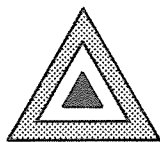


PIONEER NEWS



Phone 9759 5491

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Correspondence: MAX HERRON, Hon. Sec., 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn. Assoc., 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills 2209

Treasurer: DON CRAWFORD

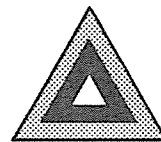
Editors: MAX & PEG HERRON O.A.M's

President: ROY JARDINE

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Welfare: BILL TASKER



ANZAC ACTIVITIES 2010

WREATH LAYING SERVICE

Saturday, 24th April at 3.45pm

All members and their families are invited to the Wreath Laying Service at the Cenotaph on Saturday, 24th April at 3.45pm. The Association Executive consider this service to be the most important event of the year and would like to see a good attendance of members.

Members and relatives to assemble on the corner of Pitt Street and Martin Place, on the GPO side, at about 3.15pm, ready to form up at 3.40pm for the short march to the Cenotaph. Medals are requested to be worn.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

Sunday, 25th April

Forming up for both 2/1st and 2/2nd will be in King Street right opposite to the Phillip Street entrance. This will be on the south side footpath outside the old Law Court Building where the two banners will be displayed in the same position as last year. The head of the 6th Division will be in King Street head on to Castlereagh Street. In front of the Pioneers will be the 2/3 Machine Gunners and behind the Pioneers will be the 6th Div. A.A.S.C.

MARK NEASBEY – March Marshal

Last year Mark, son of Bert 2/2, was called upon by the Secretary to act as Unit Marshal and he did such an excellent job he has been asked to be Marshal again this year. His duties are: 1. To watch for the movement of troops at the corner of Pitt and King Streets. 2. To then arrange the formation as follows – (a) Band (b) Land Rover (c) Banners / Flags (d) Troops (e) Head count of veterans and descendants to Secretary.

DON GRANT – Land Rover Marshal

In 2009 Don, son of Noel 2/1, carried out this task so well he has been asked to do it again. His duties are: 1. Contact the driver of the Land Rover which has been ordered by the Association. This will be in Castlereagh Street with 6th Div. H.Q. 2. Organise the Land Rover in march position. 3. Arrange veterans into vehicle with aid of two carers. President Roy Jardine, March Leader, in front seat. 4. With two carers help veterans out of vehicle at Elizabeth Street.

Veterans to ring Secretary, Max Herron, 9759 5491, to book a seat in Land Rover.

DESCENDANTS MARCHING

In past years the Association has strictly carried out the ANZAC March protocol as laid down by the RSL regarding descendants as follows:

1. Must be over RSL age of 18 years.
2. Must be well dressed.
3. Must report to the Unit Marshal.
4. Must wear medals of deceased veteran on right breast.
5. No photograph of a veteran is to be worn or carried by a descendant.

In the February Issue of Reveille the Chief Marshal of the RSL has stated descendants may act as a carer to one veteran. Last year this Association had eighteen veterans in attendance and twenty two descendants, four of whom acted as banner and flag bearers and two marshals.

ANZAC DAY REUNION

Sunday, 25th April

The Occidental Hotel is once again the venue for the ANZAC reunion which is situated on the corner of York and Erskine Street, Sydney, opposite Wynyard Park.

In the hotel foyer you will be greeted by sons Geoff Finlay, David Herron and Ray Law who will collect the lunch fee of \$20 and issue name tags.

The Ladies Auxiliary will proceed upstairs and have their lunch, fee of \$27 collected by Lynn Herron who will supply their name tags.

Members to be seated at 12.15pm and lunch at 12.45 pm will consist of roast of sirloin with vegetables and buttered roll. Cost to men is \$20. Beer prices will be: Middy \$3.10, Schooner \$4.00 and Jug \$14.50.

Ladies will have same menu as above, with dessert, at cost of \$27.

Enjoy your day and the service organised by Function Organiser Mary and her wonderful team of helpers.

THANKS TO DON CRAWFORD

Many thanks extended to Don Crawford for attending a meeting with the Manager of the Occidental Hotel and supplying all details such as menu and prices. He also attended the RSL Meeting of the ANZAC March Unit Organising Committee and provided all the new details.

ROCKY CREEK

I stand here now in silenced awe
In the quiet whispering breeze
And I hear the laughter of your mates
In the rustling of the trees
And 'though young men their eyes are old
From many a fierce attack
And sadness stabs my heart with pain
For the ones who'd not come back.

It was here you would embark,
This quiet gentle place
To a world of fury, fear and death
And battles tempest face.
I wonder what was on your mind
For you knew what lay ahead,
War's carnage you'd already seen,
The crippled, torn and dead.

I see you as I think you were
All those many years ago
As you prepared once more to leave
And face your country's foe.
Now I see your valour and your strength
And the freedoms that you seek
As I sense your presence here with me
At this place called Rocky Creek.

EDITOR'S NOTE – This poem was written by Ray Law, son of late Jim 2/1, on the occasion of his visit to the Rocky Creek Memorial Park on the Atherton Tablelands on 15th August, 2009. Lack of space in the last issue caused it to be held over until this issue.

LAST POST

ALBERT BARTON 2/1 of Gulgong passed away on 25th February 2010, aged 94 years, and the funeral service was held in St Luke's Anglican Church on 5th February.

Albie served with the 2/1sts in Tobruk, New Guinea and Borneo and after the war spent nine years in New Guinea, with his wife Gwen, doing missionary work in appreciation of the wonderful support and care of the Fuzzy Wuzzy "Angels" during the fighting on the Kokoda Track.

On returning to Australia they were many years at Yagoona before moving to Gulgong some twenty years ago. They eventually settled in Wononah Lodge, for health reasons, where they have been for two years. Albie and Gwen had been married for 72 years.

For 14 years Albie worked several hours one day a week at the Gulgong Museum, until ill health forced him to retire.

Our very sincere sympathy has been extended to Gwen and her family in their sad loss.

ALISON WALKER, loving wife of Dick 2/2 of Lismore passed away peacefully at home on 25th February aged 85 years. Her funeral service was held at the Uniting Church in Lismore on 1st March and after the service the cortege left for the Lismore Memorial Gardens Lawn Cemetery, Goonellabah.

Dick and Alison were regular attendees at our Pioneer functions in Lismore and she will be sadly missed.

To Dick and his family we extend our sincere sympathy in their sad loss and would like to thank Dot Priest for passing on the sad news.

SICK PARADE

RON CROSS 2/1, Ballina, had spent some time in hospital, both in Queensland and Ballina, for an operation on his arm for skin cancers which eventually necessitated replacing muscle tissue and arteries with ones from his thigh, as well as skin grafts.

Unable to manage at home for himself, he was again admitted to Ballina Hospital for a few more weeks, coming home in December. His son came over from Western Australia to spend some time with his father over the Christmas period.

Trust by now, Ron, you are feeling a lot better and the follow-up reports are good.

DONATION TO KOKODA TRACK

Following the closure of the Northern Rivers Branch of the Association, the Executive decided to make a donation of \$1,000 to the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway from the bank balance handed to the Association.

Copies of the Kokoda Track receipt, headed on behalf of the Northern Rivers Branch, was posted to Treasurer Ron Cross and Secretary Betty O'Connor with a note, of thanks.

"THE PIONEERS"

The unit history of the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion "The Pioneers" was published in 1988 and within twelve months was completely sold out.

Copies are being eagerly sought by the younger generation of deceased veterans who are prepared to purchase copies, if available, from any of our readers who no longer require their copy. Details can be obtained by contacting the Secretary.

MAIL BAG

By PEG HERRON

• The first issue of the Mail Bag for 2010 and we wish all our readers lots of good health and happiness in the year ahead. Sadly, during the year we have again lost so many of our Pioneer friends due to age and illness and they will be remembered with fond memories. Many thanks for all the cards and letters we received over the Christmas period and Max and I thank you for your kind words.

JOYCE ACHURCH Croydon, widow of Kevin 2/2, with a welcome letter and a donation to the News. Says it is always interesting to read and with ANZAC Day approaching a busy time of the year. She attends the services in her local area and is on the Committee of Western Suburbs Legacy Club which keeps her busy.

Thank you for your donation, Joyce and for your kind words on our work for the Association. Keep well and always good to have a note from you.

ISABELL ANDERSON, Aspendale Vic., widow of "Snowy" 2/2, with fond wishes for Christmas from herself and Julie and thank you for the cheque enclosed with your card. Always good to hear from you both and that you are keeping well. Max sends his best wishes for the coming year. Take care and love.

JACK ALLISON 2/2, Eastwood, had been in touch with Max in December wanting the address of Russ Harrison 2/2 in South Australia. Jack and Barbara had been on a holiday to S.A., which they thoroughly enjoyed, but did not have a contact number for Russ.

Jack mentioned he was very interested in the article written by Ray Law on Rocky Creek in the November issue – made very interesting reading. Thanks for the call, Jack.

BETTY CREASY, Berkeley Vale, widow of George 2/1, with a welcome note written by daughter Joy Aracri of Killarney Vale. Joy says Betty is now in Berkeley Vale Aged Care and is very frail after another fall. Joy visits as often as she can and reads the paper to her and the Pioneer News when it comes.

Many thanks, Joy, for the donation to the News on your mother's behalf and for your good wishes to Max. He still manages to get about with either a walker or his stick, but with an effort. Still gives me plenty of instructions – and cheek.

Our love to mum and thank you for keeping in touch.

BERT BEATON 2/2, Casterton Vic., with a generous donation to the News, many thanks. Bert had sent a list of 2/2nds who enlisted and went to Caulfield in 1942, marched out to Wagga and then on to Western Australia. After another move to the Tablelands in North Queensland for training, went to New Guinea. He contracted scrub typhus in Ramu Valley and boarded B2 – did not go to Borneo.

Bert said that the names he sent all went from Hamilton by train and have now passed on, with he the only survivor still hanging on (just) at 87 years of age.

Good to hear from you, Bert, and hope you continue to "hang on". Take care and our best wishes.

PAT BENTLEY, Yokine W.A., widow of Alf 2/1, with a letter and six cards since last issue, most depicting scenes in or around Perth – also a reminder of her fish and chips for her Anzac lunch. (Have even given the Occidental this in writing, Pat, so here's hoping.)

Pat had received a long letter from Eunice and Gordon Chrystal from Larras Lee with lots of news (Gordon was 2/1) and had yet to reply when she wrote. She is not doing much swimming, Club swims are far too early for her

and they have been having some fairly strong, wild winds.

Fond wishes, Pat, and see you in Sydney for ANZAC Day.

TOM BLAINEY 2/1, Noble Park Vic., with a welcome card for Christmas and hopes Max is recovering after his fall and problems last year. Good to hear from you and trust you and Vi are enjoying the best of health.

MARY BURNHAM, Forster, daughter of the late Colonel Arnold Brown 2/1, with Christmas greetings and a long letter of a wildflower tour she and a friend made to W.A. late last year. Mary got in touch with Bert Woodhouse 2/1 and he and a friend Harry met them and they did a tour of Perth, to the War Memorial in Kings Park and on to Fremantle for a fish lunch at the waterfront. Bert and his friend were wonderful company with plenty of laughs. The wildflowers from Geraldton right through to the Nullabor were magnificent.

Mary was sorry to read of the passing of Charlie Richardson. In 1940, prior to the 2/1sts going overseas the Pioneers had a ball at the Manly Hotel and her dad (then a Major) seconded Charles to escort Mary to the ball. She was 17 and her first ball. He was so nice she has never forgotten it.

Many thanks for your donation to funds, Mary, and may see you in Sydney again in the near future.

KAY BURTON, Springwood, daughter of the late Bert Rayner 2/1, with a welcome donation to funds and was looking forward to being in Sydney for ANZAC Day.

The family were off to Kyogle to visit her mother, Margaret, in January and we hope you found her in good health.

Hope we will see you in April. Best wishes from both of us.

LEXIE COATES, Umina, widow of old friend Jack 2/1, with greetings for Christmas and a few notes on her "doings" for the year. She is still very involved with the War Widows, Legacy and Brisbane Waters Seniors – not at the same pace as in earlier years, but getting there.

The War Widows had their walk again at the Kokoda Track Walkway at Concord and a very good roll-up of about 500. They hire a bus to come down and enjoyed by all – at a rather slow pace.

Lex keeps reasonably well, loaded down with pills, but getting there. That's our ageing process Lex, but lucky to be able to at least get about. Good to hear from you and many thanks for your donation to the News. Take care and love.

VERA COOK, Randwick, widow of Clem 2/1, was off on a holiday down the South Coast over the Christmas season and was in touch to pass on her greetings for the coming year. Apart from that constant companion of most of us – arthritis – keeps reasonably well.

She was to have a cataract operation in February and at the time of writing these notes everything went well. Take care, Vera, and many thanks for your calls.

JENNY DAVIDSON, Highett Vic., is the new Secretary of the 2/2 Pioneers in Victoria, and has been in touch with Max recently. They had quite a long chat and her name has been placed on our mailing list for future copies of our Pioneer News. Good to hear from you, Jenny.

ROSS DAWSON 2/2, Bayview, with Christmas greetings from he and his wife Sue. They had just returned from a holiday trip to Kangaroo Island and the Grampians, which was very enjoyable. Earlier in the year had been on a holiday to Tugun on the Gold Coast (an annual event) as their son Greig has lived up there for 20 years.

Ross and Sue celebrated their 55th Wedding Anniversary in December at the Bayview Marina with family, grandchildren and friends and we send you our heartiest congratulations for the occasion. (Bob Lake's favourite saying – you don't get that long for murder.)

Sue swims all year in the rock pool at Collaroy, but Ross says too cold for him – he goes round to Collaroy Basin and has coffee with friends.

All the best to you both and many more happy and healthy years together.

HAZEL EARNSHAW, Toormina, sister of the late Merv Rees 2/1, with a welcome note and good wishes for Christmas. (Hazel and husband Bill live close to Max's sister and catch up on the News.)

Hazel is a very fine pianist and is kept busy playing for church services in the area, funerals and two nursing homes and says around Christmas she is all "carolled out".

You have certainly had your family problems, Hazel, and good to hear the news that both your son and daughter are responding well to treatment.

Always good to have a note from you and sister Peggy often says she has a chat to you when your paths cross. Fond wishes from Max and myself – take care.

ANDY ELLISTON, Narooma, son of the late Phil Elliston 2/1, with greetings from his wife Lexie and himself for Christmas and enclosing a donation to keep the Pioneer News afloat. Many thanks, Phil, and our best wishes to you and the family for the coming year.

VI FLYNN, Belmont North, 2/1, with a note of thanks for the sympathy extended to Vi and her family on the loss of a loved son and brother.

Hope to see you soon, Vi, and best wishes from your Pioneer friends.

GRACE FOWKES, Wentworthville, widow of Dick ("Snowy") 2/1, with a welcome donation and some nice words of praise for the Pioneer News which she looks forward to seeing in the mail. Brings back a lot of memories, some sad, but says all are proud and appreciative of their service. Good to hear, Grace, and we hope to be able to carry on for a few more years.

Max joins me in sending you our love and best wishes and hope this finds you in good health. Take care.

BOB GINNANE 2/2 with greetings for Christmas and his best wishes. We have also received a welcome letter from Bob's daughter Dianne Leckie of Ruse telling of her father's move to a nursing home, Durham Green Manor, 153 Menangle Road, Menangle 2568.

Dianne has been looking after him for over five years with his health problems, but could not carry on without medical assistance. Bob is happy and content in his new home and has had a visit from fellow 2/2 friend Don Crawford. Visitors are most welcome.

Many thanks Dianne for your letter and for your years of caring for your father.

JOHN HAYDEN 2/1, Orange, with greetings for Xmas to both Max and myself and to all Pioneers. He doesn't have much news, as his late dear wife Wyn used to do the letter writing, but welcomes the News and good to hear of his fellow Pioneers who are still battling on.

John Jnr has passed on the news that his dad had spent a week in hospital in February with a blood problem, but is now on the mend. He said his dad still goes to Lodge meetings and outings they have once a month and all going well, will take part in the Orange ANZAC Day March and activities.

To John Snr our very best wishes and hope you have a happy 95th Birthday on the 6th May. Take care and always good to hear from you.

Our thanks to John Jnr for the recent news of your dad and sorry to have missed you on the day you called.

PAM HERRICK, Sutherland, daughter of the late George Bates 2/1, with a long letter with Christmas greetings from both she and Edward. Has spent a lot of time visiting family scattered around Queensland and the Central Coast and will visit Darwin in the winter months to visit family living there.

Edward is retired and keeping busy doing chores around the house. He and Pam are off to the United Kingdom, Ireland, Rome and cruising the Danube through Europe in May. What a wonderful trip and we are sure you will enjoy every minute of it. They do not arrive back until the 19th July.

Take care, Pam, and many thanks for the donation to the News enclosed with your letter.

MOLLIE JEAN HUNT, New Farm Qld, widow of John 2/1 with the news of the passing of Jean Spreadborough, widow of Harry 2/1, in late December. Mollie was not able to attend the funeral, because of car problems.

Since John passed away in February 2008, Mollie felt she must get moving and try travelling on her own. First to Lord Howe Island, then to Darwin and Broome (which she and John had talked about but not done) and then in September to her big sister's 70th Wedding Anniversary in Vancouver. Was a lovely day, the bride 93 and the groom 94. Mollie's other sister there as well - three sisters together again. Then off to Calgary, Ottawa, Boston, New York, back to Montreal (her old stamping ground) and then to her mother's home town north of Toronto to visit cousins. She and John were blessed to have such wonderful friends on both sides of the Pacific.

Many thanks for your letter Mollie and always good to have news from you. Best wishes from both Max and myself - take care.

JACK HORE-LACY 2/2, Moss Vale, with a welcome sub. for the News and his thanks for keeping him in touch with the "doings" of his old unit.

He is still getting about with a walking stick, just has to be careful about balance. Not too many these days that can get about without some sort of security.

Many thanks for your contribution to the News and all the best of health in the coming year.

GLORIA HUTCHINSON, Caringbah, widow of Bill 2/1, with Christmas greetings to all and a welcome donation to the News. Trust you are keeping well, Gloria, and we send you our love and best wishes for the year ahead.

MAISIE KEMPNIICH, Shoal Bay, widow of Jack 2/1, with Christmas greetings to Max and myself and to all the "go places group". Maisie and Jack were always part of the Pioneer group who travelled and holidayed all over the country together in those "good old days" before walking sticks were needed. Fond wishes, Mais, and always happy to hear from you.

JOYCE LAW, Kareela, widow of Max 2/1, with Christmas greetings and her thanks for the extra copies of the November issue of the Pioneer News which her Max and Frank Cheal 2/2 started together in 1952 and, hopefully, we can keep afloat for many more years.

Fond wishes, Joyce, and hope to see you at the ANZAC Day lunch with the ladies.

TIM LLOYD, Kingsford, son late Jack Lloyd 2/1, with Christmas greetings to Max and myself and every good wish for the New Year.

Just after ANZAC Day last year Tim changed jobs and since then has been involved with the Courts and the Independent Commission Against Corruption - all very exciting but also wearing and somewhat depressing. In October he just up and flew to Spain where he trekked across the top of the Iberian Peninsula, just carrying a pack and enjoying each day.

Rome and New York were next on the trip - all on frequent flyers - but determined to travel while he could. You'll have plenty to talk about on ANZAC Day, Tim, where we presume you will be carrying the 2/1 banner for a record 28 years.

All the best from Max and myself and hoping to see you ANZAC Day.

HARRY LOCK 2/2, Renmark S.A., with a very welcome letter and a cheque enclosed for the treasurer - many thanks.

We do not have many 2/2nds on our mailing

list in S.A., Harry, apart from yourself. We do have Allan Olson, Russ Harrison and Bruce Scott and three 2/1sts.

I was interested to hear you were originally of the 2/48 Btn. as I have just finished reading "The Last Man Standing" of your Btn's participation in Tobruk, El Alamein and New Guinea.

As a member of the Rats of Tobruk, Max attends the meetings here in Sydney where Brigadier Isaksson M.C. of the 2/48th Bn. is Patron. A very likeable and friendly member. I shall mention your letter to the Pioneers when occasion arises.

Good to hear you are still able to look after yourself with help of day care once a week and able to do your own cooking. Our best wishes to you, Harry, take care - you are doing well for a 90 year old.

ALLAN OLSON 2/2, Netherby, S.A. with his first letter for some time. Do hope your health problems have been stabilised, Allan, and the report from the specialists more encouraging.

He was sorry to hear of the passing of Charles Richardson in last News. They had corresponded fairly regularly as Allan was a Platoon Commander under Charles, and got on fairly well with him.

At the time of writing Allan had spoken to Russ Harrison and Rona and they were reasonably well. Rona and daughter Kate had just enjoyed a holiday in New Zealand.

Allan sent his best wishes to all the Pioneers in N.S.W. from the few left in S.A., for a prosperous and healthy New Year. Take care and always pleased to have a note from you. Best wishes for ANZAC Day.

ROBERT PHILPOTS 2/2, Gisborne Vic., with a change of address from Woodend. Bob is now a resident of Oaks Nursing Home, 5 Earl Street, Gisborne, and we thank you for the donation sent to the News. The newsletter will be forwarded to the new address. All the best and take care.

JOHN PITMAN 2/1, Moree, with thanks for his copy of Pioneer News and enclosed a cheque for our worthy Treasurer. Says he looks forward to receiving the News as he no longer sees anyone from the old unit these days - the only ones that were living in his area of Moree have fallen off their perch. Not too many anywhere, John, to my knowledge only Eric Causer, Jack Comerford and Max left from the old Sig Platoon since Allan Crute passed away last Christmas.

Max sends his very best wishes and is always happy to hear you are still in the land of the living. Hope you have been getting more of that lovely rain - with no flooding.

DOT PRIEST, Ballina, widow of Peter 2/1, with her Christmas greetings to Max and myself and to all Pioneers. She was off to Warwick in Queensland for Christmas with all the family. Loves getting the Pioneer News and then passes it on to her daughter Pam who likes to read all the news. Pam sends her best wishes to all for the coming year.

Good to hear you are well, Dot, and keeping yourself busy. Not too many up your way to send any news lately, so always good to hear from you. We do hear from Betty O'Connor now and then - good to keep in touch. Max joins me in sending you our love and best wishes.

MONA REINERS, Corryong Vic., widow of our dear friend Bern 2/1, with Christmas greetings to Max and myself and news of the family. Mona says she is keeping well and wishes she did not live so far away. Her family are very good and keep a watchful eye on her.

We had a lovely surprise recently to have a visit from her eldest son Brian who was in Sydney with wife Barbara. Have known Brian since a baby, now a school teacher at Shepparton in Victoria (I think a "special" teacher) and we spent a couple of happy hours catching up. Spent many happy holidays with the family over the years, taking Marj and Jack

Kerslake on one of our many trips to Corryong on the Victorian side of the Murray River.

Our fond love to you, Mona, and hope you continue to keep well. Take care. Will get round to ringing you soon.

BEVERLEY RATCLIFFE, Picnic Point, daughter-in-law of late Jack Ratcliffe 2/1, with the news that her husband Fred, Jack's youngest son, had passed away in June, and she had missed passing us the news. I spoke to her recently on the phone and she would like to continue receiving the News.

Jack was an early 2/1st and was wounded in Libya and served with the unit in Tobruk and New Guinea, before later serving with the 2/3rd Pioneers.

Thank you for your donation to the News, Beverley, and it was nice speaking to you.

FRANCES RHODES, Page A.C.T., daughter of the late Jim Rhodes 2/1, with her yearly letter for Christmas and family "doings". Holidays last year were at Delicate Hobby, near Kempsey (a new one to me) and back home to Year 11 for James and Meg into Year 12. Meg has just finished her year 12 Certificate and achieved the mark she earned. She is thinking of a two year long gap year, the first working in the snow and the second year as a jillaroo somewhere.

Frances has spent a lot of time on the snowfields, living close by in Canberra, and was sorry to see the season finish.

Says Canberra is still in drought, did get some rain earlier, perhaps things have changed since she wrote at Christmas.

Many thanks for the magazine from the War Memorial, made interesting reading, and we will pass it on when we finish. Also many thanks too for the donation to the News, says she loves getting it but sad to see the numbers getting so low.

Fond love to you and the family. Always good to hear from you and keep us up-to-date with your news. Your parents were very special to both of us.

EURALIE SAUER, Elanora Qld, widow of George 2/1, with a welcome donation for the Treasurer and lots of news from her part of the country. She did not go down to South Australia for ANZAC Day last year, but may make the trip this year. (Euralie and her late husband were South Aussies before moving to Brisbane.)

She has been busy house minding her daughter's home while she was overseas and it has kept her busy. Her daughter, Elizabeth, is an Associate Professor in the School of Law at Bond University and spends a lot of time travelling overseas to legal conferences. Son Geoffrey has just completed his Masters Degree in South East Asian Studies and was going up to visit for Christmas from South Australia.

BOB SEFTON 2/2, Safety Bay W.A., with a very short note enclosing a sub for the News and says news from his part of the world is non-existing. However, sends his greetings to all Pioneers and his best wishes for the coming year. Many thanks for the sub to the News, Bob, and trust the coming year brings good health and happiness - take care.

ROMA SHEARSTON, Stockton, widow of Doug 2/1, with greetings for Christmas. She is very happy in her new surrounds at Westcott Hostel in Stockton and is sure she made a wise decision to stay there and be close to family. She has a nice room, nice staff and great meals - what more could you wish for. Was having her 90th Birthday in January, so reckons it is time to be looked after. Take care, Roma, and we both wish you lots of love and good health.

JACK STEWART 2/1, Woodlands W.A., with a note on his behalf from good wife Yvonne. She says he is still not well enough to come to Sydney for ANZAC Day, but does look forward to receiving his copy of the Pioneer News.

Many thanks for your donation to funds,

Jack, and we wish you and Yvonne the very best for the coming year. Our members are certainly dwindling, but like to meet at least once a year on ANZAC Day. Most of the earlier members are close to or over 90 – Max included. How time marches on.

BETTY O'CONNOR, West Ballina, widow of Neville 2/2, with Christmas greetings to both of us and all Pioneers. My operation was successful, Betty, and I was on light duties for a month, but am OK again now. The garden needs some care, but I try and do a little each week to keep up with the weeds. Take care and thank you for your good wishes.

ERIKA PEILE, Caringbah, widow of Peter 2/1, with good wishes passed on to both Max and myself, and our "Pioneer Family" for the New Year and will look forward to future issues of the News.

Many thanks, Erika, and always happy to hear from you.

BILL THIELE 2/1, Port Hughes S.A., with a welcome letter enclosing sub and again written by good wife Betty. Many thanks.

Betty says Bill had major eye surgery and a graft on his right eye recently and is to have the left one attended to shortly and cataracts removed. We hope all goes well for him.

He is back playing his "Night Owl Bowls" again, a good interest for him, although a few aches and pains remind him to take care.

They have been having some very hot days and with water restrictions it's hard to keep the garden going.

Bill still likes to keep in touch with Doug Waters and Allan Olson, both of whom have not been in the best of health lately. Age is somehow catching up. Good to hear from you.

LES TUNKS 2/1, Mareeba Qld, with a welcome letter from the Tablelands and a donation to the News – many thanks.

As usual, Lesley penned the letter and says neither of them were in the best of health at the time of writing, and her eyes were playing up.

Daughter Clare had been in Mareeba, from their station out west, and it was at a most welcome time. Clare is off to New Guinea for ANZAC Day and to the Bomana War Cemetery and then on to Milne Bay. Her dad was in the R.A.A.F. and was killed at Milne Bay.

Our best wishes to you both and hope by now you are feeling much better. Trust Les is able to take part in the ANZAC Day functions at Rocky Creek. Take care.

SHARON TYLER, Castle Hill, daughter of the late Bill Jollie 2/1, with a letter saying she and her husband John had been on a trip to Queensland and had visited Cairns and the Atherton Tablelands.

While there they had visited the Rocky Creek Memorial Park and John had taken photos of the memorials in the Park and some very good ones of the 2/1-2/2 plaque, which Sharon very kindly sent on to Max. It was most interesting to see that the 2/3 Pioneers had erected their plaque behind the 2/1-2/2.

Sharon said they had also visited the Atherton Tourist Centre and purchased a booklet indicating all the unit camp sites on the Tablelands. They also visited the museum at Tolga Railway Station – no longer a station.

Thank you Sharon and John for the photos and your phone call, Sharon. The photos were very much appreciated. Our best wishes to you both, nice to keep in touch.

HELEN WALKER, South Coogee, daughter of the late Jack Lloyd 2/1, with Christmas greetings to all Pioneers and special thanks to Max for sending her the News. She said it was pleasing to see so many at the Wreath Laying last year and hopes to make it again. It is on a Saturday this year, so perhaps you and Andrew may be able to make it again. Would love to see you. Fond wishes and thanks for your card.

DOUG WATERS 2/1, West Croydon S.A., with thanks to wife Maureen for the note at

Christmas with greetings to Max and myself. Doug has not been too well and she was doing the Christmas writing – had notes to do also to Allan Olson and the Thieles. Best wishes to you both and many thanks for your note.

NEIL WHITELEY, Terara, son of the late Vic Whiteley 2/1 (long time Treasurer of the Association) with a very generous donation to funds and apologies for non-attendance at the 2009 ANZAC Day March and reunion. Unfortunately, his work with one of the shipping companies meant some time in Norway on secondment and will continue this year also, so sends apologies for his absence once again this year. His wife Joanna has been able to visit a few times since Neil has been there.

Many thanks Neil both for your letter and the donation and it was good to hear from you. Our fond wishes to both Joanna and yourself and hope to see you in the not too distant future.

NEV. WOODHAM 2/1, Cleveland, as usual per pen of dear wife Betty, with a card for Christmas and a long letter of their "doings" over the past year. They were going up north to Bargara for Christmas (will have to find that on the map) to their daughter and son-in-law, a wonderful place.

Nev had another fall in the bathroom a few months ago and hurt his shoulder which is still giving him a problem. Cannot go anywhere without his walker and it has meant a change of lifestyle. Time is marching on and most of their age group are in the same situation. He is lucky to still be able to drive the car, even if only local. Max with his bad eyesight had to hand his licence in, but I am fortunate to still have mine.

Your family seems to be increasing in leaps and bounds and it is great to see you are able to visit and see them while they are young.

I was also speaking to John Hayden Jnr. only last week to get the latest news of his dad, but he did not mention your visit. He had called here one day recently while in the district.

Betty mentions that Nev is the only "Tobruk Rat" left in their area of Redland, and is the Treasurer of the R.S.L. Venture Club which has about 70 members who meet to play bowls and bingo. It gives him an outing and he feels he is still contributing.

Always good to hear news of you both and send you our love and best wishes for the year ahead. Take care and enjoy your ANZAC Day, Nev, and no more falls.

Many thanks for your donation to the News and your good wishes.

MARJ KERSLAKE, Collaroy, widow of Jack 2/1, phoned as I was finishing off my Mail Bag to say she was off to Norfolk Island on the 11th April with daughter Barbara and family members for a week and would not be able to attend Tobruk Sunday at Five Dock. Will miss you, Marj, but wish you a happy week in Norfolk. Take care and love from Max and myself. Enjoy your trip.

■ That's all the Mail Bag for this issue and many thanks to all those who sent greetings, apart from those in the Mail Bag. All were very much appreciated and God's blessings for the year ahead – Robyn and Bruce Bell, Aub and Nancy Brasier, Doff and Eric Causer, Olive Finlay, Audrey and Jack Hearn, Marie Jenson and family, Marj Kerslake, Joan Lake, Dawn Levy, May/Lynda/Bert Neasbey, Janet Robertson and family, Gwen Strobe (sister Keith Jones 2/1 K.I.A.) with welcome donation, Kath Tooker and Joyce Walker.

EXECUTIVE MEETING 2010

On Wednesday 10th February the Executive of the Association held their meeting at the Five Dock R.S.L. This was in accordance with the decision of the 2009 Annual General Meeting to discontinue holding General Meetings because of not having the number of members as required by the Constitution. In attendance were Roy Jardine, President, who chaired the meeting, Don Crawford, Treasurer, and the two secretaries Max and Peg Herron.

The meeting commenced with Peg reading the correspondence as follows:- Outgoing – Mailroom Express, "Rusty Priest", Ron Cross, Secretary 2/2 Pioneers, Victoria, Sandra Bowmer, Custodian of Cenotaph, ABC Television. Incoming - Ron Cross, Custodian Cenotaph.

Treasurer Don then gave a report on the Statement and Balance Sheet showing Income and Expenditure for the past twelve months, which is printed below, also of his visit to the Occidental Hotel and the R.S.L. March Committee meeting. Secretary Max gave a report on Wreath Laying, ANZAC March and reunion – details of which are on Page One.

General Business – Assistant Peg presented her Petty Cash book showing expenses incurred for previous 12 months, detailing telephone, postage and sundries. This was presented to President and Treasurer to sign.

The President thanked the Executive for attending and submitting their reports and closed the meeting at 1.30pm.

2/1-2/2 PIONEER BATTALIONS ASSOCIATION GENERAL WELFARE ACCOUNT 80-105-103

Statement of Income and Expenditure for Year Ended 5/2/10

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			<u>INCOME</u>	
Pioneer News	– Printing	1,905.00	Donations	7,445.07
	– Postage	462.26		
		2,367.26		
Petty Cash		300.00		
Telephone rental – M Herron		156.16		
Aub Brasier – Bugler ANZAC Day		50.00		
Castle Hill RSL Band ANZAC Day		200.00		
Clothing Repairs P/L Repairs to 2/2 Banner		50.00		
Kokoda Track Walkway		100.00		
Donation to Kokoda Track Walkway		1,000.00		
		\$4,223.42		\$7445.07

CASH BOOK BALANCE

Cash at Bank 13-3-09	\$6,129.20
Add Income	7,445.07
	\$13,574.27
Less Expenditure	4,223.42
Balance	\$9,350.85
Excess Income Over Expenditure	\$3,221.65
Cash at Bank 5.2.10	\$9,350.02
Petty Cash 5.2.10	0.83
	\$9,350.85
	D. Crawford
	Hon. Treasurer

PIONEER NEWS

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Correspondence: MAX HERRON, Hon. Sec., 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn. Assoc., 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills 2209

Treasurer: DON CRAWFORD

Editors: MAX & PEG HERRON O.A.M.'s

President: ROY JARDINE

Vol. 56 No. 3

NOVEMBER 2010

V.P. DAY – KOKODA TRACK WALKWAY

The 65th Anniversary of V.P. Day at the Kokoda Track Walkway at Concord was held on 15th August and more than 2,000 people, despite the inclement weather, gathered to pay their respects to all those servicemen and women who served in the armed forces for so many years and to those who gave their lives for their country. Mr John Gatfield was Master of Ceremonies.

A feature this year was a parade of veterans in WWII military vehicles past Concord Hospital, escorted by NSW Mounted Police from the Light Horse Association. These were followed by jeeps with representatives of the Navy, members of 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Divisions, Air Force and then members of the Womens' Services. From New Zealand came the last survivor of the six army nurses captured in Rabaul and taken to Japan to spend almost four years in enforced labour. Now 95, Lorna Johnston was flown from Auckland as a guest of Qantas and the RSL State Branch.

Four staff from Concord Hospital wore wartime uniforms and marched behind the last vehicle.

On the arrival of the Parade at the Track they were welcomed by the Chief of Army Lieut-General Ken Gillespie, Alan Griffin Veterans Affairs Minister and Chairman of the Kokoda Track Walkway "Rusty" Priest.

After the mounting of the Catafalque Party, the Prologue was given by the Hon. John Murphy M.P. who then called on "Rusty" Priest AM, Chairman of the Walkway Committee to give his welcome address.

In his usual inimitable style "Rusty" welcomed the guest speaker, Chief of the Army Lieut-General Ken Gillespie AO, DSC, CSM, and other honoured guests and said it was important on this 65th Anniversary to remember the sacrifices made by our servicemen in repelling the superior forces of the Japanese and the price that was paid for freedom. He then called on Lieut-General Gillespie to address the gathering.

ADDRESS BY GENERAL GILLESPIE

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Today we gather to commemorate Japan's acceptance of unconditional surrender to the Allies on 15 August 1945. With Germany surrendering just over three months before, World War II had concluded. Almost 40,000 lives were lost as a result of service with Australian units. Globally, the war was the most costly and deadly in history.

In many ways, it becomes harder with the passage of time and each passing anniversary to comprehend the scale of the War in the Pacific. The magnitude of suffering, death and destruction far surpasses the realms of what many of the younger people in the audience here are able to relate to. And yet, in our midst we have veterans of this war. Men and women who banded together in this country's hour of greatest need. Men and women, who donned Australian uniforms and served the nation in a time of peril, putting duty to their country above their own well-being.

It is often declared that the Australian nation was born on the sands and cragged

rock faces of Gallipoli. If this is so, our nation came of age when forced to confront the possibility of invasion during the War in the Pacific. With Japanese forces entrenched in New Guinea, which was at that time an Australian mandated territory, that threat felt by Australians cannot be overstated.

The Japanese were an aggressive and determined opponent. Imbued with the "bushido" warrior code, Japan had been honing the craft of war in China for a decade before the Pearl Harbour attacks. They were an adversary who was prepared to go to incredible lengths in order to achieve their goal of establishing a Greater-East Asian empire. As a country small in size and lacking natural resources, Japan looked to its south. Here lay Indochina and the Dutch East Indies, both rich in natural resources. With Europe preoccupied with rapid German expansion, Japan saw her opportunity and launched a series of carefully planned and well-executed strikes across the Pacific. By early 1942, the Japanese military machine had swept all before it and the spectre of an invasion of Australia loomed large.

The fighting in the Pacific touched every Australian of that era. Men and women who had not sought war found it thrust upon them as Darwin, Townsville, Broome and other northern Australian cities were subjected to Japanese aerial bombardment. With the Japanese advancing through South-East Asia at a breathtaking pace, it was essential that the Allies make a stand. At both Milne Bay and along the Kokoda Track, after which this fabulous place of commemoration is named, that stand came, and for the first time, the Imperial Japanese Army was repelled.

Kokoda, a small village with a vital airstrip located in the Owen Stanley Ranges, is a name now synonymous with the Australian digger. To protect Port Moresby from occupation, the Japanese had to be pushed back across the track that traversed the mountains to the port of Buna. The country was difficult and unforgiving, dominated by steeply rising jagged cliffs, dense jungle, and fast flowing creeks and rivers. The weather seemed to alternate between torrential downpours and sweltering humid heat. Soldiers also had other factors to contend with, chiefly sickness and the scourge of flies. As Sergeant John Burns of the 2/27th Infantry Battalion wrote, "[the] flies were so bad they almost drove us to the first stages of insanity . . . I think we had all that were in New Guinea." It was in these conditions that the iconic status of the Australian digger was further cemented.

Diggers like Pte George Maidment DCM of the 2/16th Infantry Battalion, who ignored intense Japanese rifle and machine-gun fire to collect grenades from his slain mate's body before charging up a hill, straight towards Japanese entrenchments. Despite being badly wounded in the chest, he continued to throw grenades until his supply was exhausted. Pte Maidment was not finished – for he then collected a sub-machine-gun and stood in the centre of the track engaging the enemy until again his ammunition was expended. Pte Maidment died the next day from his wounds.

While Kokoda was woven itself into the fabric of the Australian psyche, it is but one part of a much larger narrative. Australian forces fought and distinguished themselves in numerous other battles across the Pacific. From the jungles of the Malayan peninsula to the desperate attempts to secure Bougainville. From the island warfare on Ambon and Timor to clearing enemy strongholds in Borneo. Each man and woman played a role in ensuring the freedom of countless peoples living across the Pacific region.

Too often, soldiers of the Japanese Army are depicted as having had a reckless disregard for their own lives. This generalisation diminishes the capability and skill of the adversary that Australian forces confronted and defeated. The Japanese were tenacious and despite the clout of industry and manpower that eventually turned the conflict in favour of the Allies, the fighting in which the Australians partook in the South West Pacific was some of the fiercest ever encountered. As David Dexter wrote in the Official History, "Any soldier who fought the Japanese cannot but have respect for them as fighters . . .".

We can never forget the sacrifice that these people made. They were people like any one of us. They were frightened – and yet they cast their fears aside in order to do their duty. They were Australians that our current soldiers, deployed in Afghanistan and other locations across the globe can look to for inspiration as they endure their own hardship, challenges and loss of mates.

We should always appreciate the words spoken 65 years ago today by the Australian Prime Minister Ben Chifley. He said "Let us remember those whose lives were given that we may enjoy this glorious moment and may look forward to a peace which they have won for us."

Their sacrifice was not in vain. Lest we Forget.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

The official Wreath Laying then followed at the Centrepiece of the Memorial Walkway. Many wreaths were laid by dignitaries and those in attendance – this ceremony ensured that their memories would continue as part of our history. This was followed by Last Post, with Don Rowe, NSW State President of the RSL, reciting the Ode, and Reveille.

CONCLUSION

Concluding the programme, Mr John Haines AM, OAM, Deputy Chairman of the Kokoda Track Walkway, was called upon to thank all those who contributed to the success of the programme. This was followed by the National Anthem.

Our thanks to "Rusty" Priest, Chairman, and Alice Kang, Hon. Secretary, and the Walkway Committee in their organisation of the service and to "Rusty" for replying to our request for a copy of General Gillespie's address.

PIONEERS IN ATTENDANCE

Pioneers who attended were Don and Val Crawford, Jack and Barbara Allison, Marj Kerslake and daughters Barbara Harrison and Margaret Stolph, Jim and Kay Burton (daughter late Bert Rayner 2/1) and Max and Peg Herron.

MAIL BAG

By PEG HERRON

• The last Mail Bag for 2010 and I am a little behind schedule. Maybe getting slower with age, but I never seem to catch up with all the chores I should be doing. Not so many letters from our readers either, so maybe they are also slowing up too. However, many thanks to all those who put pen to paper and to those who sent along donations to the News.

FRED ALWAY 2/1, Beaumaris Vic., with his apologies for lateness in sending his donation to the News. He has not been in the best of health and had a spell in hospital, but is on the mend. Hope you can still "stagger" up to the Club, Fred, to pass the time away.

Many thanks for your note and the donation and your best wishes passed on to your Pioneer friends. Take care and best wishes.

PAT BENTLEY, Yokine WA, widow of Alf 2/1, with a postcard so say hello and to say, all going well, that she and her niece Loma will be over for ANZAC Day. How time flies, Pat, seems no time since you were both here. Hope you are feeling lots better and thank you for the card and your good wishes. Love to you both.

KAY BURTON, Springwood, (daughter of late Bert Rayner 2/1) with a return thanks card on the passing of her mother Margaret in June. Kay has recently been in Kyogle and asked that her thanks be passed on to the Pioneers for their messages of condolence in her sad loss.

Trust you enjoyed your visit to the Kokoda Track Walkway on V.P. Day, Kay, along with Jim. A wonderful tribute to our servicemen and women. Good to see you both. Fond wishes.

WINN DWYER, Bronte, widow of Mick 2/1, with a photo of the Mosque of Omar in Palestine and several members of the army who were on leave. Max passes on his thanks, Winn, and will place it in the albums that he has received from various members of the 2/1st over the years. Very difficult over so many years to put names to faces.

Our best wishes, Winn, and hope you are keeping well.

OLIVE FINLAY, Mt Pritchard, widow of Gordon 2/1, has been out of action for a month after carpal tunnel operations on both hands. Daughter Jan Reynolds came down from Port Macquarie to be "chief cook and bottle washer" for the month and Olive was very grateful for the help. Jan has gone home (at time of writing) and Olive is restricted for another three weeks before she is able to return to indoor bowls at her club.

Hope by the time you read this Olive you'll be sparking on all "hands" again. Fond wishes and take care.

MAUREEN FLEMING, Mittagong, widow of Bill 2/1, with a return thanks to the Pioneers for their message of sympathy on Bill's passing recently. Says she is gradually getting back on her feet but a hard road after sharing 67 wonderful years with a wonderful partner.

However, has lots of caring support from her family and was going away for a few weeks with son Jim and his wife Julie, to Albury for a few days for a grandson's 30th birthday and then to Echuca and back on the Great Ocean Road.

Hope you had an enjoyable few weeks, Maureen, and we send you our very best wishes. Take care.

NOEL GRANT 2/1, Altona Vic, with a welcome letter from the Grant family for a great ANZAC weekend this year, although disappointed they missed the Cenotaph wreath laying due to an earlier start time. (The fall-in time was 3.35 pm, march off 3.40 and

wreath laying 3.45 – this may have been a few minutes earlier this year, as the 2/3 Pioneers, who precede us, have disbanded).

They enjoyed the march and the great reunion lunch at the Occidental, along with son Don and his wife Ann and their daughter Margaret and husband Frank. Noel said it was good to be able to ride in the jeeps provided and he urged all veterans to attend next year – but you need to book a seat.

Noel said it was sad that our old scallywag mate – "Three Course Kelly" was unable to attend, but his grandson Chris turned up with Laurie's bottle of scotch. Laurie had tripped over a piece of wood at his wood heap and came down on the chopping block.

The following day, the Grant family paid a surprise visit to Laurie's home where Chris arranged high tea – Laurie was sporting two bandaged legs and chest, but was in high spirits as usual.

Noel said their trip to Sydney was great – thanks to the Committee and hope to see everyone again next year.

Many thanks for the photos of Laurie, we shall pass them round. All the best to Jean and the family.

JACK HEARN 2/1, Howlong, with a short note enclosing his donations to the News and apologies for lateness. Says he has not been too well, but on the mend.

Thanks for your note, Jack, and hope by now you are feeling much better. Take care.

GLORIA HUTCHINSON, Caringbah, widow of Bill 2/1, has been in touch and sends her best wishes to all. She had been hoping there may have been a spare copy of the 2/1st history, "The Pioneers", still available for her to pass on to a grandson, but we told her that we may try again and see if a copy became available as they were now long out of print.

Gloria no longer drives but is kept busy with family and keeps reasonably well. Her husband, Bill, was in the Sig. Platoon 2/1sts along with Max and the late Doug Shearston. He and Doug had joined the Pioneers from the 2/2nd Machine Gunners while on the Tablelands.

Fond wishes, Gloria, and will keep in touch. Hope you enjoyed your week in Mudgee.

DIANNE LECKIE, Ruse, daughter of the late Bob Ginnane 2/2, with a welcome donation to the News and her thanks for placing her name on our mailing list. Our pleasure, Dianne, and copies will be sent as they are published.

Over many years Dianne and her dad used to sit and read the News together and Bob would explain little things that happened and he remembered during the war years. They kept his memories alive together. In letters to us, Dianne, he often said how caring you were with him and how he did appreciate all you did for him. Memories are lovely to keep.

Fond wishes from Max and myself and hope you continue to enjoy the News.

VINCE LONGMORE 2/2, Eagle Vale, with a long overdue letter – the first for several years – and a welcome donation to the News. Many thanks, Vince, and good to hear from you again.

He had a few days in hospital with a suspected heart problem and pains in his chest – no heart problem according to hospital, but pain problem not solved. However, apart from pain he feels OK. His wife, Carol, has been a wonderful help and keeps him cheerful. They walk a lot and at time of writing he had just finished pruning the roses.

During the last twelve months Vince has lost his second eldest daughter Sandra with a heart problem and we are sure she is sadly missed. However, the marriage of Carol's daughter and the arrival of a baby boy to her son, Jason, and his wife has been a happy occasion and something to be happy about.

Vince sends his very best wishes to all his Pioneer mates and a reminder to laugh a lot –

it's good medicine. Take care and we are sure your wartime mates will be glad to hear you are still battling on. Many thanks for the donation to funds.

ELIZABETH MAHY-BAILEY, Leeton, daughter of the late Phil Mahy 2/1, with a very short note enclosing a sub to the News. Many thanks. She was heading off to Tasmania for a couple of weeks R&R and we hope you had an enjoyable holiday with good weather. Tassy can be very unpredictable at times.

JULIE MCWILLIAM, Griffith, daughter of the late Steve Clark 2/1, with a generous donation to the News and lots of news from her part of the country.

Daughter Karen is back in Australia after time overseas and living in Sydney, but had spent some time in Griffith with her parents on return. Julie and Doug had a lovely trip to England in May, part business part pleasure, and enjoyed canal boating part of the time. So many are spending their holidays cruising the rivers in Europe these days, a whole new way of enjoyment – and loving it.

We were at the Kokoda Track on V.P. Day, Julie, along with 2,000 visitors and a few Pioneer family members to make up the numbers. There was no damage to the Pioneer "station", but quite a few of the others were in need of repairs. (They did find and charge the one responsible). We often think of the part your father and Bill Jollie played in getting the Pioneers "moving" on our station when it was decided to build the Walkway. A wonderful achievement. Quite a few of the War Widows' clubs take busloads of their members over to "walk" the Track, a very popular outing, and more so now since the Education Centre was opened last year.

Have noted your new postal delivery address on our records for future copies of the News and many thanks for the donation.

Our love to you and best wishes to Doug, always happy to have a note from you for old time's sake.

MARGARET MUNRIGHT, Tea Gardens, daughter of the late Jack Claypole 2/1, with a newsy letter of her "doings" since she wrote last, and enclosing a donation to the News. Many thanks.

They are having a busy year at Tea Gardens – Terry is President of their RSL Sub-Branch and Maureen in the Women's Auxiliary. ANZAC Day was wet and windy, but the Dawn Service was well attended. The rain was torrential, but in spite of the elements there were more people lining the route of the March and then stood round for the service.

The flag bearers nearly emulated Mary Poppins, the PA system "hiccuped" and all the onlookers looked like drowned rats. Terry's glasses needed wipers, but all agreed, in some small way, that they only had a small sample of what the Diggers had to endure during their war service. However, back to the club to dry out (on the outside anyway) had a lovely lunch and a great afternoon followed.

She and Terry enjoy the News and says a job well done. Many thanks for your kind words. Maureen is compiling her father's service record with photos to pass them on to his grandsons and says any information sources would be appreciated. Will be in touch with you, Maureen, in this regard as soon as time presents. We may be of help.

Best wishes to you both, keep up the good work.

JACK PAUL 2/1, Camira Qld, with a short note enclosing his sub for the News and says not much to write about from his part of the country. Says he is going on 86, still has his "marbles", does the shopping and cooking, drives his car and has a few bets and beers. What more can you ask!! Good to hear, Jack, keep on, keeping on!!

Sends his best wishes to all Pioneers and their families and lots of good health in the coming year. Many thanks for the sub to the News.

ERIKA PEILE, Caringbah, widow of Peter 2/1, with a note of thanks for the Pioneer News. Also enclosed was a photo of her grand-daughter Jackie Peile christening her racing shell at Como earlier in the year – and in honour of Peter named it "Rats of Tobruk".

Jackie and her brother Steve are members of the St George Rowing Club and both enjoyed success at the Australian titles recently. Jackie who is 22, won gold in the women's under 23 lightweight quad and a bronze in the double skull race, while Steve won a bronze in the NSW youth eight. Jackie is hoping to make the Australian team this year, but ultimately looking at the Olympics in 2012 or 2016. We wish them both the best of luck in their chosen races. Peter would have been so proud.

Erika, we took the photo of the christening of the racing shell over to the Rats of Tobruk meeting in October to show members and they were most interested. All sent their best wishes on its future success.

Many thanks for keeping in touch and will be interested to hear of their future activities. Hope you are keeping well and our best wishes.

REV. PETER PLAYSTED, Sq. Ldr RAAF (Retired), has moved from South Windsor in NSW to Highfields in Queensland. His new address is Unit 13, "Brownesholme", 109 Highfields Road, Highfields, via Toowoomba, Qld 4352.

Peter was for many years a resident minister at Lismore and attended the Pioneer reunions that were held in that city.

We wish you well in your new surrounds, Peter, and the best of health in the coming years.

OLIVE RICHARDS, Scarborough Qld, widow of Jack 2/1, with a letter of apology for not having written for so long, but has had some trouble with a torn ligament in her shoulder, very painful but lots better now. Olive says her general health is still good and she walks each day and able to help the carers in the Hostel where she lives. Olive has moved over to mainland Queensland to John Ziller Hostel in Scarborough where she is very happy.

Son Chris and his wife Annette are still on Bribie Island and when Olive wrote they were busy minding their son's three tiny tots for school holidays. Neal is in the Navy in Afghanistan and will be away until December and his wife was up on Bribie for a holiday with the young ones.

Olive keeps in touch with Vi Flynn, also had a chat to Noel Schomberg on his 92nd birthday. Happy Birthday to you, Olive, for yours in October.

Many thanks for your donation to the News, Olive, and we hope you have a blessed and Happy Christmas and keep well. Love from both of us. Take care.

MARGARET TELFORD, Wodonga Vic, daughter of Alby Dean 2/1 of Shepparton Vic, writing for her father to say that his wife Kathleen passed away in May. She did not recover after falling ill on the way to Sydney in April for the ANZAC weekend.

Margaret says her dad is OK but still adjusting to being on his own after being married for 62 years. Hopefully she may be able to bring him to Sydney for next ANZAC Day.

Our sincere sympathy to your dad, Margaret, and thank you very much for writing and passing on the sad news.

KAY TASKER, Georges Hall, daughter of the late Bill Tasker 2/1, phoned recently to pass on her best wishes to all and many thanks for sending on the "Pioneer News" to both her brother and herself. Good to hear from you, Kay, and we send you our love and best wishes. Take care and keep in touch.

JOY TAYLOR, Allawah, daughter of the late Jack Harvey 2/1, with her apologies for non-attendance at the ANZAC March this year. She had a few duties to do at church and it made her too late to join the march in town.

Thank you, Joy, for the subs enclosed with your letter. I'm sure our treasurer will put it towards printing and postage expenses.

In regard to your News which you send on to your brother Bob in Victoria, I shall put an extra copy of each issue in your envelope so as you don't have to part with your copy. We always have a few copies over and there are times you may like to keep yours.

Hope you are keeping well – best wishes from both Max and myself.

BEV WALKER, Penrose, wife of Ern 2/1, has been in hospital with a heart problem after a valve replacement and at last report was at home and recovering slowly. Originally, she was to have another operation and while undergoing tests the doctor found she needed an urgent heart operation.

Good to hear from Ern that you are on the mend, Bev, and hope to see you at the Xmas luncheon for the RATS in December. Take care and our best wishes.

TOM WALLACE 2/1, Rankin Park, with a welcome donation to funds, many thanks. He enjoys reading the News although he can't remember many of the names.

Says he is on the shady side of 92, not very fit, half blind in one eye, and deaf in one ear but still manages to keep out of the Last Post section of the News. Good to hear from you, Tom, and we hope you can continue to do just that for many more years.

All the best and keep well.

Apart from the letters, we did get a couple of phone calls from family of departed Pioneers who keep in touch.

ROMA SHEARSTON, widow of Doug 2/1, had a fall recently hurting her shoulder and knee and had lots of care from the staff of the "Westcott" Hostel at Stockton where she resides. Was out of action for a few weeks very stiff and sore, but was her usual bright and happy self when she spoke to me. Sends her best wishes to all her Pioneer friends and says she looks forward to hearing news of them per the Pioneer News.

VERA COOK, widow of Clem 2/1, with a call to say hello and checking that all was well in the Herron household. Vera is still battling her arthritis and hoping the warmer weather may show some improvement. Sends her best wishes to all.

NORMA LUNN, widow of Ernie 2/2, with her thanks for the Pioneer News which keeps her in touch. Was hoping Legacy may be able to help her with her war widow's pension application and would keep us informed. Good to hear from you, Norma, and our best wishes.

■ That's all the Mail Bag for this issue and on behalf of President Roy, Treasurer Don, Max and myself we wish all Pioneers and their loved ones lots of good health and happiness in the coming year. To those who have lost loved ones during the year we send special thoughts, so many of our long time friends are no longer with us.

Have a Happy and Joyous Christmas and may the New Year bring peace and good health to all our readers.

LAST POST

DAPHNE KELLY, loving wife of Laurie Kelly 2/1, of Oxford Falls passed away peacefully early in October after a very long illness, aged 79 years.

Her funeral service was held in its entirety at the Ann Wilson Chapel in Mona Vale on Thursday, 14th October, 2010, and we thank Marj Kerslake and Joan Lake for their attendance at the service.

To Laurie and his family we extend our sincere sympathy in their sad loss.

MAVIS BLANCH of Beaudesert Qld, widow of Ray (Joe) Blanch, passed away on 26th June, 2010 at the Wongaburra Nursing Home in Brisbane Street, Beaudesert, where she had been residing since late last year.

Her funeral was held in the Anglican Church in Beaudesert on 2nd July, 2010, and her ashes were placed in a niche in the wall of the church after cremation.

For many years Mavis had led a very active life – was involved with Legacy and was for forty years a members of the Anglican Mothers' Union, played bowls and had many trips away with War Widows Guild until forced to slow down with ill-health.

She attended most of our country reunions and a regular correspondent to our Pioneer Mail Bag.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to her family in their sad loss and our thanks to son Bill for passing on the news.

RICHARD (DICK) WALKER 2/2, late of Lismore, passed away on the 28th October at St Andrews Nursing Home in Ballina. His daughter, Pauline Goodwin, had advised us that her father had moved from his home in Lismore to the nursing home in Ballina.

The funeral was held on the 1st November at the Uniting Church in Lismore and Dot Priest and Terry McGuire were able to attend. We thank Dot for passing on the sad news.

VALE – BILL FLEMING

Bill Fleming died on the 3rd of August 2010 aged 89. He had two brothers Jack and Jim. Jim was killed in the Middle East in 1943.

Bill joined the 2/1 Pioneer Battalion. He enlisted in May 1940 and embarked on the Johan-de-Witt for the Middle East and served in the siege of Tobruk. On return to Australia the Pioneers were posted to Townsville for training in jungle warfare. Unfortunately, Bill was plagued with dysentery and when his mates embarked for Port Moresby he was in hospital. Depressed and missing his mates he later transferred to the air force where he trained to be a fitter and turner.

On discharge Bill married Maureen Dolaghan whose brother Jack also served in the 2/1 Pioneer Battalion. Bill and Maureen moved to Mittagong where they built their home and raised a family of twelve children, sadly their eldest daughter died at the age of twelve.

Bill joined Australia Post and made his way up to the position of Post Master. He was Post Master at Milton on the south coast when he retired and he and Maureen moved back to the family home in Mittagong.

Bill had been a member of Lions International for a number of years and in 1996 received the prestigious Melvyn Jones Award for services to Lions and the community. In 1999 he was awarded a Commonwealth Recognition Award for Senior Citizens also for service to the community, which was presented by the Federal Member for Macarthur, the Hon John Fahey.

Bill rarely missed a Dawn Service. His last attendance at an ANZAC Day March was in Sydney. This time Bill was in a wheelchair and his eyesight was failing. His family arranged accommodation in the CBD and Bill was able to attend the Pioneers Wreath Service at the Cenotaph on the 24th April and attend the Dawn Service and the Anzac Day March the following day.

Bill was well known in the local community and over ninety people attended his funeral at St Michael's Church in Mittagong on the 10th of August. Family members gave the Eulogy as well as a member of the RSL and the Poppy Service was moving and impressive, especially the Last Post.

Bill was interred in the Welby Cemetery near his daughter Jenny.

TRIP BACK TO KYOGLE

For some time we have been promised some notes from Kay Burton (daughter of the late Albert Rayner 2/1 of Kyogle), about the recent 75th Anniversary of the Kyogle Swimming Club and a reunion and launch of the Timber Workers' Book called "Ramblings of the Timber Industry".

Kay had the pleasure of contributing the McQuilty chapter of the book which traces the involvement of her ancestors in the industry and the entry into the industry of those who married into the family. Hence in the early thirties they saw the arrival of two men who were later to become 2/1st Pioneers, namely Joe Leis and Albert Rayner. There is a photo of them in the book taken on the day they enlisted, together with Cyril Duncan. Another Pioneer honoured was Leo Ferris.

At the swimming reunion Kay was seated with David Herron and his wife Lynn (formerly a Kyogle girl) – Lynn's family of six were all stalwarts of the swim club over many, many years. One of the Pioneers remembered with great affection was Bill Hoffman who was a member of the club prior to World War II and on his return. He was also Pool Manager for many years.

Kay is herself a champion swimmer and will be resuming training again after a busy few months. At the World Masters Games in Sydney last year she was successful winning six medals in the 70-74 age group and five more at the Nationals in Launceston this year, mainly because she chooses distance events which she says are not popular. She is currently in the top 10 in the world in two events.

Congratulations and our very best wishes, Kay, and we hope you have another great year.

DON CRAWFORD AWARD

Dear Don,

Re: Honorary Bowls Life Membership

The Board has identified you as a member who has made a significant contribution to the Club over many active years of service.

Your service to the Bowlers having commenced in 1988 and continuing to the current day, now as President is truly a remarkable achievement. The continuation of Bowls as an important element in club life is undoubtedly due to your dedication and love of the game and the club.

In recognition for services rendered to the Concord Men's Bowling Club, the Board of Concord Golf Club would like to advise that you have been awarded Honorary Bowls Life Membership. As has been the precedent the Club will now waive any fees and charges associated with maintaining your Bowls' membership.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to offer our congratulations on being awarded this honour. Your time spent in service to the Members of Concord is an achievement to be envied by many. Yours faithfully, Bill Hiller, President Concord Golf Club.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Max,

Thank you for your kind letter and to Don Crawford and members of your Association for the generous donation of \$100 towards the cost for VP Day. That has topped off an exhaustive but wonderful week with everything coming together so well for the service, despite the downpour earlier.

It is heart warming to have your continued support and that of your members. You wonderful men keep me enthusiastic!

Kind regards

Alice Kang, Hon Secretary
Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway

VP DAY 2010 - ROCKY CREEK

By Ray Law, son of the late Jim Law 2/1

It didn't seem possible that twelve months had passed since my first visit to Rocky Creek but here we were, August already and I wasn't nearly prepared for it. Like everyone else life seems to become more hectic with every year and this one was no exception. On a positive note we had become grandparents for the first time with the addition of a grandson, Jonah to the Law family. However, a difficult period workwise, resulting in the involvement of solicitors to resolve a dispute with the local council. By the time this was all brought to a successful conclusion it was almost too late to organise the trip to Atherton for the VP Day Service. If I had any hope of making it at all it would again be with my ever supportive wife Sue to do her magic. As always, she came through with flight arrangements, car hire and accommodation in a seemingly impossible time frame. She has always encouraged my passion for the Pioneers and has a real soft spot for you herself.

The only flight to Cairns available on the day before VP Day left Mascot at 6am which meant leaving home at 3.45am. I must admit to feeling a little guilty at waking her at 3am but a weary smile and a "no it's fine love" assured me again of how lucky I am. The flight itself was smooth and we touched down in Cairns right on time at 9 am.

I was quickly into the waiting hire car and heading for Atherton when I received a phone call from my daughter-in-law to say that Sue had just been kicked by a horse and they were taking her to hospital with a suspected broken arm. My immediate reaction was to turn around and catch the first flight home but Sue insisted she was alright and I'd only make her feel worse if I didn't attend the service as planned. Reluctantly, I agreed to continue with my itinerary still concerned as to her welfare. As I drove away from Cairns it occurred to me how terrible it must have been for you to have been so far away from home with not only an aggressive enemy to deal with but also the stress of not knowing how your loved ones were faring. It's just another aspect to the sacrifice you have made for us all.

MEETING WITH BOB CHESTER

On my last trip I was fortunate enough to meet Mr Bob Chester a long-time local who had owned, until recently, the property where you had constructed a suspension bridge by manufacturing cables from many strands of barbed wire. I was eagerly looking forward to taking up his offer to arrange an inspection and tour of the locality including the place where you had camped so long ago. After the short drive from our arranged meeting place at Rocky Creek to Wondecla we arrived at the property where the remains of the bridge lie almost concealed by the natural vegetation. The current owner was more than welcoming and happy for us to wander around looking at the remains of your engineering efforts of so long ago. That any of it remains after such a long period of time is silent tribute to your efforts. I was astounded at the size of the cables you had made by twisting and weaving the barbed wire and I wondered at the strength and purpose of those hands which had made it possible.

Next on the agenda was a trip to the campsite of the 2/1sts. All along the road, signs have been erected indicating where the various units were stationed and my guide soon had me standing on the very spot which had been your base over sixty years ago. To walk where you had walked and find and touch

some of the relics of your stay here, knowing that you had used and touched them brought a sense of closeness and feeling of your presence which soon had a lump in my throat. Bob was very generous with his time and graciously allowed me the chance to quietly reflect as I stood on what to me was a very special and moving place.

After leaving Wondecla we toured some more of the sites of this vital WWII staging point and it is almost beyond comprehension how it must have been. You will be pleased to know that the 'igloo' which was your recreation facility is now in private hands and being lovingly restored as a residence. With the day drawing to a close it was time to head back to the motel for some sleep before the VP Day service.

WREATH LAYING VP DAY

Our local florists had arranged for a wreath to be delivered to my room so after placing it in the car, I headed back to Rocky Creek. A large crowd was assembled by the time I arrived indicating again how important these commemorations have become to us all. There were displays of restored military vehicles and equipment of the day including a bren gun carrier resplendent in its camouflage paint.

At 1 pm the service began with an ear-splitting low level fly over by two WWII fighter planes which was an amazing experience.

The Hon. Bob Katter, Member for Kennedy, brought an address in which he remarked that Milne Bay was not only the first defeat on land for the Japanese in WWII but the first one in 800 years! He went on to say that you, as second generation ANZACs had proven again that "if you pick a fight with Australia, you will be sorry".

An American serviceman, CW4 Christopher Hurst on exchange with Australian Forces and based at Townsville was the next speaker. A plaque dedicated to the USAAF 5th Air Force 90th Heavy Bombardment which was based in Mareeba was unveiled and he commented that the day was not so much a celebration but a remembrance of the fallen. He went on to express his country's gratitude at being included in the Rocky Creek Memorial and said that it was considered by his nation to be a privilege to be identified on Australian soil with Australian Forces who were still considered by many Americans as amongst the best in the world.

It was now time for the laying of wreaths and it was again both a humbling but extremely proud experience to be allowed to lay a wreath on behalf of the Pioneers. After the playing of the Lament, the reading of The Ode, the Last Post, a minute's silence and Reveille the Australian and American National Anthems were sung and the service drew to a close.

All in all, my time at Atherton was again both fulfilling and poignant and I'm already looking forward to next year. My sincerest thanks go to you, The Pioneers, who so graciously allowed me the honour of representing you on such a touching occasion. There is so much more that I would love to share with you about this trip, but I'm sure space in the Pioneer News won't allow it. I hope this finds you all well and that I'll see many of you on ANZAC Day.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We thank Ray for his report on the service at Rocky Creek and for the expenses incurred in representing the Association. We also thank his wife, Sue, for the time she spent organising the details of his trip. Very much appreciated by our members.

PIONEER NEWS

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Correspondence: MAX HERRON, Hon. Sec., 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Bn. Assoc., 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills 2209

Treasurer: DON CRAWFORD

Editors: MAX & PEG HERRON O.A.M.'s

President: ROY JARDINE

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JULY 2010

PIONEERS ATTEND ANZAC ACTIVITIES

WREATH LAYING SERVICE

On Saturday 24th April members and relatives assembled on the corner of Martin Place and Pitt Street on the GPO side for the most important function of the year, remembering all the Pioneers who paid the supreme sacrifice during the war and those who have passed away since.

President Roy Jardine was the marshal-in-charge of proceedings and at 3.35 pm called upon the Pioneers to form up behind the markers. Behind the first two rows of Pioneers he arranged the relatives. Banner bearers were Sam Lewis 2/1 and Don Crawford 2/2 – wreaths were carried by Bert Neasbey for the Association and Janet O'Neill, daughter of the late Bill Robertson 2/2, for the Ladies Auxiliary.

At the Cenotaph the wreaths were laid and Bert recited the Ode to the Fallen, which was followed by Aub Brasier, bugler, playing Last Post and Reveille.

Before dismissal, the President thanked the seven Pioneers and their relatives for their attendance and the bugler Aub Brasier for his continued support over so many years. Amongst the relatives were Marj Kerslake and daughter Margaret Stolp, Joan Lake, Beryl Oliver and son Dean, Val Crawford, Helen Walker and husband Andrew, Robyn Bell, Bruce Montague and his wife, Jean Grant, Pat Bentley, Loma Savillo, Ann Grant, Margaret Fleming, David and Lynn Herron, Peg Herron and daughter Lynne Berry (who made a floral replica of the 2/1 Pioneer Bn colour patch and placed it on the Cenotaph) and Kay Burton (who also laid flowers in memory of her late father Bert Rayner 2/1) and her family members - husband Jim, daughter and son-in-law Therese and Brian Dollery and Darcy and Malachi Henderson sons of her youngest daughter Josephine.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

Mark Neasbey, son of Bert 2/2, was the March Marshal and at 10 am he arranged for the Castle Hill RSL Youth Band to form up with the Land Rover behind. He then organised the banners and flags into position. Banner bearers were Tim Lloyd 2/1 (which he has proudly carried for 28 years) and John Collins 2/2, the Australian flags being carried by Ray Law 2/1 and Justin Neasbey 2/2. It was quite a treat to receive a tot of rum at the assembly point by Gordon Collins.

Don Grant, son of Noel 2/1, was the vehicle marshal and promptly organised for the Land Rover, booked by Don Crawford, to move the four Pioneers into the vehicle. The Unit Commander Ray Jardine sat beside the driver while Gavin Todd, Noel Schomberg and Don Grant were seated in the rear.

Upon seeing movement of 6th Division at Castlereagh Street, Mark called on the six front row markers to fall in. They were 2/1sts Ern Walker, Eric Causer and Sam Lewis. 2/2nds Bert Neasbey, Jack Allison and Don Crawford, followed then by a second row of Pioneers and behind them the descendants.

The Executive would like to thank all those who assisted in arranging of the Pioneer units, particularly the two marshals Mark and Don, and the assembly went very smoothly. Total attendance was 43.

As in the past 17 years the Pioneers had

the services of the Castle Hill RSL Youth Band, led by James Brice, and we thank them for their continued support.

ANZAC REUNION DINNER

The venue, as in the past twelve years, was the Occidental Hotel where the manager Paulette West and her staff had arranged the seating as requested by the Secretary.

In the foyer the members were welcomed by the three sons – Geoff Finlay, David Herron and Ray Law, name tags were issued, lunch fee paid and names entered on the roll. Members were then directed upstairs where they were welcomed by the new Function Manager, Belle, replacing Mary who had been in charge for many years.

Vice-President Jack Allison commenced proceedings, when all were seated, saying ANZAC Day is a special day of memories. We remember the more than 100,000 men and women who over several wars have given their lives for Australia, we remember our fallen comrades and, especially, we remember those of our both units who have passed away since last ANZAC Day – Allan Crute 2/1, Tom Wood 2/2, Ken Oliver 2/1, Charles Richardson 2/2, Alby Barton 2/1, Bob Ginnane 2/2 and Bill Tasker 2/1. He then recited the Ode to the Fallen.

The President then welcomed members and apologised for the absence of our Patron John Gilchrist. He also welcomed friends and relatives and thanked them for their help in making the day a success.

Through the power of mobile phones he had a call from his observer saying the Pioneers stood out as they marched up George Street behind that wonderful Youth Band, everyone in step, and the banners on each side stood out.

Concluding, Roy said he would not take up any more time as there was ale to be drunk, but he must mention the younger sons who have given of their time to make things work each ANZAC Day – Geoff Finlay, Ray Law, David and Joshua Herron, Tim Lloyd, Mark Neasbey and Don Grant – also Max Herron and his good wife Peg who put so much into making the reunion a success, also Don Crawford for doing much of the leg work. He also thanked those who so generously shouted the bar.

REUNION ATTENDANCE

Pioneers in attendance were 2/1sts – Eric Causer, Don Grant, Max Herron, Roy Jardine, Sam Lewis, Noel Schomberg, Ern Walker. 2/2nds – Jack Allison, Andy Beebar, Don Crawford, Ross Dawson, Clive Maddrell, Bert Neasbey, Gavin Todd. There were 43 relatives and 22 ladies. Apologies were received from Laurie Kelly, Alby Dean and George Granger (son of late Bill Granger 2/1) whose donation was gratefully received.

LUNCH WITH THE LADIES

The ladies also enjoyed their lunch at the Occidental and, as in previous years, were joined by several visitors from interstate.

From Perth came Pat Bentley and Loma Savillo, Jean Grant, Margaret Fleming, Ann Grant and Robyn Bell from Victoria, Bev Walker and daughter Joy Jorgenson and friend Doy Hough, Marj Kerslake and daughters Barbara Harrison and Margaret Stolp, Barbara Allison,

Janet O'Neill, Olive Finlay and her daughter-in-law Lyn Finlay, Marie Jensen, Natalie and Catherine Neasbey, Margaret Lewis from Forster and Peg Herron and daughter-in-law Lynn Herron. Apologies were received from Joyce Law and Kay Burton.

VALE – BILL TASKER

BILL TASKER 2/1 passed away on 3rd April, 2010, in Bankstown Hospital, aged 90 years. He had been residing at the Salvation Army Nursing Home at Bass Hill for the past two years after moving from his home at Kingsgrove. The funeral service was held on Monday, 12th April at the Woronora Crematorium, Sutherland, to a packed congregation.

Son John gave a resume of his father's private life and this was followed by a Eulogy on Bill's army career by Don Crawford on behalf of the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalions Association as follows –

BILL TASKER enlisted in the 2nd AIF on the 11th March, 1941 and was posted to the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion. After training in Dubbo Camp he sailed on the "Queen Elizabeth" to the Middle East in June, 1941. Some months later the Reinforcement Companies joined the unit in Palestine. In March 1942 the Battalion returned to Australia on the USS "Westpoint".

After training in Australia around Kilcoy in Queensland, the Pioneers sailed for New Guinea where they served on the Kokoda Track. When the Japanese were forced to retreat to Kokoda and Buna, the Pioneers were relieved of their positions at Imita Ridge and move to the Nine Mile Quarry near Moresby. It was here that Bill and seventeen other Pioneers transferred to the 1st Papuan Infantry Battalion on 8th June, 1943. While in the P.I.B. Bill was promoted to the rank of WOII, but performed duties of a Regimental Sergeant-Major.

The P.I.B. were later to take part in the 9th Division landing at Red Beach, 20 miles east of Lae. The particular significance of the action was that, not since the landing by the ANZACS at Gallipoli had an Australian force made an opposed landing by sea.

After the war Bill became involved with the newly formed 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalions Association and one of his tasks was to act as marshal at the Association's wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph and the ANZAC Day March. It was due to his strict supervision that the RSL protocol was observed.

In 1990 he was appointed Welfare Officer of the Association and visited members in hospitals and attended all funerals, he would also perform the Poppy Service. He was also made a Life Member of the RSL in 1955 and in 1993 was awarded Honorary Life Membership for his outstanding service to the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Association.

In conclusion, we thank God for the life of our departed friend and we extend our sincere sympathy to John and Kay and their families on their loss. He will be sadly missed by his fellow Pioneers.

LEST WE FORGET

• Pioneers in attendance at the funeral were Don Crawford, Ron Webster and Max and Peg Herron.

MAIL BAG

By PEG HERRON

• Another ANZAC Day has gone and, although the weather could have been kinder to both marchers and spectators, huge crowds lined the streets of Sydney to celebrate this special day. Age and mobility is taking its toll on our veterans and most units were well down in numbers. The 2/1sts and 2/2nds marched together as in previous years, their ranks boosted by sons and daughters acting as carers.

DORA ANDERSON, Merimbula, widow of Don 2/1 and 2/2, with a welcome note and a donation to the News. Thank you, Dora, and for the cuttings enclosed from the "Melbourne Sun" with death notices of two 2/2nd Pioneers – David Mitchell and Frank Ray. Frank Ray was on our mailing list and we have received a few letters from him in recent years, always bright and cheery.

Your best wishes are passed on to all 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneers and hope this finds you in the best of health and still able to potter in your garden. Take care and kindest regards.

DORIS AMIES, Sandgate Qld, widow of Cyril 2/1, with belated New Year greetings as a result of a rushed trip to hospital with a heart attack and septicaemia with a nasty diagnosis for her recovery. Says sheer determination and specialist treatment have allowed her to live a reasonable lifestyle. Daughter Wendy and her husband Stu have been in the States for six weeks visiting Stu's ageing parents and gave Doris confidence in looking after herself.

With a lovely new unit right in the heart of the business centre, she has all the necessary facilities within riding distance from home. Her scooter has been such a help, although she was very nervous at first finding herself so close to traffic.

Max still attends the monthly meetings of the Rats of Tobruk at Five Dock, but numbers are dwindling, mostly only eight to ten members. They have lost a lot of members in the last year, but still have three 2/1sts who attend regularly.

Do hope by now you have fully recovered, Doris, and giving your motor scooter a good workout. Also that your weather in Queensland is much warmer than in Sydney.

Take care and always pleased to hear from you. Love and best wishes from both Max and myself.

PHIL BARNETT 2/2, Alstonville, with a welcome donation to funds and his thanks for the Pioneer News and our efforts to keep the Association alive. Sends best wishes to all. Many thanks Phil for your cheque and trust you are keeping well.

BERT BETTENS 2/1, Lennox Head, per pen of good wife Lily, with a couple of letters since last issue and a welcome donation to the News. Many thanks.

Lily says Bert is not in the best of health after having a stroke three years ago and as a result developed Parkinson's Disease. She is trying to keep him at home as long as possible. Says Bert still enjoys reading the News, but sad to see how time and sickness are taking their toll of former Pioneers. He will be 93 in August, and up to the time of his stroke had a good healthy life.

As the Lennox Head area was in the path of the tornado that ripped through the area a couple of months ago, Lily says their home needs a roof and they have no electricity but will be alright eventually. Trust by the time you receive this issue of the News that everything is back to normal.

Lily, we have no Eric King on our mailing list, but on the nominal roll in our Pioneer history

we have an E. J. King VX146245 – perhaps a Pioneer who enlisted in Victoria but now lives in Lennox Head.

Our best wishes to you both and we thank Dot Priest for kindly phoning us to let us know of your welfare after the tornado.

ROBYN BELL, Camberwell Vic, daughter of the late Leo Morris 2/1, acknowledging what again was a most wonderful ANZAC Day. Just to witness the growing respect our veterans are receiving by so many makes this a very special day for many of us who come together to continue our 2/1-2/2 Pioneer tradition.

The day passed so quickly, sadly, Robyn missed seeing many friends towards the end as she had another group to make contact with. She is sure we all missed Laurie Kelly and trusts he is OK and it was great catching up with Kay Burton and Janet O'Neill, also Margaret and Sam Lewis, gentle Gavin Todd and the Neasbeys, also Val and Don Crawford and the Herron family.

Robyn apologises for her non-attendance for the coming VP Day at the Kokoda Track on 15th August this year and sends her best wishes to all. Many thanks from Max for the photo of he and Eric Causer and I shall send you Eric's address as soon as I get a spare minute.

Our best wishes, Robyn, and many thanks.

KAY BURTON, Springwood, daughter of the late Bert Rayner 2/1, of Kyogle, with a thank you note to say how the family enjoyed being part of the ANZAC Day activities. Kay was accompanied to the Wreath Laying by her husband Jim, daughter Therese and son-in-law Professor Brian Dollery, who is a Professor of Economics at the University of New England (Therese lectures in Japanese) and her two young grandsons Darcy and Malachi Henderson, sons of Kay's youngest daughter Josephine. Darcy is a bugler/trumpeter in a school band. Therese's husband who is South African, was most impressed with ANZAC Day – nothing like it in the rest of the world he says.

A few days after she wrote, Kay's mother Margeret Rayner of Kyogle passed away and Kay has kindly sent details of the service which is published in this issue. Our thoughts are with you Kay and your families at this sad time.

ANN DYNON, Woodhill, daughter of the late Frank Dynon 2/1, with a very welcome letter enclosing a donation to the News – many thanks. A most interesting letter, Ann, and brought back a lot of memories of the hours spent on the compilation of the history of the 2/1 Pioneers at our home – and my many, many hours of typing up the manuscript. It was sad that Gordon Osborn did not live to see it published.

For several years we sent your mother, Billie, copies of the Pioneer News after your dad passed away – if I remember she was near Tony up at Carey Bay. We spoke quite often on the phone. How the time has flown.

Max and I attended the book launch of Peter Fitzsimons "Tobruk" with several Rats of Tobruk members and he very generously gave us three copies for Max and our family.

Very pleased to hear from you, Anne, and once again thanks for your donation to the Pioneer News. Kindest regards from Max.

ERIC CAUSER 2/1, Hamilton Vic, with a couple of phone calls in recent months with some death notices from "Mufti" of former 2/2 Pioneers – Frank Ray VX22658, David Mitchell VX20924 and John Sellars VX110499. Many thanks, Eric.

Good to see you were able to join with your 2/1st mates for ANZAC Day, Eric, and the reunion and that you enjoyed your holiday with Doff and family in Queensland afterwards. Our very best wishes to you both and always good to hear from you.

GORDON CHRYSTALL 2/1, Larras Lee, per pen of good wife Eunice, with news of the passing of John Hayden 2/1 in Orange on 28th

May. Eunice said it was fortunate that Gordon was able to see him just a few days before he passed away. Says he was a great man, he taught so much simply by the way he lived his life – he encouraged, influenced and inspired all just by being the man he was. Gordon and two of their daughters went to the funeral which was well attended by the RSL and Lodge and many others. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Their son, Ralph, continues to be very busy with his truck. He has been moving railway carriages and has now added DC3 aeroplanes to his list. Eunice says nothing like variety!!

Gordon and Eunice both sent their congratulations on the "Pioneer News" and look forward to finding it in the mail. Good to hear, and hope that readers will keep up their letters with news from around the country and interstate.

They have been blessed with some welcome rain in their area and hope that it continues as it is sorely needed in parts of the country.

Many thanks for your letter and always pleased to hear you are both well. Kindest regards from both of us.

DAVID CLARK, Lesmurdie WA, son of the late Arthur Clark 2/1, with a letter of thanks for the copy of the 2/1st history "The Pioneers" which was kindly given by Bert Neasbey 2/2 in answer to our appeal in our April issue for anyone who had a copy that they were willing to part with. David's father passed away in 1965 (when he was still young) from the effects of war service.

David has passed the copy on to his son, Stuart, at Cooranbong who was looking forward to reading of the exploits of the men of the battalion of which his grandfather NX31428 was a member, and had died before Stuart was born.

We have had a letter of thanks from Stuart for the book and said reading it would be an informative and personal experience for him.

David also sent on several photos his father had taken while in the Pioneers and has asked Max to see if he could find someone (hard after seventy years) to recognise those in the photos. The photo of Toby Hale has been passed on to family in Kyogle. Will let you know if we have any luck with identifying the men in the other photos.

Thank you for your donation to funds and our best wishes.

BOB COLE, Toronto (son-in-law of late Jack Tooker 2/1) with a welcome donation to funds and apologies for not being able to attend the march and reunion this year due to an important 70th birthday for a close friend.

Bob says Kathleen Tooker was 93 in May and after a series of shoulder operations was speeding around the retirement village with her walker.

Thank you Bob for your kind words to Max and myself on the work we do to try and keep the News afloat and your offer to help in your retirement next year. Will certainly keep that offer in mind.

Out best wishes to Ainslie and yourself and hope you are both well. Many thanks for the donation to the News.

VERA COOK, Randwick, widow of Clem 2/1, with several phone calls to keep in touch and, apart from her constant battle with arthritis, keeps reasonably well. This cold weather wouldn't be to your liking, Vera. All the best from Max and myself. Take care.

RON COYTE 2/1, Wentworthville, with a welcome letter and a donation for the News, many thanks. Always good to hear from you.

He has been in and out of hospital in the last year and has not long finished rehabilitation, after a slight stroke, at the Westmead Rehabilitation Hospital. His wife has also been on the sick list after a fall that resulted in a smashed pelvic bone and has

been slow to heal. Do hope you are both starting to regain your health, despite the cold.

Ron said he was able to go to the Dawn Service at Pine Grove Cemetery, Eastern Creek for Anzac Day. His grandson is in the Army and was on guard at the service. Ron's two daughters and two grandsons were with him and it was a very good service. Another grandson is overseas with A.D.F. Combat Engineering.

Ron passes best wishes to all Pioneers and says he appreciates the efforts of those who strive to keep the Association and the Pioneer News afloat.

Good to hear from you, Ron, and hope the coming warmer weather will be kinder to you both.

ALBY DEAN 2/1, Shepparton Vic, with a welcome donation to the News and to say he and wife Kathleen would be attending the reunion on ANZAC Day. However, they were not able to attend, as we received word that Kathleen was taken ill just before departing, so the trip was cancelled.

Do hope by now all is well in the Dean household and Kathleen once more in good health. Take care and many thanks for your donation to funds.

WINN DWYER, Bronte, widow of Mick 2/1, with a cheque for the News and that more than covers you for several years. Many thanks.

Our printer and typesetter have not increased their costs for several years and we seem to keep afloat with very few expenses these days apart from postage, phone calls and a few additional expenses that spring up from time-to-time. Postage on the News has increased, but we get that at a slightly reduced rate as long as we stay over the 300 mark. When Max took over after Max Law went to Adelaide we were sending out about 1200 copies, now it's down to 320.

We have also heard from Beryl Gillian for this issue of Mail Bag and she mentioned that she is still in touch with you. Good to hear. Hope your health continues to improve, Winn, and thank you for your good wishes to Max and myself. Take care.

BILL FLEMING 2/1, Mittagong, per pen of dear wife Maureen, with a welcome letter and a cheque for the News. Many thanks to you both.

Maureen writes that Bill is going along OK, although he has had a few ups and downs in the last six months. Winter in the Highlands isn't the best of seasons healthwise, but the scenery is lovely. They are looking forward to the days warming up a little so they can take Bill out and about. They are very fortunate that they have wonderful family support.

Thank you for your kind words on the News and nice to see it is appreciated. Our best wishes to you both and hope the warmer weather brings plenty of outings for Bill. Take care.

OLIVE FINLAY, Mt Pritchard, widow of Gordon 2/1, with news of her "doings" since ANZAC Day including a trip to Medlow Bath with her seniors group for a Christmas in July luncheon. An enjoyable bus trip and a lovely log fire at the end of the journey.

Her family are all away caravanning at the time of writing - daughter Jan and husband Allan to Melbourne, Adelaide and through the Red Centre to Cairns and on to Hervey Bay until home in November, daughter Helen and Keith to Scotts Head and son Geoff and Lyn with their new van to Crescent Head. Hope all had a safe trip with plenty of sunshine.

Love and best wishes Olive, hope to see you soon.

AVELINE GAMBLE, Chermside Qld, widow of Bill 2/1, with her best wishes to the Pioneer men for ANZAC Day and a donation to the News. There were not too many marchers, ranks are thinning, but plenty of carers to keep an eye on them. The RSL are supplying Army

vehicles to assist those who cannot march.

In regard to the photo of the first Post-War ANZAC Day March, we must ask Ray Law if he would bring it along next year for the men to see. Max does not remember seeing it.

Thank you for donation to the News and our best wishes. Hope you are keeping well.

JIM GELTCH, Moama, son of late Alf 2/1, with a welcome note and a contribution to the News. Many thanks.

He spent the Dawn Service on ANZAC Day in Katherine, NT and said there was a large crowd in attendance, which surprised him, but probably due to the Tyndal Air Base being so close.

Jim hopes to make it to Sydney next year and catch up with Max and some of his fellow Pioneers at the march.

Our best wishes to you, Jim, and good to hear from you again.

BERYL GILLIAN, Maroubra, widow of Frank 2/1, with a welcome note enclosing a donation to the News and says she enjoys reading it when she receives it in the mail. Winn Dwyer is the only Pioneer lady she sees now - Frank and Mick Dwyer joined up on the same day. It is two years since Frank passed away and she misses him terribly after being married 62 years. Not too many last that long these days, Beryl.

Sorry to hear you have not been in the best of health lately, but says the family and her grandchildren are always on hand to help. Good to hear, Beryl, and hope by now you are feeling better. Kindest regards from both of us and thank you for the cheque enclosed in your letter.

JOHN GILCHRIST, our Patron, was in touch just before ANZAC Day in regard to an ANZAC Service at the War Veterans Village at Narrabeen with an attendance of some 1,500 veterans and visitors. Several local schools were involved and Channel 7 News took part in the proceedings. Caught a glimpse of John who was in attendance. Our best wishes to you John and hope you are keeping well.

ANN HEALEY, Semaphore SA, daughter of late Jim Hall 2/1 of Kyogle, with Easter greetings and her thanks for the News which she loves to receive. Says it was good to hear news of Kay Burton and Lexie Coates.

Ann says she will be away for ANZAC Day this year as she is off to China and Hong Kong on 19th April to visit her sister Margaret and her husband John who are teaching in China. Ann and Margaret are doing 10 days of activities before heading home.

In June, Ann and a girlfriend are off to the States and Canada and will be away for another seven weeks - Los Angeles, New Mexico, New York and then on to Canada to visit her late husband David's brother and relatives. Had taken Mollie Hunt's advice in the News and inspired Ann to get on with it - life is short. Sounds great, Ann, and we hope you enjoyed every minute of it.

Thanks for your love and good wishes, Ann, and always good to have a note from you. Also, many thanks for your donation to the News which has been passed on to our worthy Treasurer.

ELAINE HENDERSON, Epping, niece of late Ron Clark 2/1, with a cheque for the News, many thanks. Since her last letter, Elaine has lost her husband, Alan, after many years in a nursing home and we send you our deepest sympathy in your loss. Legacy and DVA have been very helpful to her and she is very grateful.

Elaine has had her own problems too - a bad two years - two operations on her hip and after a replacement she is walking quite well. Our best wishes, Elaine, and hope by now you are well on the road to recovery. Take care.

VERDUN HUMPHREYS, 6th Div HQ, Punchbowl, long time friend of the late Vic Whiteley 2/1, with his thanks for the Pioneer

News and his very best wishes for ANZAC Day. Says age and health stops him attending but will be with the Pioneers in spirit.

Many thanks Verdie for your kind donation to the News, and best wishes to Connie and yourself.

MOLLIE-JEAN HUNT, New Farm Qld, widow of John 2/1, with a welcome cheque for the News, many thanks, and says it is always welcome, although not so many familiar names these days. Hope you are keeping well, Mollie, and getting warmer weather than we are in Sydney.

BILL JOHNSON 2/1, East Bentleigh Vic, with a welcome letter enclosing a cheque for the News and apologies for non-attendance on ANZAC Day but hopes to be in Sydney next year, all going well. He is always happy to find the News in the mail and catch up with some of the activities of the Association.

Bill and Mavis have just celebrated 61 years of marriage and have become great-grandparents of a lovely little girl - Charlotte Georgia - six months old and a real bonny baby. Bill sent a photo of the little girl and she is all he claims. Their daughter Vivienne is the grandmother and her daughter Melanie, the mother. All girls in the family, so the oldies are spoilt with their company - and loving it.

They still potter in the garden and apart from knee and hip joints wearing out they are reasonably mobile and still driving.

Good to hear from you, Bill, and all the best to Mavis and yourself.

DIANNE LECKIE, Ruse, daughter of the late Bob Ginnane 2/2, with a thank you card to Max and myself for attending Bob's funeral from David, Kim and herself. Thank you Dianne, and we will keep your name on our mailing list for future Pioneer News. Kindest regards and always pleased to hear from you.

DAWN LEVY, Revesby, widow of Roy 2/2, with a welcome note enclosing a donation to the News and her best wishes passed on to all. She is keeping well but has had a lot of family problems over the past couple of years.

Dawn had another holiday with her Legacy group in May to Montville in Queensland - she had not even heard of the place before she went. Montville is on the edge of the Blackall Ranges a charming mountain village and she thoroughly enjoyed the trip. Nothing like a holiday, Dawn, to forget your problems.

Take care and love and best wishes from both Max and myself.

NANCY LINTON, Tuncurry, widow of Don 2/2, with a welcome letter and a donation towards the production of Pioneer News which she looks forward to receiving.

Says watching the ANZAC Day march brings back memories close to the hearts of war widows and families. However, all are most thankful of the times we had together and proud of the dedication and service our men devoted to their country.

Many thanks Nancy for your kind words and we are sure they are the sentiments of all those wives of our "Pioneer Family".

Hope you are keeping well and always good to hear from you. Many thanks for your donation to the News.

JANET O'NEILL, Clovelly, daughter of the late Bill Robertson 2/2, with a welcome letter of thanks for the opportunity of laying the wreath on ANZAC Eve on behalf of the Ladies Auxiliary, and said it was indeed an honour for her. She would also like to say thank you for the privilege of marching with the Pioneers on ANZAC Day once again and said it was wonderful to be included with such a great family and it was humbling to be able to join the march. She looks forward to joining with the "Pioneer Family" again next year.

Thank you, Janet, for your letter and glad to hear that you enjoyed the luncheon. Will look forward to seeing you again soon.

JACK ROBINSON 2/1, with a letter penned by good wife Olive, to the News with a change of address from Woy Woy to Slacks Creek in Queensland. Their new contact details are Unit 32, Tall Trees Tanah Merah, 3745 Pacific Highway, Slacks Creek Qld 4127. Jack sends best wishes to all his B Company mates.

Thank you, Olive, and your new address has been amended on our roll. Hope you enjoy your move to sunny Queensland.

ROMA SHEARSTON, Stockton, widow of Doug 2/1, with several phone calls to keep in touch and her best wishes passed on to all Pioneers and their families. She is keeping well and still has her daily walks around the area at Stockton.

Love and best wishes, Roma, and always happy to hear from you. Take Care.

NOELA SHEEN, Pearce ACT, widow of Gordon 2/2, with a cheque enclosed for our worthy Treasurer. Many thanks.

At the time of writing (no date on your note Noela) you were enjoying some lovely weather, but I'm pretty sure your ACT weather has changed, if the nightly news can be believed. Hope you are still golfing and able to potter in the garden – the weeds seem to grow a lot quicker than the plants.

Good to hear from you and best wishes.

WAL SMITH 2/1, North Gosford, with a donation to the News to be passed on to Don for membership fees. Thanks, Wal, and our best wishes to Yvonne and yourself. Hope you are both keeping well.

JOYCE WALKER, Gilead, widow of George 2/1, sends best wishes to all her Pioneer friends and says, apart from the fact that she can't get about without her "walker", she keeps reasonably well. Daughter Judith has been overseas for seven weeks and is due home at the end of the month. Joyce is looking forward to her return.

Her grand-daughter Alana had her baby christened last week at the lovely old church at Ebenezer and it was a happy occasion for Joyce and her family.

Take care, Joyce, love and best wishes.

■ That's all the Mail Bag for this issue and many thanks to all those readers who keep in touch and for your donations to the News.

LAST POST

BOB GINNANE 2/2 passed away on 30th March, 2010, aged 89 years, while residing in Menangle Nursing Home. Bob had lived with his late wife Nell in Leumeah and had only been in the nursing home for a few months.

The mass was held at St John The Evangelist Church in Campbelltown on 6th April and conducted by Father George Condookala. Assisting the priest were sons David and Kim and daughter Dianne, who had lovingly cared for Bob at home for five years with his health problems, and his grandchildren.

The Eulogy of Bob's army life and his many years of service to the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalions Association was read by Treasurer Don Crawford 2/2 as follows:-

BOB GINNANE enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 12th February, 1942, and was posted to the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion at Kapooka, near Wagga, during May 1942.

After several months of training, the unit marched out of Kapooka on 30th September, 1942, and went by train to Western Australia where they set up camp in the country near Strawberry. The stay at Strawberry was short as, after several months training, the unit was once again on the move to Bellevue, a suburb of Perth.

Early in 1943 the unit moved to a new camp at Mangalore, a few miles north of the Victorian military town of Seymour. In March the unit moved again to a staging camp in Woodford,

southern Queensland, before moving again to Ravenshoe, Nth Queensland, to rejoin the 7th Division in late April.

Jungle training was commenced in earnest and it was not long before the troops were experiencing the difficulty of operating in such terrain. It was during this period that Bob was promoted to the rank of Corporal.

July 1943 saw the Battalion sail for Port Moresby for action in New Guinea, where they served with distinction at Nadzab, Lae, Ramu and Markham Valleys, Shaggy Ridge and Boana.

In January 1944 the Pioneer's participation in the Shaggy Ridge campaign was over and they returned to Port Moresby and embarked on the "Kanimbla" on 8th February homeward bound to Townsville for a well-earned leave.

On return to camp the Battalion began concentrating at Wongabel on the Atherton Tablelands and allocated to 2nd Aust. Beach Group. On 10th April a move was made to Trinity Beach, 15 miles north of Cairns, for amphibious training. The Battalion received at this stage re-inforcements from the Canungra Jungle Training Centre and was about full strength. The Beach Group was formed to provide the personnel to man a beach area in the initial stages of amphibious landings on enemy held shores. One of the units they trained was their sister Battalion, 2/1 Pioneers.

On 15th March, 1945, the 2/2 Pioneers were on their way again to a staging camp at Morotai on the US Troopship "Sea Barb". From Morotai they sailed in convoy to the landing at Tarakan.

After the landing at Tarakan the unit moved back to Morotai and thence by convoy to the invasion of Balikpapan in Borneo for further action against the Japanese, until the surrender on 15th August, 1945.

On 8th October, the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion was declared redundant and the men were drafted to units of their choice.

After the war, Bob joined the Committee of the newly formed 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalions Association and was a regular attendee at their meetings. He also attended the ANZAC Day march and reunion and the country reunions at Lismore.

In conclusion, we thank God for the life of our friend and on behalf of the Executive our deepest sympathy is extended to Bob's family – he will be sadly missed by all his Pioneer friends.

LEST WE FORGET

• Pioneers in attendance were Don and Val Crawford, Bert Neasbey and Max and Peg Herron.

JOHN JOSEPH HAYDEN 2/1 of Orange passed away on 28th May, 2010, aged 95 years. The funeral service was held on 3rd June in the Wesley Uniting Church in Orange conducted by Rev. Noreen Towers.

John was born on 15th May 1915 in Suffolk in England and moved to Woodbridge where the family lived. He was placed in a Barnardo's Home in 1924, aged 9, due to family circumstances, where he remained until 1933. At 18, he found himself boarding a ship to Australia, arriving in 1933. Luckily, he became ill before coming and missed a ship to Canada where he wanted to go and join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

He worked on properties out west in NSW and ended up in Orange for a period of time where he met his wife Wyn.

John joined the AIF in 1940 and, after training, was sent to an Officers' Training School, and early in 1941 was posted to the 2/1 Pioneer Bn. as a Lieutenant. He sailed as a reinforcement officer to the 2/1 Pioneers in the Middle East in June 1941 and joined A Coy of the Battalion after the unit came out of Tobruk. He returned to Australia on the "Westpoint" in March 1942.

In August 1942, the unit was on the move again bound for New Guinea where John served with A Coy on Imita Ridge before being promoted to Captain and 2/1C of D Coy at Milne Bay.

The Pioneers final campaign was at Balikpapan in Borneo until the surrender of the Japanese in August 1945.

After the war John and Wyn lived in the family home in Orange until shortly after his 90th birthday when they located to Ascot Gardens, an aged care facility, each having their own room with communications between both.

He maintained an active involvement with the RSL and was Marshal each year at the ANZAC Day march until he was unable to do so. Right up to his last march this year he was still trying to work out how he would be able to walk proudly down the main street, finally agreeing to being pushed in a wheelchair by son John.

He was an active Mason right to the end and looked forward to their meetings.

John is survived by son John and his wife Lyn, daughter Helen and husband Garry, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Among the mourners were Gordon Chrystall 2/1 of Larras Lee and his two daughters.

Our sincere sympathy has been extended to son John and the family on their said loss.

FRANK RAY 2/2 of Doncaster Vic, passed away in Melbourne on 17th March, 2010, at 92 years of age. He wife, Rona, still resides at their "Applewood" Apartments in Doncaster.

Sadly he had a fall at this home and suffered a brain haemorrhage and died peacefully in St Vincents Private Hospital.

Frank's son, Geoff, said his dad enlisted on the 5th June, 1940, and was discharged on 26th November, 1945, with the rank of Lieutenant. He saw service in New Guinea and Borneo.

We thank you, Geoff, for passing on the news and extend our sympathy to the family on their sad loss.

MARGARET RAYNER, Kyogle, wife of the late Albert (Bert) Rayner 2/1, passed away in Kyogle Hospital on 27th June 2010, aged 96 years. A Requiem Mass was held at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Kyogle with quite a number of people attending.

Her nine grandchildren, both boys and girls, acted as pall bearers as well as some great-grandchildren.

Margaret is now buried beside her husband Bert in the Kyogle Cemetery, not far from some of the old 2/1 Pioneer couples – Jim and Lil Hall, Jack and Flo Shearman and Toby and Vera Hale.

We thank Margaret's daughter, Kay Burton, for passing on the sad news and we extend our sincere sympathy to Kay's family on their sad loss.

NORM McEVOY 2/1, formerly of Woodburn, passed away on 6th July, 2010, aged 89 years. The funeral was to be held on 12th July at Great Southern Gardens of Remembrance, Carbrook Qld.

We are indebted to Dot Priest of Ballina for phoning us the news of Norm's passing, as he has been missing from our Pioneer address rolls for many years. Many thanks, Dot.

DON McCLELLAND 2/2, Bundaberg, passed away on 17th March, 2010. He had been a regular correspondent to the Pioneer News for many years and usually drove south to Melbourne to see family and friends for the ANZAC period. Don's passing was recorded in May/June issue of "Reveille".

BRYAN SMALLHORN 2/1, late of Armidale, had made the move to Sydney to live with his son at Denistone, and we were saddened to see his name listed in "Reveille". Bryan was a Lieutenant in 15 Pln, C Coy, during the Borneo Campaign.