in earnest conversation with Alf Bentley at one stage, passed on the news that his brother-in-law had recently died and the Chaplain officiating at the funeral was Padre Albert Pitt-Owen. Alec said Albert wished to be remembered to all Pioneers.

Bob Donald came down from Glen Innes for Anzac Day and said it was the first time he had met up with his old mates in forty-eight years. Another first in many years was Wal Page, all the way from Cudgen which is near Murwillumbah. It was nice to see you Wal and you don't look a day older.

President Bill Jollie was in charge of his usual table with John Gilchrist, Steve Clarke, Stan Jones, Jack Tooker and Ken Stuart. Missing faces were Allan McInnes, Ray Harris and Bill Robertson.

2/2 REUNION TABLE TALK

Despite the ravages of time and illness a small but dedicated band were in attendance to meet and dine with their comrades after the march.

All the way from Wollongong and Dapto were Matt Elliott and "Tib" Martin to share a few beers with Bruce Metcalf, Bill Henry and Jack Henderson, who was ably escorted by son-in-law.

Bill Lewis was telling tall tales but true, to Roy Levy and Bob Ginnane, whilst Ian Willmore and Jack Allison were in deep discussion. Stalwart Pat Collins was there with sons Gordon and John and Jack McDonagh, Bert Beasley and Don Crawford stayed in close proximity to the bar.

On another table I spotted Gavin Todd, Bob MacGregor from Qld, Wally Coe, Pat Egan and Clive Madrell talking about the war years.

Apologies were received from Russ Harrison, Frank Locane and Ken Wilson who were all interstate on Anzac Day. A long list on Sick Parade included Horrie Sedger, Ray Harris and Alan McInnes, all in hospital plus Bill Robertson, Charlie Henry and Jack Crouch ill at home. Padre "Jock" Steele apologised that being Sunday his "Big Boss" couldn't give him time off.

John McKnight and George Smith couldn't make the reunion but did hear "Smithy" was heading off with "Smoky" Dawson who marched with the 2/2nds. Thanks "Smoky" maybe next year you can bring your horse to allow "Billy Robbo" to lead the 2/2nds in the Anzac March. **BOB GINNANE**

NEWS ITEMS

JACK MORGAN of Wagga reports that the Soldiers Chapel at Kapooka Army Camp is running on time and the official opening will be on Saturday 30th October, 1993. The Appeal has reached \$1.3 million following a recent contribution by the Australian Army of \$250,000.

BILL ROBERTSON 2/2 of Randwick was recently awarded the Meritorious Medal by the RSL. This is the most prestigious award that can be bestowed on a Life Member. Congratulations Bill.

BILL JOLLIE wishes to thank all those people who sent sympathy cards on the passing away in April of his wife Phyl. They were appreciated.

2/1-2/2 PIONEERS, WA

By President **LEN PREEDY**

Our March 19th meeting at Anzac House was well attended especially by our ex P.O.W.'s who were there in force. Ted Rowe made a welcome second visit and Hugh Sorley made his first. Added to this our regulars, Barry Hunt and Neil MacPherson, who rounds up the guys for me.

Joan and Jack Monger, who is looking so well, along with Jack Stewart and Syd Abercrombie built up the strength of 2/1sts. Norm Le Cornu and Jack Murray passed on the information that Owen Outridge who recently passed away, was in the mortars and that they remembered him.

Beth Lee was the only one of the ladies who made it to our meeting, and we hope Don is well. We had an apology from Ethel and John McDougall who were going to be in Albany so hope you both enjoyed your stay.

Syd Abercrombie and Barry Hunt were to be hospitalised in the near future, so hope the results are good for you both. Thank you for donations from Hugh Vincent, Joy Butcher, Neil MacPherson and E. Rowe, N. Le Cornu and Ted Lyon.

While in Busselton we paid a visit to Ted and Dorothy Lyon who both appear well and send best wishes to all Pioneers. Also visited George McNess who has a punt at the local TAB and plays golf occasionally. We went across to Boyup Brook to visit Josie Outridge widow of Owen who she said had been manager of the local club and worked at the TAB until he retired. Josie invites all Pioneer calling through to pay her a visit.

We had a pleasant surprise visit recently from Dick and Sheila Hobley who were on a rare trip to the city for a family wedding. Had a letter of apology from Virginia Safe. I would like to send a cheerio call to Harry Fitzgerald, Fred Newton, Jack Crispin, Bob Sefton and Bill Scott.

Hope to see you all at our next meeting on 16th July and kind regards to all from Joy and myself.

PIONEER NEWS

Phone: 759 5491 Official Organ of 2/1 and 2/2 PIONEER BATTALIONS ASSOCIATION Per Annum: \$5

Registered under the Charitable Collections Act, 1934-41 — Certificate No. 10462

Printed by Principal Press, 19 Grey Street, Carlton

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Vol. 38, No. 3

NOVEMBER, 1993

Welfare: BILL TASKER, phone 718 6658

THE 2/2nd AUST PIONEER BATTALION

Part Six of the series covering the Battalion from the formation in June 1940 to the 50th anniversary in 1992.

PART 6 — BEACH GROUP, TRINITY

The NSW troops were the first to arrive at Wondabel. However, on 10th April a move to Trinity Beach, 15 miles north of Cairns was made. By 26th April the whole battalion had moved there, the campsite being in an area known as Deadman's Gully. The Beach Group was concentrated at Trinity Beach for amphibious training. The battalion received reinforcements from the Canungra Jungle Training Centre and was about at full strength.

The Beach Group was established to provide the personnel to man a beach maintenance area in the initial stages of amphibious landings on enemy held shores. The 2nd Beach Group consisted of some 15 individual units including 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion, Signals, RAAF and Naval liaison personnel, engineers and others. The role of the Pioneers was handling stores landed in the area and defence to prevent enemy interference in these activities. The work of unloading in the landing area required much practice and despite assurances from senior officers, was regarded by the troops as boring and lowering of morale.

To maintain enthusiasm, leave to Cairns was reasonably generous and sporting activities were organised against other units. The Australian Rules team took part in the Cairns Services Competition. The Rugby League team participated in the 1st Australian Corps competition and the Beach Group Competition, and the hockey team had many successes. Cricket and basketball were also popular. Swimming instruction at Trinity Beach and Cairns Baths, had for its main object the qualifying of all ranks in swimming 50 yards in shirt, trousers and boots.

The construction of a battle course five miles south of the Pioneers camp, with the stress on realism, proved of benefit although there were accidents. Capt. T. James, Clemm McDonald and Matt Elliott suffered wounds — Clemm's more to his pride than anything and Matt's serious enough to necessitate a long period in hospital.

Training continued, enthusiasm being revived at various times using assault landing craft and in October with the arrival of a tank landing ship and in mid November, two infantry landing ships, HMS Empire Spearhead and HMS Glenearn, Royal Navy vessels, which had been used in the Normandy landings.

In December, Exercise Mowbray was carried out. The battalion traversed the Macalister Range, then proceeded 50 miles through Black Mount area to Mowbray Pass and down to the sea. This exercise and Exercise Schnapper carried out by the Beach Group saw the arrival of Christmas 1944, the battalion's fifth.

On 19th January, 1945, 9th Australian Division staged a sports carnival in which a composite platoon under Sgt. G. Colcott won the drill competition. The tank attack gun competition was won by a team under Sgt. White and Pte. Morgan obtained first place in the grenade competition. The mortar, machine gun and stretcher bearer teams were all placed.

In inter-company competitions held in January, Pte. R. Molyneux (D Company), Cpl. Egan (HQ Company) and Pte. R. Kenny (A Company) were adjudged the best marksmen and D Company the best company.

Soon orders were received for the battalion to move to Wondelca on the Atherton Tableland. In early February, the Duke of Gloucester visited the Beach Group area and carried out an inspection of the troops. Rumours abounded and on 23rd February Lt. Col. Davis attended a conference on

deficiencies in personnel and equipment. This was followed a few days later with an inspection by Colonel Hodgson, Beach Group commander. This activity preceded another move and on 9th March, 1945, advance parties moved to the Staging Camp at Redlynch. By 11th March the entire battalion was aboard the United States troopship *Sea Barb*, berthed in Cairns. The ship moved to the north of Fitzroy Island and hove to for two days due to bad weather. As a result she sailed for Morotai with a strong contingent of sea-sick Pioneers.

MOROTAI — ABOARD THE SEA BARB

The voyage to Morotai took 13 days and calls were made to Hollandia, Noemfoor and Biak. The *Sea Barb* arrived at Morotai on 28th March. Morotai in the Halmaheras group was a vast United States air base. Conditions for the Pioneers were very poor. Initially the water was tainted by petrol and tasted vile, but the troops soon improvised rainwater catching devices. There were no washing facilities, these being provided about 4 pm each afternoon by nature with downpours of rain. The battalion provided working parties engaged at stores dumps, wharf labouring, cleaning campsites and guarding various installations. The worst job was unloading and stacking timber done by shifts working at night. These activities prevented any improvements at the Pioneers campsite. Morale was at a low point and apart from all the other problems, the food was poor, not in any way due to the cooks, but more to what was provided.

AMPHIBIOUS LANDINGS AT TARAKAN ISLAND

The involvement of the 2nd Beach Group in the landing at Tarakan Island off the north east coast of Borneo was now imminent. Embarkation of the battalion and its stores began on 21st April. The convoy put to sea on 27th April. The invasion force consisted of 26th Brigade 9th Division (2/23rd, 2/24th and 2/48th Battalions), 2/3 Pioneer Battalion, 2nd Australian Beach Group (which included 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion); 2/12th Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers, 57th Battery, 2/7th Field Regiment Royal Australian Artillery and 2/4th Independent Company. The 2/2nd Pioneers embarked 200 men below strength from Cairns due to leave parties being unable to reach Cairns due to flooding in the Burdekin River causing several spans of the railway bridge being carried away. On 1st May the convoy was standing 4000 yards from the shore off Tarakan Island. The landing beaches were pounded by salvos from cruisers and destroyers standing further out to sea and by bombing sorties by allied aircraft. The bombardment lifted to targets inland and landings of troops began at 8 am. First ashore were the Beach Company commanders, Majors W. A. Robertson and K. B. Kidd. Their assistants, Capt. W. Copp and Lieuts. R. Harris, A. J. Olson, L. Murphy, T. Emes, M. Armstrong and F. Bolitho landed later than was planned due to a last minute decision to change the sequence of landing. Then the rest of the battalion waded ashore. Sporadic small arms fire had little or no effect on the setting up of the Beach Maintenance Area. After being allotted bivouac areas the rifle companies were detailed to the work areas. BHQ and HQ Company were located near the village of Sibengkok.

Work proceeded all day and the tired troops moved to Roach feature but enemy reaction, including mortar fire, forced them to adopt a defensive position for the night. During action to clear the enemy, Pte. K. Moore was wounded and later died. Lieut. W. Hood, Sgt. A. R. Woods, Ptes. H. T. Brown, G. Walker, J. J. Newton and J. N. Lyons were wounded. Working parties were called for during the night and all the next day.

Late on 2nd May 2/2nd Pioneers and 2/3rd

Pioneers relieved 2/23rd and 2/48th Battalions of responsibility for protecting the coastal road, the features Finch and Lingkas being allotted to the 2/2nd.

Problems in the Beach Maintenance Area began to appear. These included haphazard loading of stores prior to leaving Morotai and heavy vehicles becoming bogged in the muddy conditions. Mesh pathways were proving useless. Added to this, enemy activity caused problems necessitating continual battalion action. Hospital Ridge was cleared on 3rd May, removing danger from the Beach area from sniper fire, infiltration and shell-fire. Bombs disposal duties resulted in two victims, L.Cpl. C. Lucas and Pte. R. Bracken.

Two 3 inch mortar detachments under Sgt. A. S. Hanson and three PITA teams (Projectile Infantry Tank Attack), Ptes. F. W. Thomas, J. Williams, R. Fairbairn, J. P. Barry, J. T. Tuckwell and J. L. Bobbin were attached to 2/4 Independent Company. For his part in the operations that followed Sgt. Hanson was awarded the Military Medal.

Patrolling continued under Capt. C. Richardson, Sgt. Baird, Sgt. Bardsley, Pte. Stewart, Sgt. Elphick, Lt. E. B. Reid and L/Cpl. McCourt during which several clashes with the Japanese occurred. During one, Pte. H. A. Adams was wounded. By 16th May, Australian troops had reached the east coast and Netherlands East Indies troops had captured both the main oilfields. News of the cessation of military operations in Europe was received, which brought hopes in the troops that before long, operations against the Japanese forces would be all over.

It was decided that 2nd Beach Group would return to Morotai and 19th May the battalion embarked at Tarakan. They reached their destination a few days later, and moved to a new staging area prepared by Lieut. Canning and the LOB group. A week later the battalion moved to an area near the Sabata River and the demand for working parties resumed. It was at this area that the Pioneers came to appreciate the Beach Group Salvation Army representative Cappy Redford and his writing materials and tea and biscuits.

Swimming was possible, despite the presence of coral snakes, bluebottles and other marine menaces.

AMPHIBIOUS LANDINGS AT BALIKPAPAN

The battalions' next operation became known about this time — the invasion of Balikpapan by the 7th Division. The L.O.B. group moved from the battalion area to the area vacated by D Company. On 20th June, 1945, the battalion embarked, its men and equipment loaded on 19 different vessels. A change of command occurred at this time when Major Aitken took over from Lt. Col. C. Davis who was evacuated sick.

A full rehearsal for the coming operation occurred and the invasion force set forth. The largest convoy of Australian forces ever assembled consisting of more than 200 vessels of war to take part in the amphibious landings, protected by a force of allied naval vessels including aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers. The air forces had undisputed control of the skies.

The landings commenced on 1st July, 1945, from the infantry landing ships *Manoora*, *Kanimbla* and *Westralia*. The first 2/2nd Pioneers ashore were the Beach Commanders' parties. By mid-morning the battalion was ashore, A B and D companies to Red Green and Yellow Beaches respectively, C company and HQ Company moved to Romilly feature to protect the area between the advancing troops and the beaches. The mortar platoon registered targets forward and to the left and right of Romilly. Cpl. Cotter and his section were sited on the right flank to cover a footbridge carrying an oil pipeline across the river Klandasan Besar. By the end of the first day, the Beach Maintenance Area was virtually free of the enemy.

By the end of the second day the whole of 7th Division was ashore involving 35,000 personnel and 4250 vehicles.

On 11th July the battalion moved to the old Dutch hospital which had been practically demolished. Conditions were much better than the beach areas. The battalion's LOB group arrived together with 30 tons of unit stores.

By 25th July, the troops were working longer hours than at any time during the campaign. To provide more men, the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion was called on for working parties. The situation was aggravated by the raids by enemy aircraft in the port area. Morale was being seriously affected. August brought increasing demands for labour and the quality of the rations deteriorated.

(Part Seven (final) continued next issue.)

SOLDIERS CHAPEL KAPOOKA

More than 1500 people, on Saturday 30th October, were present to celebrate the official opening of the \$1.4 million chapel, the fruition of years of fund raising and hard work since the national Soldiers Chapel Appeal launched in May 1989, from the Army camp at Kapooka, Wagga Wagga.

The impressive chapel, designed as a dove in flight as a symbol of peace, was officially opened by the chapel patron and Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General J. C. Grey, A.O.

The imposing building was constructed by Sappers of the RAE with minor input from outside contractors.

Multiple glass doors span the entrance, each bearing its particular emblem, such as Artillery, Nursing and Armoured Corps but of special interest is the striking 2/2 Pioneer door, proudly bearing the Battalion colour patch, above the words, "The first AIF battalion to occupy Kapooka camp 1942". On another door was the emblem of the Rats of Tobruk Association.

Other features of interest are the three magnificent stained glass windows, and the golden translucent Rising Sun badge in a glass panel over the main entrance.

After the ceremony, afternoon tea was served in the Recruits Mess, a formidable exercise in logistics. An officer was overheard instructing two very young recruits at the door. Pointing to the hat rack, he indicated caps belonging to two Generals and one Admiral. "There they are, and there they will stay until they leave. You will see to it. Do I make myself clear?"

On or off duty, recruits do not walk around Kapooka, they MARCH! Small objects are carried in the left hand, which is held firmly against the side. This is the Army, 1993 style.

Hundreds of people returned to the new chapel on the following morning, Sunday 31st October, to attend the Inaugural Worship service beginning with an Ecumenical Service followed by individual services held in each wing of the Chapel for Catholic, Anglican and Protestant denominations — a fitting end to a weekend of symbolic ceremonies for Kapooka.

Visitors to Wagga Wagga would find it worthwhile to phone Kapooka camp and seek permission to inspect the Chapel with special regard to the Pioneer door.

Pioneers in attendance were: 2/2nds — Victoria: George Murphy, Tom Brabin, Don Hose, Snowy Anderson. South Australia: Allan Olson. NSW: Kevin Raward, "Stumpy" Rae, Ken/Ida Wilson, Jack/Barbara Allison, Jack Morgan/Evelyn Booth, Allan McInnes, Ian Willmore, Bill Robertson, Bill Lewis, Vance Foley. 2/1sts: Vic/Peg Whiteley, Jack/Marj Kerslake, Roy Jardine, Maurie McEvoy, and Max/Peg Herron.

— Reported by BILL LEWIS

SICK PARADE

ALBERT BARTON 2/1 of Gulgong for a brief stay at Concord Hospital then on to Strathfield Private for a double by-pass in October. Visited by Peg/Max Herron and now doing well.

RAY HARRIS 2/2 of Ballina at Concord for check ups then on to Lady Davidson for treatment. Visited by Bill Robertson and Russ Harrison.

JACK TOOKER 2/1 of Chatswood in Concord Hospital for a short stay to have a cataract operation which was successful.

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

On Thursday, 11th November, about 20,000 people witnessed the funeral parade of the Unknown Australian Soldier and veterans from all this century's conflicts were among the crowd as the soldier's remains were interred at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

The unknown digger's long journey from the battlefields of France ended when he was buried with full honours in the War Memorial Hall of Memory at 11 am on the 75th anniversary of the end of the Great War.

The last leg of the Unknown Australian Soldier's final journey had begun that morning, at 9.25 am, at old Parliament House. Fourteen World War I veterans from four states and the ACT formed a guard of honour for the coffin as it was moved from Kings Hall where the soldier had lain in state for four days.

The Unknown Soldier was farewelled inside the Hall of Memory — after prayers read by chaplains of the three services — by the funeral party and his World War I comrades, all of whom might have known him in life.

The Governor General placed a sprig of wattle on the coffin before 93-year-old veteran Bob Comb, of Canberra, threw a handful of French battlefield soil on the lid as the coffin was lowered. To the thousands outside, that final moment was signalled by three volleys of rifle fire.

The national president of the RSL Major General "Digger" James then read the Ode which was followed by the playing of "The Last Post" and two minutes silence.

More than 600 unit banners and thousands of spectators lined Anzac Parade. The 2/1st Pioneer banner was carried by Bill Tasker and in the banner party were Bill Jollie, John Gilchrist, Stan Jones, Jack Kerslake, and Max Herron. Also in attendance were Tom Wood, George Walker, and Ron Murray.

The 2/2nd Pioneer banner was in the hands of Ted Hanson, John Williams and George "Bluey" Kelly.

NOTICE

With this issue of *Pioneer News*, we enclose a card commemorating the opening of the Soldiers' Chapel at Kapooka, incorporating among others, the 2/2 Pioneer door.

The door was a gift, made possible by the generosity of a member of the 2/2nd Pioneer Bn., who wishes to remain anonymous.

Initially, the 2/2 Pioneer Chapel Committee wished the message on the door to be the same as that on the card. The Trustees of the Chapel, in their wisdom, decreed otherwise, and the battle honours, etc., were excluded.

Although disappointing at the time, the restrained and balanced treatment of the Chapel as a whole confirms the correctness of the Trustees' judgement.

We are grateful to Ian Willmore for producing this excellent card for everyone to keep as a memento of such a memorable occasion. If anyone wishes further copies for relatives or friends contact our Secretary.

LAST POST

JOE KYFFIN 2/1 of Reservoir, Victoria, passed away on 22nd July at the age of 81. Sympathy was extended to his wife Maida.

NEVILLE GRIFFITHS 2/1 of Towong, Victoria, passed away in July. Bernie Reiners who gave us the details said Neville worked for the Forest Commission until he retired, manning one of the fire towers in the hills.

BARLOW, S.A. of Numurkah, Vic., and **ALLINGHAM, A. A.** of Rosebud, Vic., passed away in August and we thank Eric Causer for these details.

SECRETARY'S REQUEST

Please address mail to Secretary as follows:
M. HERRON, Hon. Secretary
2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn Assoc
3 Enoggera Road
Beverly Hills NSW 2209

ANZAC 1994 CHANGES

At the Committee Meeting held on 13th August it was resolved that, in order to ease the work load of the Executive, the following changes be made over the Anzac period.

1. **ANZAC REUNION DINNER** to be held at the Occidental Hotel, 43 York Street, Sydney (corner York and Erskine Streets), just a few minutes walk from Wynyard Station.

2. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** date be changed from Anzac Eve to a date in May to be decided by the Executive.

3. **WREATH LAYING CEREMONY** to remain at 7.30 pm on Anzac Eve as in previous years. Organised by Jack Tooker.

Full details will be published in April issue of *Pioneer News*.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

24th APRIL 1993

During the past 12 months two Committee meetings were held at Redfern RSL and a reunion at Gosford in addition to Anzac Day.

The committee meetings on both occasions were well attended and conducted in an harmonious manner. We were indeed very sorry to lose the efficient services of Vice President Ray Harris during the year when he and his wife moved to Ballina. Ray was our representative on the 7th Division Association. This position has now been filled by Vice President Allan McInnes.

Anzac Day, although reduced in numbers, was still a great success and our thanks go out to the sons and friends of some of our members who assisted on the day. The 2/1st march was once again led by the Bankstown Police Youth Band. Many thanks to that organisation. We will have to accept as a fact of life on this and future Anzac Days, numbers will diminish as the years roll on.

The 50th anniversary of the reformation of the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion was well and truly celebrated at the Gosford Reunion held during September last year. The organisation was superb and greatly appreciated by all concerned. Once again our many thanks to Max and Peg Herron for a job well done and also to Ray Harris and Roy Levy who organised the Wreath Laying and the Sunday picnic.

Life Membership during the year was awarded to Ray Harris and Larry Robson in recognition of their services to the Association.

Our Treasurer, Vic Whiteley, has once again carried out his duties in a most satisfactory manner and an appeal for funds assisted to boost our dwindling finances. Please take note of our appeal "If you want the *News* — pay your dues". The cost of printing and postage of the *News* is becoming prohibitive.

To our welfare officers Bill Tasker and the late Jack Collis we owe a debt of gratitude for their visitation to the sick and attendances at funerals. The loss of Jack Collis was a sad blow to the Association.

Many of our members have died since our last Annual Meeting and to their loved ones we extend our deepest sympathy. They will be remembered throughout the coming years.

The *Pioneer News* continues to be the life line of the Association and for the three editions published during the past 12 months we sincerely thank the Editors, Bob Lake and Max Herron. We would not receive the *News* without the efforts of the Wrapping Committee. This is a tedious and time consuming job. Thank you for a job well done.

Once again I would like to convey our thanks to Len Preedy of Western Australia and Allan Olson of South Australia and their respective committees for keeping the flag flying in their States.

I would like to extend on your behalf our appreciation to the President and Board of Directors of Redfern RSL Club for the use of their facilities free of charge, and to the Mayor and Aldermen of South Sydney Council for the use of Redfern Town Hall on Anzac Day also free of charge.

Finally and on behalf of you all we say a big thank you to both Max and Peg Herron who have served us well throughout the years far beyond the call of duty.

— BILL JOLLIE

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

Hi Blokes and Ladies:

Another issue of *Mail Bag* and a very welcome one it is. We thank you for your letters and, in most instances, the donations that accompany same — keep up the good work, we will always answer them.

ALBERT BROWN 2/1, Harden, with a note per pen of Mrs Zita de Smer saying that Albert had had a stroke some months ago, but is now out of hospital and making some progress. He has had great support from his RSL friends in the district and will be residing with Zita indefinitely. He asks that his mail be addressed C/- 27 Clarke Street, Harden. Many thanks for giving your attention and time to Albert, Zita, we all wish him a speedy recovery and best wishes from all Pioneers.

ARTHUR BROWN 2/1, with a note requesting badges and pins. Max has already replied to your letter advising that we do not have the goods you mentioned and advised Arthur to write to the 2/2nd in Melbourne. Good luck, Arthur.

BOB BALLY 2/1, West Aust., with apologies for not having written sooner — no excuses — just that he hates writing letters and the late Bob Brewster was doing things for him at this end. Enclosed a subscription for the treasurer, for which our thanks. Through the WA meetings had contacted Jack Monger and late Syd Abercrombie and attended one of the social get-togethers, but always seems to have other things on his plate at the wrong time. Closes with best wishes to all.

FRANK CAULFIELD 2/2, Benalla, with a short note enclosing the funeral notices of the late Joe Kyffin 2/1. Frank was unable to attend the funeral service, but sent his condolences. Frank also enclosed an invitation to the Herrons, that after attending the Chapel opening at Kapooka, they were welcome to visit he and Betty at Benalla. Sorry they did not make it, Frank, but understand Max is writing you shortly. All the best to you both and good wishes from all Pioneers.

JOHN CLEMENT 2/2, Baulkham Hills, with a cheque for the treasurer and a thank you for keeping the *News* coming. John has been holidaying up the north coast quite a lot and driving up and back quite often makes you relaxed and lazy — and a good excuse for not writing letters. Still sees a familiar name in the *News* and says its good to hear and read about everyone. Sends his regards to all the boys, with special mention of 1 Platoon, 2/2.

JACK COATES 2/1, Umina, with his usual lengthy letter. He has passed on a copy of the *News* to Brian Collis (son of the late Jack) who is using part of the old home for a workshop, and tells that younger son, William, has once again sailed on HMAS Perth. Jack sends him the *Herald* each week while he is away to help Will keep up with the local news.

Jack has had another trip to hospital for tests for heart and lungs, reports reasonable, maybe 80%. Has also been down to Concord a couple of weeks ago, but doctors reluctant to operate at the moment. Too risky. Can report that Harry Hamer and Glad, "Blue" and Edna Miller and Ivor Garnon all well and in attendance, at last local Rats' meeting. Not bad, four Pioneers out of 20 odd Rats is heartening. No doubt will have a better attendance at the Xmas Dinner at Tuggerah in December — Snowy Jardine always attends. Jack attended the Balmain Football Club reunion a few weeks ago and met a few of his old mates and fellow players of pre-war days, then will attend Back to Balmain Day at Elkington Park. He says he would like to return to Tigertown before finally "going to ground", but Lex is not keen. Nostalgia — so be it! The Coates have been married 48 years shortly, and as Jack says Lex is as fine as ever, just like Ayers Rock. Not the best of comparisons Jack, but we know what you mean. Congratulations to you both from all 2/1 Pioneers.

RON COYTE 2/1, Wentworthville, with a cheque for the treasurer and a thank you to the fellows and wives for the *Pioneer News* and the work involved getting it out. Ron is out of action at the moment with a bad back, but rolls a bowl now and then at the Wentley Leagues Club when he's well enough.

Max Law, sad to say, is much the same, showing no improvement, and as you say the ranks are getting thinner each year. Ron is looking to buy a weekender within a couple of hours of Sydney soon. Closes with best wishes to all the mob and the team on the newspaper.

DON CROOKS 2/1, Mayfield, with a short note to say he is still in the land of the living and a new address in his retirement. Your change of address noted, Don, and the *News* will be posted as usual. Has been on a few trips to Victoria and Western Australia and enjoyed every one of them. Met Jack Griffiths a few weeks ago and had a good yarn with him, his wife Esme was not the best. (I'll bet that's not all you had Don.) Closes with best wishes to all and enclosed a cheque for the treasurer.

RON CROSS 2/1, Ballina, with a cheque for subs and the news that Alex Cameron's health is not the best and he has been transferred from the hostel to the nursing wing of the Ballina Ex-Servicemen's complex. Ron has been very good to Alex, but he says the last time he went to take him to a Rats meeting, he was not too sure that Alex knew who he was. It's always a bit of a problem as one gets on in years, and Alex is getting that way, but we as Pioneers appreciate your efforts and I'm sure he does too.

RON EDWARDS 2/1, Victoria, with a letter saying that as a latecomer to the Battalion and not having the pleasure of knowing too many members, he still gets great pleasure of reading the *News* and encloses a donation to keep it rolling. He was interested to read in the July issue of Lionel Fullerton of Orbost, Vic., Ron did not know him in the Services, but they became firm friends over a period of some 30 years. Admits though that they haven't caught up with one another in the past decade. Closes with best wishes to all for a great effort.

JACK GRIFFITH 2/2, Vic., with a short note, annual subscription, and kind regards. Thanks, Jack, perhaps a longer note next time.

ROSS HALL 2/2, WA, also with a short note and donation to the *News*, which he looks forward to receiving. Sends his best wishes to all.

JOHN HORE-LACY 2/2, Moss Vale, with a letter thanking Max for the *News*, which is much appreciated, and mentions that he also receives the Victorian newsletter as well. John spends some of his time mountaineering, mainly in the ACT, but he and his eldest daughter went to Tasmania in March and walked through the Walls of Jerusalem for three days. Had perfect weather and saw hundreds of lakes. They also climbed Ben Lomond and Mt Barron. Closes with best wishes to all and hopes to be in Sydney for next Anzac Day. Thanks for your sub, John, and hope you make it to Sydney in April.

GLORIA HUTCHINSON, widow of Bill 2/1, Caringbah, with a note of thanks for receipt of the *News*. She still misses Bill and often waits for his "How about a cuppa Glor". Has been visiting her son at Woolameyah, near Yamba, and has a lovely daughter-in-law whom she "clicks with" which is great. Gloria had a call from Doug Shearston a few weeks ago, always a nice guy, and gives a ring when he and Roma are in the big smoke. She still looks after her mum who is 90 and looks like getting a telegram from the Queen. Also has a new grandson born since Bill passed away, so naturally one of his names is William (wonder why). Good luck Gloria, always happy to hear from you and thanks for the sub.

CHARLIE KERR 2/1, Gatton, with a newsy letter to say it's quite a while since he dropped a few lines. He was sad to read of the passing of Jack Collis and Syd Abercrombie and passed on his sincere sympathy to Bill Jollie on the loss of his wife, Phyl. Charlie attended Anzac Day at Gatton in glorious weather, but there were no 2/1sts on local RSL books.

It is now two years since he left Maryborough after he was diagnosed to have Parkinson's disease and glaucoma, but has responded well to medication. He has bought a two bedroom flat not far from his daughter, Cathe, who has two boys who are into athletics and soccer with mixed success. Son Frazer still with Boral and at the moment in Honiara in the Solomon Islands as area manager. He and his family have now been out of Australia for ten years. Closes with fondest regards to Max and Peg and a special mention to the Sigs. Thanks for the donation, Chas, and pleased to hear you are keeping fit by your outdoor and indoor bowls. You haven't time to get sick! All the best, mate.

CAL MITCHELL 2/2, Victoria, with a thank you

for the *Pioneer News* and a cheque for the treasurer to help with future production of same. Sends his best wishes to all.

GLEN MORISH, nephew of Jack Morish, 2/2, with a sub for the treasurer and a thank you for the *News* which he finds very interesting. Your change of address for future issues has been noted, Glen.

HARRY MOWBRAY 2/1, Cleveland, Qld., with a letter telling us that he and Dorothy were off to the States in August-September, and we hope you had a great trip. He had been in contact with Nev Woodham and Harry Spreadborough at the ROTA meetings and still plans to be in Sydney for Anzac Day 1994. Also plans a quick visit to our former campsite at Dubbo, now the Western Plains Zoo, as he has been told it is very good. Don't forget to look at the Battalion plaque affixed to the hand-grenade wall on the left hand side as you go through the main entrance — nearly opposite the office. Harry congratulates Bill Tasker on his Life Membership for a job well done and sends his condolences to Bill Jollie on the passing of Phyl. Closes with best wishes to all, and many thanks for your postcard, from the States.

JACK MCGREGOR 2/2, Shortland, with a short note of thanks for the *News* and a sub for worthy treasurer. Jack and Dot both keeping well and sincerely hope all down here are the same. Best wishes to you both.

ROY MCGREGOR 2/2, Maitland, brother of Jack, with the bad news that he had been in hospital recently for an operation on his left leg due to circulation problems. Unfortunately Roy lost his left leg above the knee. Although they tried to save the knee in the first operation, it would not heal, so the Drs had to operate again.

Roy had been in Adelaide in April for Anzac Day and had a great time with the Adelaide boys who will be surprised to hear Roy's news as he had marched with them without any problems. Closes with best wishes to all and we hope you take things quietly, Roy, and we wish you every success with your new limb. Can't keep a good Pioneer down, and we are sure you are getting plenty of care from Marion. Many thanks for sub.

NEV O'CONNOR 2/2, Tintenbar, with a long newsy letter and to say he had just returned from the funeral of Kev Rayward's wife, Mae. He spoke to Kevin at the church and passed on sympathy on behalf of all Pioneers. They would have been married 46 years, all but a day, when she died. Nev was the only Pioneer at the service.

In regard to your query re Ray Harris, Max has seen him while in Sydney and he had been visited by some of the 2/2nds at Lady Davidson Hospital. He has now gone home and expect you will have been in touch when you returned from Atherton.

Nev and Betty had been on a family reunion trip in Victoria and had been caught up in the floods around Shepparton and were lucky to make it back into NSW. However, ran the gauntlet at West Wyalong and were pleased to get home safely. The weather around Ballina had been great and the boys on the property were flat out planting and harvesting.

He and Bet were off to the Trek Back at Atherton and then flying on to New Guinea. Says when he was there he never wanted to see the rotten place again, so either he has gone troppo or mellowed in his old age. Both have to take malaria tablets before they go and after they come home.

Nev has seen Jack Crouch recently and Ray and Nancy Robbins come out for a cuppa nearly every week. At the moment Ray was in Victoria in his new four-wheel drive Toyota — a beaut waggon. A poor old lady came through a stop sign and did her best to write off his last one which was only two years old. Closes with fond wishes to Max and Peg, also Mary Lloyd, and all Pioneers and enclosed a cheque to keep the *News* coming. Do hope you had an enjoyable trip to the Tablelands, and New Guinea improved since the war years.

PETER PEILE 2/1, Caringbah, with a note per pen of wife Erika to say they have sold their home and bought a villa with a small yard. Change of address noted, Erika, and hope that you both like and enjoy your new surroundings. All the best to you both.

JOHN PITMAN 2/1, Boomi, with a note to say it's about time he donated to the cause again. We appreciate your thanks in regard to the *Pioneer News* and, of course, the subs are always welcome. On a recent visit to Victoria, Max spent a few days

with Bernie Reiners at Corryong. He was interested to hear that Max had heard from you and passed on his best wishes. Says he'll get around to writing one of these days.

PETER PRIEST 2/1, Ballina, with a letter per pen of wife Dot. Peter went to Evans Head for Anzac Day and had a great day. Pete and Dot had also been on a hurried trip to Perth late in April as Dot's brother had phoned to say his grandson had been washed off rocks down at Margaret River, along with the mother, but although a young man on a surfboard had managed to save the mother, they didn't find young Danny for two days. We are sorry to hear of these accidents that affect our members, especially when the victims are children.

With this tragedy, and your plane problems, I guess you will be glad to see the end of 1993, although becoming great-grandparents would put a smile on your faces.

Thanks for your donation and best wishes to both you and Pete.

JACK RICHARDS 2/1, Lennox Head, per pen of wife Olive, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that things have been a bit hectic over the past 18 months. Olive is pleased to report that Jack is well on the way to recovery after an operation last October. He developed fluid on the brain and had to have a shunt put in to disperse the fluid and relieve the pressure. Veterans Affairs looked after him very well with a leading Qld. neurosurgeon doing the job in a private hospital in Brisbane. Many thanks for your letter, Olive, and glad to know that you are both feeling a little bit chirpier now. Keep sober.

CHARLES RICHARDSON 2/2, Qld., saying that he had just received the Qld. ROTA news and the Vale column contained the name of Jack Hemi. He was a driver and I think he was A Coy. Charles passed on good wishes to all who have been on the sick list and his sincere sympathy to Bill Jollie on the loss of his wife. He remembers Bill as one of a draft of young eager reinforcement Lieuts. who came to the Training Btn. at Hill 95 in Palestine. Glad to hear from you Charles and look forward to your notes on some Btn events, when you get around to writing (or typing) them.

BRYAN SMALLHORN 2/1, Armidale, with a late again note, but a good excuse. Went to Sydney for a couple of weeks holiday and the day before they were to return his wife Eileen had a massive heart attack. She had a quintuplet by-pass 12 years ago and four of the grafts had broken down. Eileen is now home after 10 weeks in St Vincents and reports progress very slow, but hoping for the best. Do hope by now that things are on the up and up. Bryan says he was almost tempted to write of his trip overseas, especially the mills in Italy and France — the country underneath the Pyrenees magnificent — and ever so glad his French stood the test. Maybe sometime he'll put pen to paper.

He passes on thanks to Bill Thiele and Noel Grant for their cheerios and says hello to all 15 Pl. Bryan has a son in Qld. and it is just possible he may try to contact Bill Gamble and John Hunt — so beware! Sends best wishes to all and extends his sympathy to Bill Jollie.

HUGH SORLEY 2/2, WA, with a cheque for the treasurer and an apology for having lost contact for so long since 1945. He would appreciate any news of Cliff Smailes, Jim Heywood, 2/2 Pioneers, also Ray Martin and Geoff Smith (units unknown). Glad to see Jack Dargaville is still going strong, as is Hugh himself. Hope someone may have news of above for you.

KEN STUART 2/1, Turrumurra, with a letter to the Association re Noel Trefoni who passed away earlier this year. Noel was not only the youngest member of Ken's platoon (he enlisted at the age of 16), but also a very good soldier. Ken wrote to Rita, Noel's wife, and told her how sorry he was at the sad news. He was glad that he wrote because Rita had rung him to say how she had treasured his letter and how pleased she was to hear from him. Noel was 68 when he died and had spent his last days in a lot of pain. Ken was 80 in October (old bastard), too old to march from now on, but sure to make it to the April reunion. You had better, Stuart old boy!

TREVOR THOMSON 2/1, Kingswood, with a cheque for the treasurer and says how he looks forward to receiving the news of the men of the battalion. Closes with best wishes to all — not much news Trevor, perhaps you can do better next time.

BILL THIELE 2/1, Sth. Aust., per pen of wife

Betty, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that they have changed their address after 45 years and now look forward to a country life style by the sea. Bill has always been pretty active, built the old house at Flinders Park and now the new one at Pt. Hughes. Still enjoys his golf, but has been out of action for a few weeks with sciatica — is that a sign of years catching up at last.

Betty reckons that Bill is a better talker than writer, hence her efforts on his behalf, but joins him in wishing all Pioneers the very best for the Festive Season and good luck in the New Year. Our good wishes to you both.

TED WILCOX 2/1, Bringelly, with a sub for the treasurer and a change of address to above. Ray Law kindly towed his van to Bringelly and Ted thought that Ray may have given Max his new address on Anzac Day. Ted had to attend a wedding at Tweed Heads on Anzac Eve, so had no chance of making it to Redfern, but hopes to make it next year. He is out in the bush now and has to have a car to get around, but is quite happy.

TOM WOOD 2/2, Bomaderry, with a short note that he and Renee have decided that their home at Orient Point was getting too hard to look after so were moving to a new villa in Bomaderry as from September. Cordially invites anyone down that way to call in for a chat and a cuppa, they would be most welcome. Thanks, Tom, and we wish you well in your new home. All the best to Renee.

NEV WOODHAM 2/1, Thornlands, Qld., with the news that last *Pioneer News* arrived (or did not arrive) only the wrapper. Sorry about that, Nev, the gremlins must have been on the job, but another copy was sent post haste. He and Bett are lucky healthwise and keeping reasonably fit. They are both still playing bowls, but not doing so well this year.

Claims it was great to see the boys again at the reunion at Gosford, especially his old mate Bill Chisholm after all these years. Bett reckoned we were carrying on like two long-lost lovers. Nev is coming to Sydney for next Anzac Day to see the blokes again and looking forward to it. He did not take on the job of secretary of the local RSL Sub-Branch this year but still secretary of the ROTA Sub-Branch which was formed in 1991 — five 2/1st Pioneers in a sub-branch membership of 27 — not a bad record. Closes with best wishes to all and looking forward to seeing all next April.

ERIC REYNOLDS 2/1, Macksville, with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that he and Joyce had recently been on a coach trip to Canberra. It had been 20 years since they were there last and thought they had better go while they were able to get about. You would see a great change in 20 years, Eric, especially at the War Memorial. Sends best wishes to Max and Peg, Vic Whiteley and George Walker and all the best for the Festive Season to all Pioneers.

ROY LEADBEATER 2/2, Rockhampton, with his thanks to all who help with the *News* and a cheque to keep it rolling. Sends his best wishes to all.

ALBERT BARTON 2/1, Gulgong, with a letter of thanks to Max and Peg for their visit to Concord while he was hospitalised for his by-pass, and great to have a chat of old times. He is now home and getting used to his new way of life. Glad to hear from you, Alby, and we wish you all the best. Your good wishes are passed on to all.

PHIL BARNETT 2/2, Lismore, with a change of address to Alstonville. This has been noted, Phil, and we wish you well in your new home. He sends his kindest regards to all.

LEN PREEDY 2/2, Shenton Park, WA, with several letters re events in the West and the news that he and Joy had recently been up north to station country for a week's holiday to escape the terribly cold and wet weather they had been having in Perth. They went to see the biggest rock in the world, Mt Augustus, which is reported to be 2½ times larger than Ayers Rock. Len had been suffering from a bad bout of the shingles and we do hope by now the worst is over. Hope the trip bucked you up, Len, and the weather improved.

Our heartiest congratulations to you on the award of the RSL Meritorious Medal, Len, these are not given lightly and always well-deserved. We can imagine how thrilled you would be. Quite an honour for the 2/2nds, with you and Bill Robertson both receiving them in the same year. Well done and our best wishes.

● That completes the Mail Bag for this issue. Football has finished for another year, my team finished a creditable fifth, but the Broncos were too good. However, we beat the Poms at cricket, so that's not bad. I've had a tale of woe this year and it's all because I knocked off smoking. In May I had to go into hospital to have the carotid artery in my neck by-passed, and to have this done they said "no smoking". Well, I did that and what happens? I had a slight stroke coming out of the ether and now only have about 50% use of my left arm. Then they decided to do something with my throat, another biopsy, and in doing so knocked out a tooth, now my plate won't fit and I am toothless and it's not a pretty sight. Enough of my whingeing. On behalf of all the members, executive, committee and Joan and I many thanks for your support over the years and we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Keep sober.

LAKEY

2/1st – 2/2nd PIONEERS, WA

by President LEN PREEDY

At the July meeting apologies were received from Freda Due who was having eye trouble, Jack Murray on sticks with arthritis in his feet and Neil MacPherson away escaping the winter.

In attendance were Barry Hunt, Bob/Norma Sefton, Jack/Joan Monger, John/Ethel McDougall, Norm Le Cornu, Jack Stewart and Len/Joy Preedy.

Welcomed a phone call from Alf Bentley 2/1st with a cheerio call from Bob Lenane of Melbourne. A letter from Bob Bally apologising for non attendance as he is busy with voluntary work. Lin Wilson of Mandurah has put his home on the market and hopes to buy a unit at Leederville Gardens so it will be nice to see you Lin.

Further letters to hand from Phill Jackson of Dongara per his wife Yvonne, to say Phill appreciates our news sheet which keeps him in touch. And one from Josie Outridge of Boyup Brook who had been on a fishing trip to Hopetown. Thank you for all those letters — nice to hear from you.

Sadly we report the following who have passed away: **Syd Abercrombie** 2/1 — 24th June (Syd's wife had died a couple of weeks before him). The funeral was well attended by close to 200 people. Joy and I represented the Pioneers. **Fred Newton** 2/2 — 30th June. **Bill Scott** 2/2 — 7th July. **Syd Hobbie** 2/2 — 12th July. **Dick Ellery** 2/1 — 15th July. **Gordon Buller** 2/2 — 8th August. **Harry Fitzgerald** 2/2 — 18th August, who was one of the original members to come to our meeting. He originally came from Girilambone, NSW, and had a Margaret River station before coming to Gosnells. **George Bayliss** 2/2 — 3rd September.

S.A. ANZAC ACTIVITIES

by President ALLAN OLSON

On Anzac Eve 42 Pioneers, wives and friends were entertained at a Pre-Anzac gathering at the home of my daughter and son-in-law Margaret and Kevin Reynolds to whom thanks were extended for hosting the largest assembly of 2/2 Pioneers since the end of the war, in Adelaide.

Thanks also go to Mandy and Tracey (grand-daughters), Nola and Judy (daughters-in-law), Robert (Mandy's husband), Phillip (Tracey's friend) and my sons Jeff and Reg for making the show a great success.

Sydney visitors were Ken/Ida Wilson, Frank/Jean Locane, Russ Harrison and Roy McGregor. The "crows" present were Les Bence and son Norm, Stan/Olive Clarke and daughter Barbara, Cyril Denton, Geoff/Ronnie Lloyd, Len/Betty Norman, George/Eulalie Sauer, Harry Fenwick, Joe Robertson and Bruce Scott.

The next day (Anzac Day) all the above Pioneers took part in the march and were joined by Bill Thiele, Doug Waters, Noel Grant, Roger Monks, Ron Pasfield and myself.

After the march 47 Pioneers, wives, sons and daughters met at the Duke of York hotel for the AGM and Reunion partaking of a two course meal and plenty of amber fluid. Here we welcomed Harry Lock.

That was Anzac Reunion 1993 in Adelaide and I hope all other Pioneers enjoyed their Anzac activities as much as we did. Regards to all.

—ALLAN OLSON