

PIONEER NEWS

75-5491

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

75-5491

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

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Vol. 12, No. 1.

1st APRIL, 1967

Price: 50c Per Annum



ANZAC FUNCTIONS, 1967

By WALLY (Desso) PAGE, Publicity Officer

The following are the arrangements for the Anzac functions as organised by the Social Secretary and his hard-working band on the Social Committee. Please reward them by making it a good roll up.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

MONDAY, 24th APRIL, 2/1 AND 2/2

Once again we ask as many association members as possible to join us when we lay wreaths on the Cenotaph, Martin Place, at 7.30 p.m. on 24th April. These men we remember were your wartime mates who lost their lives during the war or have passed away since, so come with us to pay homage and remember them as we knew them.

We meet on the 24th April (Anzac Eve) outside No. 19 Hunter Street, Sydney, at 7 p.m. We lay the wreaths at 7.30 p.m. We invite the Ladies' Auxiliary to join us.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, 24th APRIL, 2/1 AND 2/2

After the Wreath Laying Ceremony a cordial invitation is extended to all members to attend the Annual General Meeting of your association, to be held at the British Ex-Servicemen's Club, 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney, at 8 p.m.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

TUESDAY, 25th APRIL

As every year at this time, we ask all 2/1 and 2/2 Association members who are able to march (and remember

it's shorter this year) to assemble at their respective starting points and follow the old Pioneers' banner to Hyde Park.

The starting points are as last year: 2/1st, Phillip Street, near King Street; 2/2nd, outside Sydney Hospital, in Macquarie Street.

ANNUAL REUNION

TUESDAY, 25th APRIL

The 2/2nd's Reunion is held at the Randwick Literary Institute, Clovelly Road, Randwick, immediately after the march.

For those who do not know, the 2/1 Annual Reunion is at the Castlereagh Hotel on the corner of Park and Castlereagh Streets.

AFTER THE MARCH

On arrival at the hotel each man is given a free, hot meal in the Quarter Deck Lounge. Later in the afternoon we have a free snack for you.

Don't forget, we need you to make this annual reunion a success, so make an effort and make us happy. Let's see you at the march and reunion.

All members are expected to wear their medals at these Anzac functions.

Regards From Newcastle

Dear Max,

At the request of both Bob McGregor and "Desso" Page, I am enclosing herewith a little of the history of the late "Nap" Pelgrave. You may use, delete, brush-up or add to it as you wish, but it covers the facts, as I was a very close friend of "Nap", having joined up with him and Dick Sedden and knocked around with him for many years before the war.

Bob and "Desso" both graced our city with their presence during January and it was good to see and hear from them again. We also had a visit from Fred and Jean Wheaton, who came to Newcastle to visit their daughter, Judith (with the Wales). It was very fortunate as Fred was a good mate of "Nap's", too, and we had a good session with him one Sunday morning at New Lambton R.S.L. about three weeks before he died. We (and he) knew the score then, as it was cancer.

NEWCASTLE JOTTINGS

● Sid Jopson, now in Newcastle, of course, has not been very well lately (blood pressure problems) and has been off work for the past three weeks.

● Joe Hickey, after a gall bladder operation at Concord, is back in circulation again.

Still see most of the other local Pioneers occasionally, but not much else to report.

I ran into Bill Steers some time back at Swansea and you may not have him on the list. His address is Docker Street, Mark's Point.

Our Tobruk Day will be held on 9th April this year, and an invitation to yourself and any of the boys who care to make the trip is extended. We are also sending an invitation to "Normie" Neal again this year, not as Guest of Honour but as one of the boys. He has on old First War mate in Newcastle and I think he likes to make the trip.

I am enclosing cheque which will keep me near the mark as far as subs. are concerned.

Will definitely be down for Anzac Day this year.

Regards to all, and
Keep up the good work.

Jack Griffiths



Mesdames McInnes, Lake, Herron, Montague, Wheeler, Shearston and Oliffe at the 1966 Wreath Laying Ceremony — Photo by courtesy of Jim Field, 2/2

VALE

"NAP" PELGRAVE

(NX45219)

By Jack Griffiths

Ronald Edwin Pelgrave was born at Cook's Hill in 1918. He moved with his parents to New Lambton at a very early age and was to remain a resident of Newcastle all his life.

As a boy, he joined the Boy Scouts and began what was to be a life of service and friendship to so many people. In his youth, his application to sport and his ability to mix with people of his own age started the widening of this ever-growing circle of lifetime friends.

It was during this time that he received the nick-name of "Nap", by which he was to become so affectionately known.

He enlisted in the A.I.F. on the 19th June, 1940, and was drafted to the Recruit Training Battalion at Newcastle Showground on the second day of it coming into being, and it was here that he first became acquainted with some of his firmest army mates. He was with a contingent from Broadmeadow that joined the 2/1 Pioneer Battalion in August and he sailed in the Johan De Witt as a member of B Company in September, 1940.

During our sojourn at Julis, "Nap" was transferred to H.Q. Coy. as a fitter and in conjunction with Ken Newling and "Wagga" Grice was responsible for the excellent way our commercial vehicles were adapted for desert service. After our early desert days in the wake of the 6th Division and the Benghasi Handicap, "Nap", unfortunately, was one of the first members of the unit to be wounded, during the Siege of Tobruk, and was injured during an air-raid by the Luftwaffe in the same action that Driver Gibbs of H.Q. Coy. was killed. He was evacuated by destroyer, but through his courage and determination, he returned to the Battalion whilst it was still in Tobruk during the Siege, and was one of the very few men to do so from any unit.

He remained with the Battalion on its return to Australia and also through-out its campaign in New Guinea, but on its return to the Atherton Tablelands he was transferred to a Field Ambulance Unit and promoted to the rank of Sergeant, and remained with this unit until the end of the War.

After the war, he followed several occupations, namely motor mechanic, locomotive fireman, merchant seaman, and for several years was employed by the Newcastle Abattoirs. His likeable personality could not help but win him many more friends during these years.

His death, on 2nd December, 1966, at the age of 48, after a short illness, brought to a sudden close this life of service and friendship. The esteem in which he was held was clearly evident by the number of lifelong friends who attended his funeral at the Beresfield Crematorium, in which officials of both the Returned Services League and Rats of Tobruk Association took part.

BI-ANNUAL SMOKO, 1966

By GORDON FINLAY

● **SAILOR WITHAM** has made himself available to visit anyone at any time. He also has a car available to pick up anyone on Anzac Day and, I think, drive them around in the march. Phone 665-6454 — 48 Trafalgar Street, Waverley.

● Don Coy. didn't have a lot of strength numerically, but made up for it in quality and noise. **MAX HERRON, BILL HODGES, PETER O'BRIEN** and **BERT MOORE** made up their table and they always seemed to have visitors.

● **JOHN DOWD, JACK McKNIGHT, MICK EGAN, GEORGE PARICOS** and **JOHN HODGES** made up a very talkative group from the 2/2. Something seems to tell me that John Hodges knew more about the 2/17 Battalion, though. Never mind, John, you know that you are very welcome at any of our smokos, so keep coming.

John Dowd brought news of Bill Hood, of Casino, known to both 2/1 and 2/2, also Ted Reece, of Casino. He ran into Alex Lowe, of 18 Pltn., Don Coy., 2/2, at Brunswick Heads, who has always a big welcome for any of the old mob who are up that way at any time.

● John Dowd also mentioned that Kevin Raywood, D Coy., 2/2, is a member of the Lismore Workers' Club and works at R. H. Gordon, Auctioneers. John states he was the father of "twins first up". What about dropping us a line Kevin — perhaps you may be able to assist on this proposed Country Smoko. John sends his regards to you, Kevin.

● Probably the strongest group present was made up of former "C" Coy., 2/1. Led by "SNOWY" **HEMMINGS**, there was **SAMMY LEWIS, JACK RUSSELL, ALEX ABERCROMBIE, BILL CHISHOLM, "STUMPY" CURTIN, TED DOLLING** and "PORKY" **GRAHAM**. And was **CASEY BROWN** ever "C" Coy.

● What a pity somebody can't remember who was the better half back, **CLIFFORD** or **HEMMINGS**, then we would be able to enjoy ourselves at these get-togethers, instead of trying to arbitrate in their arguments.

● **JACK HYDE, MICK DODSON, "NIP" KEARSLEY, DON SLATER** and **GORDON FINLAY**, of "A" Coy., with **GORDON WALSH** and **JACK WESTWOOD**, of "B" Coy., also had a get-together.

"NAP" PELGRAVE Cont.

His wide grin, his effervescent humour and his helping hand will be sadly missed by many and those of us who were fortunate to share the kinship of "Nap" are much richer for having had that experience.

To his wife and relatives, the Association offers our deepest and understanding sympathy and we trust that they may find some comfort in knowing that we, too, share their loss.

"We Will Remember Him"

● The usual hard-working committee were at it, of course. "**BLUEY**" **WALSH, BOB MCGREGOR, BOBBY LAKE** and **DOUG. SHEARSTON** never let up.

● **JACK HYDE** and **GEORGE PARICOS** found out that it is still a small world we live in. After going half way round the world together, they now find themselves, after 25 years, working for the same group of companies. I didn't manage to find out which one.

● **JACK BROWN (R.A.P.)** and "**NOBBY**" **SMITH (Bandsman)**—why the difference in designation I don't know, but both appeared to enjoy themselves very much.

● It was good to see "**NIP**" **KEARSLEY** early for a change. It gave us all time to have a few words with him. He brought news of Henry Nicholls, who has to go back into the army for another spell.

● **DON SLATER** had news from John Morahan recently, who sends his regards to all his old friends.

● **GORDON WALSH** was there in all his old glory. He and Westwood didn't stop talking (except to lubricate) all night. It only wanted Cyril Morahan and they would have still been there.

● **TED SKOYLES** came up from Wol-longong again. Why not try and bring a few with you next time, Ted. Straub Dale, Snow Thirlby and Nobby Cooper are all in your locality.

● The usual dozen were put up again. This was won by **JACK RUSSELL**, of C Coy. and donated to the paper wrappers. Thanks, Jack. Now that Bob McGregor doesn't drink, it goes round a bit.

● Had a visit from **JACK BERTRAM**, all the way from Newcastle. He brought along his twin brother, Jim, Navy man.

● **BRUCE MITCHELL ("C" Coy. 2/1)** came to the Smoko from Greta and was a passenger in the car with Jim Bertram.

● Had quite a yarn with **PAT NOONAN**, the good old Sig. Sgt., who was really enjoying his drink with Ted Skoyles and Doug Shearston.

● **TOM McGUINNES** mentioned that he met Des Fields while visiting Gundagai recently. Tiny is a foreman on the Council and looking very prosperous, too.

A big thank you from everyone to **DOREEN**, the lass dishing out the beer. (She says if we put her name in our paper she will give better and better service.)

● **JEFF WILLIAMS ("D" Coy. O.C.)** rang the Secretary to offer his apologies for non-attendance, but he is committed to duty each Friday night. He sent his regards to all Pioneers. According to the Treasurer, you are up to date, Jeff. Many thanks for your kind remarks.

2/2 NEWS...

By DON LAWSON

Quite a large number of 2/2, along with their wives, attended the Canterbury Methodist Church for the Remembrance Service held last November, conducted as usual by the Rev. Stan Claughton. This service is becoming more popular because of the friendly atmosphere prevailing. The Padre has a way of getting his message across to his congregation, which gives the day special significance to all. This year, as last, there were several 2/1 in attendance, including Mr. and Mrs. Max Herron, Mr. and Mrs. Doug Shearston and Mr. and Mrs. H. Montague.

After the service, a supper was provided by the ladies of the church in the Church Hall, where the guests were warmly welcomed. In reply, Allan McInnes, Max Herron and Basil Welch responded on behalf of the guests. Cappy Christian entertained with a typical "Cappy speech" which finished the night with everyone in a happy frame of mind. I do hope more of our boys can manage to come along next year. They will have a night to remember as — We Will Remember Them.

Do not forget to come along to our re-union after the march on Anzac Day. Same place as last year — Literary Institute, Clovelly Road, Randwick, and everyone is guaranteed a good day for a nominal charge.

Not much response to the appeal for news from 2/2 members. How about letting us hear from you? Address your mail to Don Lawson, 35 Clifton Road, Clovelly, 665-4357, or to our Secretary, Max Herron, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills. So long and the best to all and families.

LAST POST

We are indebted to our Welfare Officer, Jack Collis, for sending along the following information regarding the passing away of our fellow members.

NX52224, Cecil Wilson, 2/1
 NX53881, Capt. Joe Doyle, 2/1
 NX18391, Pte. N. V. Murray, 2/1
 NX22811, Pte. E. Swadling, 2/1
 NX29665, Pte. W. Simpson, 2/1
 NX72497, Pte. O. N. Phillips, 2/2
 VX18389, Cpl. G. Thorne, 2/2
 VX23088, Pte. W. A. Dean, 2/2
 NX88326, Cpl. A. E. Kelly, 2/2
 NX1407, Pte. G. A. Moxham, 2/2

To relatives of the above, we extend our deepest sympathy.

THANKS TO L-F-W

A friend of mine who happened to be going to Dorrigo said he would convey my regards to a certain butcher in the above town. When my friend asked the butcher if he was acquainted with a certain "Wally (Desso) Page", the butcher promptly remarked "Don't tell me that b — is still alive?"

My regards to you, too, Fred.

AN UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTER

By S. G. CLAUGHTON, 2/2 Padre

As Pioneers, let us pay tribute to the memory of an unforgettable comrade, Padre James Benedict Lynch. On a number of occasions, he visited the Two bar Twos, and in the writer's diary, specific references are made to his presence at Port Moresby and the never-to-be-forgotten Gabmatzung, Markham Valley.

It was at Gabmatzung that the winsome, understanding character of this strong yet gentle man shone crystal-clear as he tended to the wounded, the ill and the dying. "Jimmy" Lynch, as he was respectfully called, appeared not to be concerned with labels and in him was reflected the term we daily use in Christian circles today: "Ecumenity".

It was, and is, men like Padre Lynch who lift religious profession and affiliation to Christlike levels. The world is a better place because they interpret Christianity at the grass roots of life and demonstrate its relevancy in every situation.

His ministrations at Gabmatzung, his encouragement and buoyant optimism are fragrant memories. He had the happy knack of saying the right word at the right moment.

He and Padre "Don" Redding were inseparable and as Senior Chaplains in the field were brothers to all. As far as this writer is concerned, their friendship and practical assistance made the rough places smooth.

The years have gone and civilian life has meant for most of us different tracks, but consciously and unconsciously these men moulded our attitudes — and for the better!

Monsignor J. B. Lynch died at the age of 63 years at his Presbytery, Hendra (Queensland), in November, 1966. He was born at Colmcille, County Longford, Ireland, the eighth child in a family of ten children of the late Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lynch.

Well can we repeat:

"Let the fine memories,
 Thy soul with limpid mirroring repeat."

THE REVEREND

GORDON STUART WATTS

I had the distinct pleasure of meeting up with our Padre once again, although it's well over twenty years since I've seen him. I had no trouble in recognising him, he looks very well and he said he feels well and thrives on work. The Padre's work at the moment is lecturing in Adult Education of Philosophy and Comparative Religion. He does his Adult Education Lecturing at Sydney University and Tamworth University.

The Padre told me to tell the boys in the Tamworth district that they are welcome to drop in and say "hello." He works mostly at nights and weekends, so if anyone wants to see him, call at the Universities of Sydney and Tamworth or Room 7, First Floor, 296 Pitt Street, Sydney.

— Wal Page

2/2 ANNUAL CHURCH SERVICE

By H. MONTAGUE, 2/1

The 2/2 Annual Remembrance Service was held on 13th November at the Canterbury Methodist Church, and was conducted by the Rev. Stan Claughton, former padre of the 2/2.

There was quite a good gathering of Pioneers and their wives and families at this memorial service, which was indeed, very inspiring.

Jim Field and Don Lawson, from the 2/2, assisted the Padre in his readings and the choir rendered some lovely hymns, followed by two splendid solos.

In his address, Stan spoke at length on the comradeship which was prevalent among the Pioneers and why we will always honour the cherished memories of those who paid the Supreme Sacrifice. It was a great pleasure to hear him speak so understandingly, and he left no doubt in anyone's mind of what we owe them.

After the service, the Padre spoke personally to all present and, on behalf of the Guild, invited everyone to the adjoining hall where an enjoyable supper awaited us. Our hosts then entertained us with some fine singing, which was indeed a pleasure to listen to.

Later, Mrs. Claughton, who is President of the Ladies' Guild, officially welcomed us and said how pleased they were to have the 2/2 and 2/1 Pioneers with them on this memorable occasion. Several speakers from the Church also endorsed Mrs. Claughton's remarks.

In reply, our President, Allan McInnes, thanked Rev. Claughton and his band of helpers for giving us such a pleasant evening. He was supported by Don Lawson, of the 2/2. The Association's Secretary, Max Herron, on behalf of the 2/1, added his praise and joined in thanking everybody for making such a night possible.

All Pioneers joined in three hearty cheers for the hospitality and welcome accorded them by the church officials, Ladies' Guild and parishioners. This was followed by the Benediction.

HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION

We request next of kin of a member to notify Jack Collis, our Welfare Officer immediately a Pioneer enters hospital, or even before, if possible.

Contact by letter or phone Jack Collis, 22 Fisher Street, Auburn, N.S.W. Telephone 648-1509.

"PIONEER NEWS"

The "Pioneer News" is posted on the 1st April, 1st July and 1st November each year.

Copy must be lodged with the Secretary six weeks prior to these dates.

Letters must contain — Surname, christian name, nick-name (if any), Platoon, Company, Battalion and present address. When forwarding your new address, please include your old address.

The cost is 50 cents per annum.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The following is a letter from Bob Burnside, and although we know Bob is not at all concerned about the medal concerned, we thought we would publish such a humorous article. The second letter is a reply from the Army.

29 Woronora Crescent,
Como West, N.S.W.,
7/11/1965.

The Officer-in-Charge,
Army Records Section,
Australian Military Forces,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Victoria.

Dear Sir,

I am not usually the complaining type, but since the end of the 2nd World War I have gradually come to the conclusion that I have been a victim of two clerical errors made by the dear old Army, in which I served with no distinction for five and a half years.

They are as follows:

1. When I applied for my Campaign Stars, Defence and War Medals, somebody made a blue and didn't issue me with a Defence Medal. I only wear the things once a year on Anzac Day and every year someone says, "Why didn't they issue you with a Defence Medal?" Each year I have replied, "I don't know. I think it was because I was wounded in Tobruk and was evacuated home on the 'Mandunda' direct from Egypt and didn't come back to Palestine with you blokes."

To which the experts reply, "Boloney! You must be entitled to the Defence Medal. You sailed in September, 1940, served for a couple of months in Palestine, served for six months in the Western Desert, was wounded and evacuated home and subsequently served for a year in the Philippines. You must be eligible!"

One bloke even got so worked up about it that he dragged up, out of an old tin trunk or something, a "Summary of Conditions of Award and Notes for Guidance in the Wearing of Campaign Stars, Defence and War Medals", and pointed triumphantly to the bit that says: "Service in eligible categories brought to an end before the qualifying period has been completed either by death due to enemy action on duty or by injuries inflicted by enemy action will qualify."

I would say that being walloped by hefty fragments of a German trench mortar would come under the category of "injuries inflicted by enemy action", so please send me my Defence Medal and make my mates happy.

2. Whilst being discharged in Sydney on 18/12/45, a fresh-faced conscript, who was taking down the details for my Discharge Certificate (No. 281407), said, "Any marks or scars?" I told him I had various gunshot wounds, but he seemed to think that, because these were incurred during war service, they didn't count. I didn't argue, although at the time I thought it was a bit silly. Consequently, my Discharge shows: "Marks or Scars . . . Nil".

It has occurred to me, during the ensuing years, that this doesn't seem quite right. For instance, in years to come, after I have died (as we all must), if my sons are discussing their old man and mention to a friend that he was a soldier and was severely wounded and somebody produces my Discharge Certificate, it would be rather embarrassing if it showed: "Marks or Scars . . . Nil".

I would be pleased if you could advise me how this error could be rectified so that my descendants can be saved from embarrassment.

A copy, or a fresh Certificate of Discharge, showing: "G.S.W's. left arm, right hand, chest, and head" may fill the bill.

Yours faithfully,

R. D. BURNSIDE.

Army No.: NX19688.

Date of Enlistment: 3/6/1940 (2/1 Aust. Pioneer Battalion).

Date of Discharge: 18/12/1945 (Central Bureau, Aust. Int. Corps).

Telephone 94-0101
Ext. 6389.

NX19688

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES
Central Army Records Office,
"A" Block,
Albert Park Barracks,
Melbourne, SC3.

Quote in reply
EL/026250

Dear Sir,

Your letter of 7th November, 1965, is acknowledged.

To qualify for the issue of the Defence Medal by virtue of service in the Middle East, it was necessary to have served for a period of at least One hundred and Eighty (180) days in Palestine or Syria between 3rd September, 1939, and 2nd September, 1945.

Examination of your record of service shows that you embarked for service in the Middle East on 30th September, 1940, and proceeded, on disembarkation in to Palestine. You moved from Palestine to Egypt on 4th January, 1941.

This service gives you a total period of Ninety-seven (97) days qualifying service towards the issue of the Defence Medal.

To qualify for the award for a period less than One Hundred and Eighty (180) days service, it was necessary for that service to be brought to an end by death or injury due to enemy action while serving in the qualifying area for the Defence Medal.

When you were wounded in action, you were at Tobruk. Tobruk was a qualifying area for the 1939/45 Star and Africa Star, but not for the Defence Medal.

Service in the South West Pacific Area, including the Philippines, between

Chaplain's Office
Repatriation General Hospital
CONCORD, 7th Nov., 1966

Dear Mr. Herron,

As you may know, we have two large annual services at the G.G.H. Chapel, Concord. The Australian Army Nurses Association and the Annual Commemoration Service for the A.A.M.W.A.S. The latter service was held yesterday and at a discussion amongst the Padres afterwards, the question of "laying up" Regimental Colours in the Hospital Chapel was raised.

You probably know that I was for nearly three years the Adjutant of the Pioneer Training Battalion, and, if you have not already done anything about it, I thought it might be very appropriate if the Pioneer Colours were "laid up" in the R.G.H. Chapel.

This matter would, of course, have to be discussed with the Medical Superintendent, but I would like to get the feeling of the members of your Association before I mention it to him. Most Pioneers come to the hospital at some time or another and it seems to me that the hospital chapel would be the most appropriate place for the colours.

I shall be glad to hear what you think of the idea.

With kind regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Donald A. Clarke,
Methodist Chaplain,
R.G.H.

ASSISTANCE REQUIRED

Herb Wilson, NX46675, of H.Q. Coy. 2/1 and later in D. Coy. seeks assistance in his claim for a pension.

He was in a Bren gun carrier at Bardia when it turned over and injured him, but, unfortunately, records are not available to substantiate his claim.

If anyone can help, would you please write direct to Herb Wilson at 54 Ingall Street, Mayfield via Newcastle.

8th December, 1941, and 2nd September, 1945, was qualifying service for the Pacific Star, but not the Defence Medal.

Accordingly you did not qualify for the issue of the Defence Medal.

In regard to the showing on your Certificate of Discharge, the marks and scars sustained by you when you were wounded, it is advised that it is not possible to make alterations or additions to Certificates of Discharge issued in 1945, unless the information is specifically recorded on your record of service.

The fact that you were wounded in both arms, shoulders and chest is recorded, but any scars left by such wounds are not recorded.

Yours faithfully,

HUGH WILSON (Col. Re.), Colonel,
OIC Central Army Records Office.

Mr. R. D. Burnside,
29 Woronora Crescent,
Como West, N.S.W.

If They Give the Vietnam Troops A Gong, Let's See It's Worth It!

By JOHN HARNETTY, "C" COY., 2nd/1st.

A Commonwealth decision to grant a special medal to Diggers serving in Vietnam has met with general approval, but all old servicemen hope the medal will be worth winning.

General comment is, that since the Vietnam Force was an all-Australian affair, it is only reasonable that an all-Australian award should mark service in it.

Here are a few comments heard from Pioneers — and others.

"Let's not have one of those tinny-looking things that troops would be ashamed to wear", remarked one member with service in two wars.

"I think there was a suggestion that the Vietnam boys should be given the British General Service Medal with a Vietnam clasp, the same as was given to the chaps in Borneo and Malaya.

"But can't we have something a bit different? There's nothing wrong with the G.S.M., but it's a British Commonwealth award, and there's nothing distinctly Australian about it."

He said it had one merit — it was made of silver, and was of more careful design than the campaign stars and service medals of World War II.

Another bystander commented, "I think Winston Churchill once said something about not cheapening the currency of British medals, but you just have to take a look at the stuff they handed out for World War II to see why a lot of blokes don't bother about claiming the medals, let alone wearing them.

"We have an Australian Service Medal for World War II. It's not silver, or even copper, which wouldn't make a bad-looking gong. It's cupro-nickel, with a nice tinny look.

"There's the Royal head on one side, and the Australian coat of arms on the other.

"Take away the thing you hang the ribbon on, give it a milled edge, and it looks just like a brummy two-bob!"

Another view was that the campaign stars for World War II, with the name of the campaign on one side of the six-pointed star, and nothing on the reverse but the soldier's number and name, were certainly not the best examples of the medal-maker's art.

"And look at the metal. Some sort of mixture that won't take polish, and a funny reddish colour. The only blokes satisfied with them are those who had them gilded or brass-plated.

"If they're going to give the Vietnam Digs. a medal, and they don't feel like copying the English G.S.M., it won't break them to give at least a silver gong, with the Queen's head on one side and a decent sort of Australian design on the other, with the word 'Vietnam' on a clasp or a scroll at the top", said another critic.

Other old hands said a red, white and blue ribbon, with a gold stripe denoting

wattle, might be a good idea. There were objections that this would be involving too many colours.

"Colours?" said a Pacific veteran. "How about the ribbon on the Pacific Star? It's a baby-frightener. There are more colours in that than a four-day-old black eye!"

It was suggested that green and gold, the generally accepted Australian colours, would be good. However, these are the standard colours for efficiency decorations.

Another complaint was voiced about the ribbon of the Australia Service Medal. It was pointed out by one old soldier who had obviously read his handbook on honours and awards that the A.S.M.'s ribbon had a central stripe of khaki colour, flanked by navy blue, red, red again, and light blue.

"I understand the light blue is supposed to represent the R.A.A.F. But since the R.A.A.F. wears dark blue, almost navy blue, why didn't they have two blues of the same colour?"

"That grey-blue is the colour of the Royal Air Force and the New Zealand Air Force, and perhaps the Royal Canadian Air Force.

"They could have been a bit consistent about their colours."

Diggers of World War I said the French seemed to have the best ideas about medal and ribbon design.

"I've made a bit of a study of these things in books and museums", said one.

"French ribbons seem to be a bit broader than ours, almost always of one colour divided by narrow, vertical stripes of another. They look simple and soldierly, and their medal designers follow the same idea.

"Any bloke who's ever seen a Croix de Guerre would know what I mean — and lots of Australians have won them in two wars.

"In Syria, lots of our blokes picked up French medals for souvenirs, and their Medal for General Foreign Service was as good as anything I've seen. It was like a cross, with swords, and a sculptured head in the middle. It looked like something worth wearing."

There was some pleasure that, after 51 years, Gallipoli Diggers were to get a commemorative medallion, with perhaps a buttonhole miniature.

"It's about time, too!" was one growl. "They designed a Gallipoli gong years ago, and made 50,000 yards of ribbon for it. But nobody ever got it, because the British objected. It was the same with the proposal for a Tobruk clasp to the Africa Star. It never came to anything.

6th DIVISION REUNION

Saturday, 18th February, 1967.

At 5.00 p.m., about 350 men of the 6th Divy moved off from Phillip Street to the Cenotaph, where wreaths were laid. The march continued along George Street to Margaret Street, where the march finished at Pfahlerts Hotel.

After some refreshment, all made their way to Randwick and joined others who went direct to the Racecourse.

In the Paddock Enclosure, about 400 listened to the President of the 6th Divy Association, General Dougherty, welcome all to the reunion. Sir General Jack Stevens, now the Patron of the Association, was the other speaker.

All then sat down to a very good barbecue and liquid refreshments and talked over times gone by.

During the night, a film was shown of the Australians in the Second World War from the first to the last actions.

When the evening came to a close after 10.00 p.m., a very good time was voted by all.

2/1 Pioneers were well represented in the persons of Mick Dodon, Austin Ronan and Charles Vickers.

Jack Hamilton, 2/1, living at Kiama, wishes to be remembered to Snowy Coote and Fred Davenport and all other mates of "A" Company.

Fred Dunleavy, 2/1, now residing at Tuggerah Lakes, wishes to be remembered to all. Fred mentions that Rick Johnson, 2/1, also lives in that locality.

John Morahan, 2/1, after these long years, has taken the plunge, no longer the boss. Good luck to you and your wife, John.

Mick Dodson, 2/1

WELFARE REPORT

Members visited during the last few months have been Jim Howard and Fred Loveless, both in Concord for a spell, but now discharged. Joe Hickey, our old friend from Newcastle, was also in for several weeks, but now discharged and back home again. Taffy Lawrence was in for a painful operation, but like the Taffy of old was still cracking a smile. Hugh Green was not feeling the best and was back in Concord for several weeks.

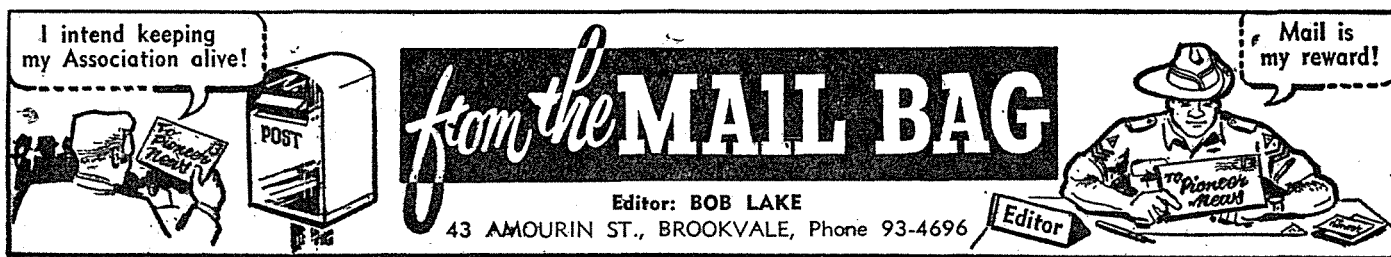
All members are now discharged and we hope they are all feeling OK.

Don't forget, if you hear of anyone in hospital, please give me a ring.

JACK COLLIS,
Welfare Officer
648-1509

VIETNAM MEDAL — Contd.

"Let's hope our boys get their Vietnam medal — and a good one for good service. If a bunch of long-haired, screaming deadbeats like the Beatles can qualify for Royal awards, is there any objection to a fighting soldier getting something that he can wear with a bit of pride?"



2/2 NEWS

With the success of response from members of the 2/2 by placing their contributions first in the column, I think that we should continue to do same again this issue. We received some six or seven letters from these boys this period, which is almost double what we usually receive, so keep up the good work, lads, we will continue to make something of it.

JACK ALLISON ("D" Coy. 2/2), and now a resident of the Sydney suburb of Eastwood, a short letter, including subs. for "News" and quotes a pretty poor ex-Pioneer, but supports his lack of effort to being a family man on too big a scale.

FRANK HEPBURN ("C" Coy. 2/2), and now at Bankstown. A very short note from Frank, three lines. I am afraid that I cannot make much news from this effort. However, Frank sends his subs., and his best wishes to all the boys.

DON MURRAY (H.Q. 2/2), and now a resident of Tinonee, near Taree, sends a two-page letter, although the circumstances of his news were of the unhappy variety. It was with regret that he and Bernie Daly had attended the funeral of one of their close friends, Norm Phillips, of Laurieton, ex 2/2 H.Q. Coy. Both Don and Bernie acted as pall bearers at the occasion, which was attended by quite a large gathering of friends, relatives and R.S.L. members, which expressed the esteem in which the late member was held in the district. After the funeral, Don and Bernie were pleased to meet up with "Butch" Phillips, and they have made a date to get together on Anzac Day at the reunion. Subs. are now in the hands of the Treasurer, Don, doing good?

WALLY BAIRD ("C" Coy. 2/2), and now at "Bogibel" Station, Collarenebri, a newsy letter of the doings up around the North-West. Wally enjoys reading the "News" and keeping in touch with the old blokes of the fortys. Alec Bye is one of his closest mates and he resides about sixty miles away. He also has a good block of land, and with his wife, attended the Diggers' Ball, which, despite the drought, was a huge success. However, Wally failed to make the grade — down with a bout of flu. Wally passes on some local weather information, with regard to the dry spell — rainfall on a normal average of some 18 inches per year, and over the past two years only about 21 inches, so, as he says, stock losses were considerable and cost of hand feed more so. Wally had quite a day when last in Sydney, where he tangled with Alan McInnes and Dick

Wakely at the Combined Services Club. He also mentions that the local Sub-Branch is quite strong and that Legacy benefits by some \$200 after the Anzac Day March and the "game" that goes on after. Thanks again, Wally, for a newsy note, also the donation, and for the good wishes to the Association.

W. J. McFADDEN (2/2), and now at Neutral Bay, a note of the same nature as Frank Hepburn — one line, enclosing a donation. Thanks a lot, but how about a little news, some of the boys would like to know how you are progressing in civvie life.

BOB EVANS (2/2), and worthy secretary of the "Pioneer Despatch", Victoria, writes a letter enclosing a sub. for himself and one for Victor Clark, of Ringwood, East Victoria. Bob sends best wishes and a few pars from the Southern State that may be of interest to any of the boys in N.S.W. that were with the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion at any time. For the benefit of any Pioneer that may be in Melbourne for the Anzac Day Commemoration, the Annual Reunion is to be held at R.A.A.S.C. Depot, Sturt Street, South Melbourne, on Anzac Eve.

CLAUDE BARKER, Murrays Bay, Auckland, New Zealand, visited Sydney and Melbourne in 1966 and spent some happy hours with Colonel Williams, and hunting up army mates.

FRANK O'KEEFE, Glenelg, South Australia, made a visit to Melbourne at Christmas, one of the best festive seasons he has ever put in. Good Coy. and good beer!!

PATRICK O'ROURKE, who spent some time on the Burma Railway line, is now retired and settled in Swan Reach, South Australia.

JOE HANCY, Welfare Officer, had another successful year in 1966, breaking the record and raising a substantial sum for welfare.

FRANK EDMONDSON, Horsham, Victoria, spent some time in hospital at Melbourne on the dangerously ill list, but is now making good progress.

SAM WRIGHT and **JACK GUY** have both recently disposed of their properties and now gone to live in Benalla, Victoria.

FRANK CHEAL, still looking very healthy, may be found sitting behind a desk at the Commonwealth Bank, Collins Street, Melbourne.

DES EVANS has recently been elected to the Maidstone Council. Members of the Association wish him all the very best.

BRUCE STEVENSON, very dapper and manager of the renowned "Fletcher Jones Trousers" firm in Melbourne.

VALE

As one by one the dry leaves fall,
So one by one, to each of us,
Must come the last Roll Call.

George Bredin, 6th August, 1966; Geof Thorn, 8th August, 1966; Major R. S. (Happy) Houston, 8th August, 1966; H. Smith, September, 1966; S. Cooper, 15th October, 1966; T. Gaul, 12th October, 1966; H. M. Juers, 6th November, 1966; K. Hutchinson, 4th December, 1966; D. Adams (result of accident), 10th January, 1967; Bill Barrett, Beralla, suddenly. No date.

2/1 NEWS

KEN STUART (2/1 H.Q.), Corporal, Sgt., and later Lieutenant, now a resident of Turramurra and an employee in a very good position with Qantas, writes that the firm has seen fit to post him to San Francisco for a period of two years. Well, Ken, all the boys of the Battalion wish you the very best, and all the success possible. We presume that the wife will be going to America with you and we can assure you that the "News" will be posted as directed and that our little rag will be so looked-forward-to in the land of the Yankees.

JIM FAIRLIE ("D" Coy. 2/1), of Bulli, N.S.W., sends his usual two lines, enclosing his subscription and nought else. This makes a very newsy letter so much the opposite, Jim. How about trying for a little information, such as blokes you see, family life, or just news.

BRUCE MITCHELL ("C" Coy. 2/1), and still residing at Greta, N.S.W., tells of a terrific night at the Bi-Annual Smoko with the mob at the Castlereagh Hotel, and of a small screening afterwards, at the residence of Max Herron, with a few of the boys, of the Rats of Tobruk film at the Canberra Reunion. Many thanks, Bruce, for your willingness to show these films. All that were present enjoyed same immensely, and to the Newcastle "Rota" Team, we say thank you for the effort credited by your members, and the photographer, Bruce Mitchell. I shall digress a little here, just to remark on the visit of Wally Page and Coy., who visited Newcastle just lately, and of the wonderful reception they received from the boys, Glido Griffiths, Sid Jopson and the supporters that they rounded up.

OSSIE THURLING (2/1 H.Q.), now at New Lambton, encloses a subscription and a request for Pioneers in the Newcastle area. Well, Ossie, there are many of them, but I would suggest that your best method would be to contact Jack Bertram, 247 Lawson Street, Hamilton, who would be only too pleased to

give you all the assistance you need. Jack is our country representative for the Newcastle district.

BILL MACE (2/1 "B" Coy.), now up in the citrus area of Gosford, sends his usual sub. and short note. Bill is now a Toll Road collector at Hawkesbury, and appears to be quite pleased with the uniform. He claims that these are now fitted, and not like some we were more used to, referring of course to those that were just draped. However, Bill, those old draped rags did get us all a lot of fun, a lot of mates and a whole wealth of experience, don't you agree.

CEC SNUDDEN (2/1 "D" Coy.), now of the copper town of Cobar. Not a lot of news from Cobar — perhaps next mail could see some marked improvement in this respect.

WAL SMITH (2/1 "B" Coy.), of Sans Souci. A postal note for subscriptions and the sad news that Mrs. Wal passed away last year. As we can readily understand, things would be a bit disrupted, but we sincerely hope that you have now been able to settle down again and that time has helped to soften the sorrow to which you have been subjected.

RON CLARK (2/1 "D" Coy.), and now with a firm foothold in Kingsford, sends along a four-line letter enclosing subs. to the paper and best wishes to all Pioneers.

DR. GEOFF DYNON, our worthy Doctor of New Guinea and Borneo, writes a short penscript from Strathfield and claims he is grateful for the appeal by our treasurer, who, as Geoff says, "Made him remember", and he enjoys his little gaze through the paper. Thank you, Geoff, we know that a doctor's life is not all it's cracked up to be. However, we wish you well, and, as I said before, should you feel able to make it to a turnout sometime, we will always supply the ice cream (of which I know you are partial to) and some lemonade, with which to wash it down. Don't blame anyone else for this, Geoff, "I wrote it." For your information, since going back to the printing trade I see quite a bit of Brother Frank, as we print the North Sydney Club Paper — Bob Lake.

ALLAN SHAW (2/1), stretcher bearer and bandsman, sends along a donation of subs. and the news that he is now back on his feet after a serious operation. Allan now resides at Mortdale and makes special mention of George Levy and the Seven Platoon, A. Coy. boys, and also the boys from Newcastle, where he joined the Army. Allan has a request for old photos of the original band, so if any of you fellows have a copy of the original band, Allan would appreciate the loan of same. He guarantees return of same in perfect condition — makes a special appeal to Ivor Garmon. "How about this, Ivor?"

DOUG. HARRIS, Deniliquin, a short note thanking Sec. for the copy of the paper, but remarks that he was not a member of the Association, but had contact with the 2/2 in Java, both on the "Orcades" and later on in the jungle on the railway. However, Doug knows a couple of Pioneers around Deniliquin, and he passes the paper around to them.

TOM GODDEN (2/1), and a resident of Epping, pens a short note wishing all the success and good wishes to the Association and its members, and remarks that the cheque enclosed would help to swell the coffers of the newspaper bank account. Thanks, Tom, the cheque is now doing yeoman duty.

TOM AMEY, of Mullaby, enclosed the usual cheque and a few lines informing us that he is trying to sell his farming and grazing property, and, if successful, hopes to move to the city to reside. Both Tom and his wife agree that they have had enough of farming, so we in turn wish you every success with the sale, and hope that you will be happy as city dwellers, once you get settled in.

REG. BUTTSWORTH (2/1 "D" Coy.) sends along a short letter, and informs us that they have moved into their war service home at Mt. Druitt. Both Reg and his wife are as pleased as punch to be there, and, as he says, it is really something to be out with the cleaner climate, after being in Chippendale all their lives. Well, Reg, we in turn wish you both well and sincerely hope that you will both be very happy in your new home.

HUGH GREEN (2/1 "C" Coy), and now a habitant of Parramatta, sends along his usual note, of the goings on of Pioneers up around the "Parra" district. Hugh has not been as active on this occasion, and remarks that he has not seen much of the local boys, namely Sid Sweeney, Len Wayman, Jack Price, Snowy Lloyd or Frank Pearl. However, I suppose that by the time this paper goes to press, this matter will have been attended to. Hugh has also visited Euabalong, where he met Scotty McKie, and they passed the time of day together. Hugh, as usual, sends his best regards to all, with a special mention to old 15 Platoon. He has also had his usual spell in Concord, but I suppose Concord would be lost without him on his visit every now and again. Good luck, Hugh, and thank you for all the nice things you say about the Committee.

BOB GRATTON (2/1 "D" Coy.) sends along a note commenting on the effect that he has changed his address, and is now working on the P.M.G. Department at Goulburn. With regard to your request as to the paper, Bob, I do not know whether you have missed an issue or not, but you must remember that the "News" is printed three times a year — April, July and November — and although this may seem to be a long time between editions, we find that any more issues would be beyond our capabilities.

With regard to your suggestion for the family day out, this has been discussed by the Committee, and any result from the discussion will be published, as usual, in the "News". Bob sends his regards to all the old mob, with a special mention for Bob McGregor and Bluey Walsh.

PETER CRAIG (2/1), of Mosman, and a committee man when he is not away in the country, sends along a letter apologising for his lack of attendance at Committees, but Peter is away again with the wool classing and at time of

writing was at Bombala. Thank you for the letter, Peter; however, we all realise that the job of work has to be done and we know that your attendance is tops whenever you are at home. Looking forward to seeing you again in the early future.

JOE HICKEY (2/1 "C" Coy.), and now one of the Newcastle stalwarts, sends along the information that he has been in Concord again. Jack Collis has been in attendance to see Joe on a couple of occasions, and, of course, anyone else that may have been out there at that time. However, Joe, we all hope that you are back to your normal self again by now and still able to sit up and take a little nourishment. One good thing about your group at Newcastle, they are always on hand if and when any of you get crook.

While on the Newcastle district, we have also a letter from the one and only Peter (Dick) Seddon, (2/1, B. Coy), and he has excelled himself with three pages. Always one to keep up with the news, and to keep us posted with same, he passes on the information of Sid Jopson being back in Newcastle with a roving commission with the bank of N.S.W. Dick mentions a reunion with Sid, Jack "Glido" Griffiths, Fred Wheaton and the wives on a Saturday night. Dinner and drinks at Tatt's. Club on the Saturday night, and then New Lambton R.S.L. on Sunday (no wives) and about 12 schooners later and many miles of travel through the Western Desert, the party had to call time. As usual, it was a good day, but Monday was not so good and a terribly long day. Well, Dick, thanks for all the news, it's good to hear from you and like yourself, we are hoping to see you on Anzac Day with perhaps quite a few of the Newcastle mob.

TOM HUGO (2/1 "D" Coy.), now with their own little piece of dirt out at 58 Sherwood Street, Revesby. Glad to receive your letter, Margaret, on behalf of Tom, and your very generous donation. I can assure you that we can always derive some news from your letters, and I hope that you do not mind my giving them some reference. Tom has been out of hospital some two years now. He is, as you have been informed in earlier papers, confined to a chair, but his wife tells us that he can do a little weeding from his chair, and can enjoy a glass of beer with friends when they call in. That is the CATCH-LINE, all you Don Coy. blokes. There must be some of you that are around Revesby some time or other, and I feel sure that you would be made more than welcome by Tom and Margaret for a half-hour or so. **DON'T FORGET** ("and take a bottle with you").

SID ABERCROMBIE (2/1 "A" Coy.), and now over in Western Australia, sends along a sub. towards the paper, claims he is no letter writer, but assures that with the continual supply of the "News", he keeps in the happy frame of mind with the blokes he made contact with in the unit. Sid claims he has always promised himself a quick trip to one Anzac Day, so we wish you well, Sid, and can assure you that the "bad penny" as you term yourself will be given a royal welcome.

PHIL CRAMSIE (B.H.Q. 2/1), and now at Eagle Junction, Brisbane, sends along the usual donation and suggests that the Treasurer's little job about subs. should be made an annual piece of literature in our paper. So much for Phil's good thoughts and his appreciation of the efforts of the committee and the success of the paper, but we have quite a report on what a grand member to the Association that Phil has been. While in Brisbane, Phil called on the wife of Jack Curry (B Coy., 2/1), who passed away in April, 1966. Phil hopped on the waggon and helped Mrs Curry acquire the information necessary to have this man's health recognised as due to war service. With the information received from our Secretary, Max Herron, and the help of Phil, Mrs. Curry now receives the War Widows' Pension.

Thank you, Phil, I am sure that all the boys appreciate what you have done and we think a very fine gesture. Here is the letter received from Mrs Curry.

"Dear Mr. Herron,

Referring to our previous correspondence, I want you to know that Jack's death has now been accepted as due to war service. I want to thank you sincerely for all you did in assisting me in this regard. I met Colonel Graham when he was in Brisbane in July, and I feel he did a lot toward having it accepted as you predicted. Once again, my grateful thanks.

Yours sincerely,
RITA CURRY"

FRED CALLAWAY, 2/1, now at Kingsgrove and Secretary to our Association prior to Max Herron, sends along a sub., a little information and some photos, all to try to boost to greater heights our little paper. Well, Fred, with regard to the photos, according to the engraver, only very close-up photos of groups are really able to be blown up for newspaper photos and any with any age almost impossible.

The photo of Colonel Brown will be forwarded to Eric Kinkade of the 36th Battalion for reproduction in the Battalion History Book. Fred also suggests that anyone interested in contacting John "Nanna" Hyde could easily do so at the "Grove Inn", Kingsgrove, between 5.15 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. any afternoon on the terrace. Thanks again, Fred, for a very interesting letter and your suggestions could very easily be adopted. Hope to see you on Anzac Day.

CHARLIE WILBY (H.Q. Coy. 2/1), and now at Crooble (where the hell is Crooble?). No doubt, Charles, you get some terrific place names — first the old Pallemallewah and now this. It's good to see an old transport man drop a line, we don't get many letters from the truckies. Charlie has just done a round trip from Moree to Dubbo. Orange, Jenolan Caves, back up the coast to Taree (where he called on Fred Brooks but did not find him home), Port Macquarie and back home. It rained most of the way and he arrived back to the drought area, dust and heat. Charlie had news that Pat "Lonely"

Dwyer was in hospital at Quirindi. Pat is on the land and Charlie heard that he had a good wheat crop. Billy Nicholson, another driver, had spent a few days with Charlie recently, and is still the same old Nicko, although getting a bit long in the tooth and receding hair. I don't know as I ("Lakey") appreciate that crack about hair, but I'll forgive it this time. Thanks for the good word, old Wilby, will certainly look forward to seeing you on Anzac Day. Charlie has three daughters and four boys, one of whom is in the army and off to Vietnam in April. We wish him well.

So I come to the final section of Mailbag, and while extremely pleased with the result of the appeal by the treasurer, I was disappointed that there was not one letter with regard to the country smoko, of which I had already been to Grafton and spoken to Harold Leese and Bruce McNaughton, who went along with the idea. All were in favour that perhaps Lismore or Casino would make a good venue, however, with more than 30 members around Lismore and Casino, apparently no one was interested enough to do a little ground work. As all members probably know, it is impossible for the committee to arrange a smoko in a town where they have no contacts, and contacts were what we sadly lacked on this particular occasion.

With this paper going to press on the 12th March, it would be impossible to do any more on the smoko at this date, and it will have to be stood over until a later period.

Cheers for now,

BOB LAKE
Editor

"THAT'LL BE THE DAY"

If all the seas were made of beer,
And all the land was cheese,
And lobsters grew already cooked,
Like leaves upon a tree;
If banknotes fell instead of rain,
And all the grass was gold,
Summer days were not too hot,
And winter not too cold;
If houses sprouted in the night,
And motor cars cost nil,
And everyone was full of vim,
And no-one ever ill.
If every man had fifteen wives,
And all were dumb,
And diamonds grew like hazel nuts,
And cows provided rum;
If bandits spewed out jackpots
With every single pull,
And Commos' threats turned out be
Just a lot of "bull".

... Ah well, 'twould be a merry world
... but some perverted owl, some pessimistic, bloody fool, would find a cause to grawl.

PUBLICITY OFFICER REPORTS

By WALLY "Desso" PAGE

NO COUNTRY SMOKO THIS YEAR

In the last issue of the "Pioneer News", we put in a loose-leaf insert requesting someone to help organise a Country Smoko. We know that a lot of fellows would like a Smoko on the North Coast, but no-one seems willing to help organise one. The only correspondence we received was one letter saying it was a good idea, but there was no offer to arrange anything.

As you must realise, your Committee can do very little, being so far away, so if you country fellows want a Smoko on the North Coast next year, approach your R.S.L. Club Manager and see what you can come up with. Those who went to the Smoko at Port Macquarie will remember that it was held in the R.S.L. Club, arranged by the Manager and Max Herron. You can do it, too, so let's see some action for next year.

APOLOGIES TO ERIC FACE

The Committee thought you had a very good idea, Eric. We publicised in our last issue that we would like all members with interesting movie film or colour slides to help us put on a family film night, but I'm sorry to say, Eric, we didn't receive one letter, so where there is no interest there is no action. Sorry, Eric.

NEWCASTLE HOSPITALITY

The Pages and McGregors made a trip to Newcastle and were the lucky recipients of some wonderful hospitality handed out by Sid and Myrtle Jopson and Jack and Esmae Griffith. We had a wonderful night at the Gallipoli Legion Club, then adjourned to the Jopson's spacious home at Kotara to drink some more, sing some of the Old Pioneer songs and generally enjoy ourselves. Everything went wonderfully until "banana-nosed" McGregor did poor old Jopson out of two cents and Joppo hasn't paid his house off yet. If he doesn't pay up, Sid, let us know and we will fix him. Jokes aside, thanks to the Jopsons and the Griffiths. We had a good time. We hope your health has improved, Sid. Our regards.

THEY ARE EVERYWHERE

It was reported that during the 7th Division Smoko at Newcastle, the question was asked—"Why is it, that wherever there is an Army turn-out, there are always Pioneers there?" Jack Bertram had the answer. He said that it appears that sometime during the Second World War, the 7th Divy was attached to the Pioneer Battalion. Thanks, Jack, for the information.

PIONEER NEWS

759-5491

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

759-5491

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

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President:

ALLAN McINNES

Vol. 12, No. 2.

1st JULY, 1967

Price: 50c Per Annum



2/1-2/2 ANZAC FUNCTIONS

WE REMEMBERED THEM — By Walter Page, Publicity Officer

Wreath Laying

As we have done on previous Anzac Eves, we again remembered our mates who are no longer with us in body but, I believe, they are in spirit. For a change we had a fine night and there was quite a large number of people watching our short but sincere and solemn ceremony, which is made more so by our usual bugler, Aud. Brazier.

Another point of interest is the fact that last year we had 35 members present, this year we had 51, once again we had the Ladies Auxiliary along, and Mrs. Ronan laid the wreath with Allan McInnes and Mick Dobson.

Here again I would like to thank all those who attended.

After the Ceremony we broke off only to re-assemble at British Ex-Servicemen's Club for our Annual Meeting.

Annual Meeting

This year we had our annual meeting in a new lounge at the British Ex-Servicemen's Club at No. 5 Hamilton Street. We had our own steward and our own waitresses, and we were served while we carried out our meeting.

Our meeting which was very constructive and informative, says a lot for the 38 members who attended, and more so for the way the meeting was conducted by our President, Allan McInnes.

The Annual reports were presented by our Executive Committee who incident-

ally were all reappointed for another year. Allan McInnes as President, Max Herron, Secretary, Doug Shearston, Treasurer, Bob McGregor, Social Secretary, Jack Collis as our Welfare Officer.

All these fellows have done a sterling job in past years and the Association cannot do without them, they are the backbone of the Association and there is nothing I could say here that would express fully what they mean to us and the Association, but I would like to humbly say thanks, gentlemen, for your time and energy given to the Association and on behalf of the members I give you our thanks.

Anzac March

There was an estimated 100,000 spectators to the Anzac Day March this year, which was 25,000 more than last year.

The perfect weather brought out an attendance of 251 2/1 Pioneers and 88 2/2 Pioneers. We were very pleased with this roll-up, and we would like to thank all the members who marched.

Neither unit scored a band close by which tends to upset the step a little.

The 2/1 started off the march with Colonel Jeff Graham and Major Norm Neal as leaders and at the Town Hall they handed over to Capt. Jones. The banner was carried by Wal Page and Bob Lake.

The 2/2nds had Major Harry Huggard and Capt. Allan McInnes as leaders, with Jim Fields and Bob Dixon carrying the Banner.

RATS OF TOBRUK ASSOCIATION SOCIAL

On Saturday, 20th May, the Rats of Tobruk Association invited members of our organisation, with their wives and families, to a social evening at their hall in the Five Dock R.S.L.

The response to this most generous invitation was very good, considering the weather conditions.

On entering the ballroom all were received and welcomed by Committee-man Jack Pearce, ex 2/1 Pioneers, then ushered to various tables which were gaily decorated like the hall itself. Our old unit colour patch design of a triangle with the regimental purple, white and grey adorned each table, and on prominent positions around the wall as well as a large 2 ft. one in front of the stage.

The Committee and the Ladies Auxiliary of the "Rats" certainly put a lot of hard work into making the displays, which were greatly appreciated by all.

The band was very good and the dance floor was always crowded. Some very nice prizes were given out.

Later during the night, Ken McBurney, President of the "Rats", officially welcomed everyone and said how proud and happy his Association was to have their old Tobruk mates with them on such an occasion. He recalled a few old times with the 2/1 Pioneers and assured those present that they would be very welcome to come along whenever possible and enjoy the facilities of their Club.

Bob Scott, ex 2/1, and Secretary of the "Rats" also said how pleased his members were with such an evening and hoped a repeat could be arranged in the near future.

It was the unanimous opinion of all visitors that the evening was a great success, and they expressed their sincere appreciation to the President, Committee, Ladies Auxiliary and members of the Rats of Tobruk Association for making it possible.

H. (Monty) Montague

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE...

As treasurer, may I take this opportunity to thank members of both battalions for their generous donations on Anzac Day.

April and May are undoubtedly our most expensive months, with catering for the reunions, the Annual Meeting and a lot of other expenses to contend with.

It is very gratifying to me to see the necessary funds being so freely given.

May I remind those members who have not paid their yearly subscription that it is now due.

With your subscription, please send some news of your family and your happenings. After all, the "Pioneer News" is a good way of keeping in touch with friends. What may seem commonplace to you is often news to somebody who knew you many years ago.

DOUG. SHEARSTON, Treasurer.

HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION

We request next of kin of a member to notify Jack Collis, our Welfare Officer immediately a Pioneer enters hospital, or even before, if possible.

Contact by letter or phone Jack Collis, 22 Fisher Street, Auburn, N.S.W. Telephone 648-1509.

MEMORIES STIRRED BY ANZAC DAY

The following article has been sent in by Monte Reid, of Cessnock. Monte was an original 2/1st, but later spent three and a half years with the 2/2nds and, naturally, these latter years are fresher in his mind than the earlier years.

He has written this article in an endeavour to share these memories with you, whether you be 2/1 or 2/2, for are we not members of the one association?

We are most grateful to Monte for this excellent article and if he can stir your memories, just put them on paper and send along to us.—The Editors.

DEAR FELLOW PIONEERS,

Greetings and best wishes to you all! It was good to join with you in the march this year. So many familiar faces were there, but, unfortunately, so few remembered names. Sometimes I feel ashamed that so many of those whom I knew so well for such a long time are just so many Pioneers, and not individuals any longer. This worries me and, more than anything else, makes me regret the passing years.

Some time ago I met a Mr. Les Taylor and found to my delight, that he had been a "Y.M.C.A." man during the war, being stationed with the 2/24th Bn. Of all the unsung heroes of the war I feel that the men of the Red Shield and Red Triangle Huts are the most deserving of reward. As I spoke with Les, my mind turned again to those so often uncomfortable days when I, as so many others, was in need of a word of comfort, of encouragement, of advice, or for just someone different to talk to, and sure enough, not far away would be one of our friends with a happy smile and the ever welcome cup of coffee.

There was a very definite reason for us being where we were, whether it was from a sense of adventure, or of patriotism, or to escape from some previous situation, or even the prospect of conscription, and over all the knowledge that there was a common enemy who had to be defeated to ensure the safety of our land; but with these men of the "Sallies" and "Y", they were in uniform for one, and only one, reason, and that was to serve us in the way that was most natural to them, by unselfish personal service.

Recently I was able to read the story of the 2/48, and I also read again our own story, and as always I was struck by the fact that such books are rather cold affairs with very little of the warmth that makes a unit the interesting collection of people that it is. This of course is inevitable, for so much of the personality of men cannot be incorporated in a factual history. The editor of the 2/2 Pioneer Story has done a good job, even though there are some notable omissions, and one of these I wish to write about later. In these few pages I will try and present some of the impressions I gained while a Pioneer.

WELCOME BY GENERAL GEORGE VASEY

I was most interested to read some time ago of the visit that Jim Field made to Ravenshoe—I was also envious, for I have always wanted to re-visit

those places where we spent so much time and energy in preparing for the work that was ahead. Many memories flooded in as I read Jim's letter, and none was more vivid than that of the day we first met General George Vasey. We had moved to the parade ground, and I guess those who were there will still remember the way in which he welcomed us to the Division, and the uncompromising way in which he outlined the work that we would be doing with him.

Never one to pull punches, he spoke to us in his usual down to earth language, and I feel sure that in that one speech he enlisted every man on his side. On one other occasion I had contact with him when he again demonstrated his feeling for the ordinary soldier. We were working at Dumpu, and one day as the two Maynard Brothers were struggling up the hill above the lakes, along came the General in his jeep with some Staff Officers, and although there was no room for more passengers, he stopped the jeep, told his staff to move over, and the Maynards to climb aboard. One did not argue with George Vasey, so Terry and Arthur climbed aboard. What a blow when his plane crashed and he was lost.

UGH! POWDERED EGG

One of the identities I remember from Ravenshoe was the Officers' mess Cook. For much of our time there, we, in common with the rest of the Bn., were enjoying (?) egg powder. Our so often meal was bread soaked in watered powder, and fried, and, although rather boring when served every day, rather enjoyable now and then. However, one night we were to have a visit from some of Division and Brigade, so Major Tope went to Cookie and asked him as a special favour in view of the occasion, if it would be possible to prepare some interesting dish for dinner. Cookie agreed, and so it was with a sense of anticipation that we assembled for the meal with our visitors. At last in came the main course, and we all looked with great eagerness to see what had been prepared to whet our appetites. There on a huge plate was an equally huge stack of—yes there it was—FRIED BREAD. I thought there would be murder done there and then. At least the visitors saw the funny side of the incident, but then, they probably were not living on egg powder.

I guess 5 Platoon will always remember a training march the battalion did to the jungle training area. On this occasion they had been given the task of carrying the spares of the Sig. Platoon. For many weary

hours they had struggled up and down hills and creek beds with those unwieldy baskets the sigs. used, and at last camp was reached. Meal time arrived and everyone received whatever food had been prepared for them and were content. Everyone, that is, except the sigs. For out of those baskets that had been full of so important spares came tins of fruit and other delicacies that had been kept for just such an occasion. Once again there was murder in the air.

INTRODUCING

LT.-COL. "BIG" JOE LANG

One of the outstanding personalities prominent throughout my army life was Lt.-Col. Joe Lang. I met him first at Greta when he came to us on exchange for a time. Then later, when those of us of the 2/1st who had been seconded to the training Battalion, had transferred to the 2/2's, he became our CO. Big in personality, he was big in play, and certainly in his ability as a soldier, as well as being just plain BIG.

Known to all and sundry as "Joe", many of the incidents in which he was involved, in any lesser man would have been just plain ridiculous, but with Joe were merely a means to an end, and as evidence of this, let me tell you of the day that he and the Adjutant were out at the jungle area on a recce. Both were on motor bikes, but when the time came to return to camp, it was found that the CO's bike had broken down, and as it was almost evening, the prospect was rather dim. The bike that Gordon Bellmaine was on was a small BSA, and this had a faulty headlight. Any other two men would have been in a quandary, but not our fearless leaders.

Much, much later, the camp sentry saw coming down the road toward the entrance, a light which had the appearance of being carried by a drunk, for it was wobbling all over the road. Then to his surprise it turned into the camp and his startled eyes saw that it was a motor bike ridden by the CO. This of course was not an unusual sight, but the thing that was unexpected, was Gordon Bellmaine clinging to the CO's back, and as well, he was holding out in front of the rider's nose, a hurricane lantern. This had apparently been borrowed from a timber cutter. What a shame no one in the unit had a colour camera. Surely, this was a ridiculous sight, and yet, not really, for it merely illustrated the resourcefulness of Joe.

In the same vein one could mention the day that we reached Kirklands, on the Markham. While we were waiting to cross the river, and

wondering how many Japs there were on the other side, the C.O., being very hot, but certainly not bothered by the coming clash with the enemy, dived fully clothed into the river to cool off. Ridiculous? Certainly, but would we have had him any other way?

And I can remember him a few days later at "stand to" charging around the lines, all six foot-odd and 17 stone, and in his hand, like a toy, his Smith and Wesson pistol. And then a week or so later, as we went down the Markham to Lae, remember his famous signal to Division: "The 2/2 Pioneer Battalion, less two rifle companies and elements of Headquarters Company, are advancing on Lae." There he was, in the lead with me on one occasion, and as he made a terrific swipe at the wait-awhile vines with a razor sharp butcher's knife, he took off part of his hat brim and missed his ear by a whisker. This was our C.O.!

"JOE" INFORMS GENERAL HE WILL BUILD ROAD

Perhaps the seemingly most ridiculous action of Joe occurred at Dumpu. We had just come out of the hills at Levatts Post, ostensibly for a rest, when Joe came to see me. The advance on Shaggy Ridge was at a standstill, for the distance that supplies had to be carried was beyond the resources of Divvy. A few days earlier, I had made a survey to see if a possible alternate route was in fact a possibility. My negative report had been accepted by Division without question, and it looked as if a stalemate had been reached. There was only one obvious route to follow, but the Engineers had stated that it was not possible to build a road over such rough terrain without heavy equipment, and this was unavailable. I do not know what went on at Division, but this I do know—Joe came to me and said that even though the Engineers had branded the road as impossible at that stage, he had told the General that we would build it. Just like that. That day I was to go with him and look over the general area, the next day I was to peg out the route, and on the third day we would commence work. And that is how it all turned out.

Without any measuring or levelling device at all I pegged out what appeared to me to be a suitable road for jeeps and next day we started the job. Later the Engineers returned with a small bulldozer and took over construction. Just after this I went to hospital with malaria, and when I returned a month later I found a well-used road and one that appeared to follow my "survey" exactly.

I would say without fear of contradiction, that the greatest single contribution that this Battalion—at least in its resurrected form—made toward the war effort was the acceptance of the challenge to build this road, thus showing that it could be done, and yet, in the Pioneer Story, for some strange reason, not one line appears about it. The editor has included so many trivial items, and yet this has been left out. The event was of such importance to the overall war effort, that the official War History

records the fact that "the 2/2 Pioneer Bn. accepted the challenge and commenced to carry out the work". So once again an apparently ridiculous action of the CO had paid off.

JIM DERRICK IN ACTION

When I was reading through the Story of the 2/48th, naturally the name of Jim Derrick was prominent, and this brings to mind a certain patrol on Tarakan, that Alan McInnes took part in with our new CO, Col. C. Davis. What an outstanding soldier he must have been in his younger days, but no doubt by this time his abilities were somewhat dimmed. On this occasion he and his men were on a ridge behind our lines, when they came across an infantry patrol. This patrol was then stationary, no doubt with good and sufficient reason, but the CO thought they should be moving faster, and being the CO, said so in no uncertain terms. Alan had recognised the patrol leader and tried to shush the CO, but this was like a red rag to a bull, and only added fuel to the fire. However at last the patrol having apparently made up its own mind that it was time to move, went on. Alan then asked the CO if he was aware of the identity of the leader. "No", replied the CO, "but he should have made a move quicker". On being informed that he had been watching Jim Derrick in action, the CO, without turning a hair, said "Oh, good show, good show".

I guess we all remember those days at Cairns, especially the way Col. Davis always tried to help his men in every way possible. How the Provosts must have hated him, for, over and over they would bring our Pioneers from the town and parade them before the C.O., presenting what must have appeared to them to be an open and shut case, and the C.O. would turn to them and say: "Case dismissed, insufficient evidence." I often wondered if he ever tried these tactics in any of his pre-war court cases as a lawyer.

UNTRAINED, PERVERSE, CANTANKEROUS RECRUITS

Just one final thought, this time to express my admiration of those Company Sergeant-Majors who knocked us into shape at Greta. I now work with a group of about 150 men, and as I look at them, I see again us as we must have appeared to the CSM's, when we entered camp as raw recruits. Untrained, perverse, cantankerous, not really keen to be disciplined or bow to authority, in only a few short weeks those experts had made us into polished, well turned out soldiers. How proud we were as we marched through Dubbo, and how our hearts responded to those shouts of acclamation from the enthusiastic crowd. And then my mind turns to another parade in another place many thousands of miles away, and just about twelve months later. We had come out of the desert after nine months, and were holding our first Bn. parade in Palestine.

We had gone into Libya with over 1,000 men, and yet as we stood now on

that parade ground, I counted about 400 only; there was scarcely a complete uniform amongst us, we were unkempt and dirty, and yet in those ranks of ragged troops there was one great difference between Dubbo and Palestine—then we had thought that we were good, now we knew that we were.

"IF IT CAN BE DONE, THE PIONEERS WILL DO IT!"

Finally, as I close, let me appeal to you, the members of our Association, to give every possible assistance and encouragement to those who are endeavouring to keep the members together. What a worthwhile job they are doing, and I guess there isn't much thanks handed out. Let us continue to keep alive that spirit that was a feature of our Battalion during the years of conflict: the spirit that led men like Joe, and Clayton, to say, and believe, "If it can be done, then my men will do it".

Yours for old times sake,

MONTE REID

SPECIAL INVITATION

It is the desire of the Association that a special invitation be extended to Dulcie Thomas, Geoff Benfell and Lyn Hobbs and anyone else who feels that they would like to attend our Wreath Laying Ceremony on the next Anzac Eve. We realise that there are a lot of people who would like to remember someone in this way on Anzac Day, so we extend this invitation to all who would like to join us for our Wreath Laying. You will be notified in the Pioneer News of the time and date, if you will just remember you have the invitation.

Wally (Desso) Page

LAST POST

We are indebted to our Welfare Officer, Jack Collis, for sending along the following information regarding the passing away of our fellow members:—

NX56238 Pte. P. M. BALL, 2/1.
NX45219 Pte. E. R. PELGRAVE, 2/1.
NX52224 Pte. C. D. WILSON, 2/1.
NX23490 Pte. P. HOWELL, 2/1.
NX51765 Pte. G. GARLAND, 2/1.
NX39842 Pte. A. J. SHEATHER, 2/1.
NX33117 Pte. J. W. STAMP, 2/1.

SEVENTH DIVISION

4th ANNUAL REUNION

RAMSGATE R.S.L. CLUB

SATURDAY and SUNDAY
14th and 15th OCTOBER, 1967

For further details contact

SYDNEY:

C. Sandison, 40-4128

F. Alexander, 59-7261

NEWCASTLE:

M. Quinn, 24 Queen Street, Waratah

DUBBO:

T. Mead, c/o R.S.L. Club

LEETON:

M. Roberts, c/o R.S.L. Club

Anzac Day with the 2/2nds

THE MARCH...

A good gathering of 2/2 lined up for the march and among the familiar faces were noted a few one had not seen for some years. These included:—

JACK MORGAN, back to Wagga after a fourteen year visit to South Australia. Welcome back, Jack, good to see you.

BILL HENRY now resides in Sydney and looking very fit. Particularly pleasing to see you, Bill. Let's hope it's the forerunner of many more visits. Sorry Charlie couldn't make it. See him next year.

JIM DRUMMOND, looking as fit as in early 40's. Nice to see you and your moustache again, Jim.

CLEM MACDONALD is a relieving bank manager in N.S.W. for the Commonwealth Bank. Good to see you Clem, but God help the bank.

BILL FALLON came all the way from Barraba. Hope you enjoyed your two weeks holiday, Bill, it was nice to see you. Trust you can make it again next year.

VINCE LONGMORE also honoured us with his presence. It was good to see you, Vince, try and make it a habit.

"SKIPPI" MCGOWAN looked fit and well. Hope to see you again next year Skip.

"BLUEY" McCOURT—the same as ever. Even attending to a tribe of young McCourts has not greyed him. Good to see you "Munga".

"SPEED" GORDON is Mine Host of a fish shop at Panania, right near the "local". A warm "fishy" welcome to all visiting Sydney. Good to see you, mate.

• After the reunion at Clovelly quite a number adjourned to the Mascot R.S.L., where **BOB GINNANE** is assistant manager. A pleasant evening was

had by all and I seem to remember two of them sharing a jackpot. Was that right Syd Booth?

• A few faces missing this year that were always on deck:—

BILL ROBERTSON, hope you are feeling better, Bill. It does not seem the same without you.

DON LINTON—how about it, Don?

PAT CURRAN—it may not be as bad as you think, Pat. See you next year, mate.

JACK HENDERSON and **RUSS HARRISON**—how about it, fellas?

HARRY SEDGER—your voice was missed mate. You can bring your Hi-Lo next year.

• A special invitation to all 2/2 Pioneer country members to come along next Anzac Day and make it a gala get-together. Some of you we have not seen for many years. Among them are:—

BOB MOLYNEUX—Mr Lightning Ridge himself. How about it, Bob?

BERNIE and **SOAK ALLEN**, from Murwillumbah. **BERNIE DALY**, from Taree. How are you, mate?

JIM COMINS, of Spring Hill. **BILL NORRIS**, of Warren. Get out of your dug-out, Bill, and come and have a Mascot beer.

JACK CROUCH, Goulburn. **GEORGE TOMLINSON**, Trangie. Try and make it, "Snow".

BILL HOOD, manager of the Commonwealth Bank at Casino. How about it, Bill?

KEV. RAYWARD, of Lismore. Honour us with your presence, Kev.

TOM and **MICK BYE**. How about it, chaps? I believe the traffic will come

to a standstill, Tom, next time you visit Sydney. Be nice to see you both.

MAX, where the "DICKENS" are you? Come and say hello!

ALEC. LOWE, of Burleigh Heads. See what you can do, Alec, we would like to see you.

• We realise that it is not always possible to make a long trip as other commitments tie one down, but if you think you can make it write Bob Ginnane or myself, C/- Mascot R.S.L., Botany Road, Mascot. I think we may be able to arrange accommodation for you. Hoping to see you Anzac Day, 1968.

• Country members at the march were **MONTE REID**, **BILL FALLON**, **JACK MORGAN**, **ANDY BEELAR**, **BILL NICHOLS**.

A Message was received at the march assembly from Colonel Joe Lang. It was delivered by the secretary of Red Cliffs (Queensland) R.S.L., wishing the battalion all the best and his personal regards to all the Pioneers. He said that even though he wasn't able to be present he would be with them in spirit.

Another visitor at the assembly point was **JAN HOWARD**, a daughter of that very popular member of "D" Coy., Frank Howard. Jan talked to Frank's friends and messages were brought and taken back. Frank's address is: Somerset Dam, Queensland.

This was a very nice gesture on the part of Jan and it was nice to see such a wonderful spirit from the Howards.

Frank should be proud of Jan, as she is not only beautiful, but has personality plus.

• **JACK MORGAN**, down from Wagga Wagga for the march, tells us that he sees Ken Knight, who is a member of Blackmore & Graves (Architects) of Wagga Wagga.

BOB GINNANE and **JOHN DOWD**

THE REUNION...

The usual reunion was held at Randwick again this year, with a good attendance of 56, among whom were quite a few new faces. The day was a social success—good food to eat and convivial company. Our thanks to **Dick Wakely** and **Allen McInnes**, who helped to make the function a financial success with their donation of goods for a raffle. Due to their fine gesture we will be able to arrange our show next year for the same charge.

• Had a yarn with **KEITH SELFE** from Cobar. He looks well as is the Postmaster up there. Keith occasionally contacts "Bluey" Meppen who runs a mixed property at Bellata and is doing well. He also has quite a few little "Blueys" running around. Keith also sees "Snowy" Freebody who runs a dry cleaning business at Nyngan.

• **CLEM McDONALD** was seen in close confab with some of his old cobbles. Clem is President of the Clovelly R.S.L. Sub-Branch, and at one time was the youngest life member of the R.S.L. He is to be found in the city as manager of the Commonwealth Bank in Pitt Street.

• **STAN CLAUGHTON**, our patron and padre, was along bright and early and is looking forward to a good attendance of the boys and their families at this year's Remembrance Service. It will be held at the Canterbury Methodist Church, Canterbury Road, Canterbury, on 12th November, at 7.30 p.m. Make an effort fellows.

• **GAVIN TODD** spent the Easter holidays in Melbourne as the guest of Col Shea, who has a butchery in Footscray. Gavin was shown quite a lot of the Victorian countryside during his stay. Col. sends best wishes to all his old cobbles in N.S.W.

DON LAWSON

KOKODA TRAIL PILGRIMAGE

Arrangements are being made by Mr. H. A. Vining, State Secretary of the R.S.L., Papua, New Guinea branch, Lae, concerning the 25th Anniversary of the Kokoda Trail Pilgrimage to be held in November, 1967.

A basic tour of Sydney, Port Moresby, Lae, Sydney, including accommodation, can be arranged plus any of the side trips to your requirements.

Suggested departure is Friday, 3rd November, on a Boeing 727 at 6.45 a.m., arriving Port Moresby at 11.30 a.m.

The approximate cost involved on the Sydney/Port Moresby/Lae trip by air is: 1st Class, \$253.20; Economy Class, \$229.40. Accommodation would be \$14 per night, including bed and breakfast.

For a party of 15 or more economy class, Ansett-A.N.A. have offered 10% off the normal fare, plus free ground transport and 45lbs. of luggage per person.

Anyone interested please contact the Secretary.

Anzac Day with the 2/1sts

Yes, we held another wonderful and successful reunion at the Castle-reagh Hotel. We served out 139 hot meals as the fellows arrived, and a very nice hot meal it was, too—braised steak with vegetables and bread and butter.

After the meal was eaten everyone seemed to have the same idea to wash it down with the usual amber fluid and then it wasn't long before age was forgotten and memories returned in full force.

Later in the afternoon we had our usual afternoon snack—hot fish pieces, biscuits and cheese and meat balls that were as large as cricket balls, as much as we wanted, but you would have to be there to appreciate the friendship and the happiness that is evident at our Reunions even in those that aren't in the best of health. It's these things that make a Reunion a success and the Committee realise that it's worth the effort.

WALTER (Bombo) BROWN. Yes, Wally was with us at the wreath laying, meeting and Reunion and he looks wonderfully well. Wally was down from Bourke on his holidays. He works as a linesman for the P.M.G. Department. He brought down with him best regards to the boys from Jack Charters, who has a property at Cobar where the dust comes from. Jack was one of the Don Coy. Boys.

Wally reports on Ken Black. Ken is also a P.M.G. Linesman, and he lives at Brewarrina, and according to Wally is keeping well and our Bourke reporter says he last saw Wally (Sporty) Thompson heading out the back of Bourke with his lubra and four picaninies, probably some walkabout, if you see him again Wally, pin him down and let's hear from you. Thanks for coming down.

JOHN BENFELL. No, John was not with us, unfortunately John was killed in a mine accident back in 1956, but he was well represented by his 17-year-old son, Geoff. Geoff came along to our assembly point wearing the uniform of the Homebush High School Cadets (and very smart he looked too). He is a Staff Sergeant, he told me he would like to march in his father's place and of course he was promptly told he was more than welcome and we would like to see you again next year Geoff. Our best to the rest of the Benfell family.

DULCIE THOMAS. Yes, we had a lady again this year, Dulcie joined our Ranks so that she could represent her father "William Beers". Dulcie's father was not a pioneer, as a matter of fact he wasn't in our War, he was a 1st A.I.F. man, but his daughter felt he should be remembered in this way, so she marched with us—a very nice thought Dulcie and please feel free to join us next year.

LYNETTE HOBBS. Remember last year we had Lyn marching with us on behalf of her uncle "Charlie Pagett".

Well this year we missed Lyn, she wasn't with us, we do hope you weren't sick Lyn and we hope to see you next year.

"PASHA" JACKSON was on the sidelines at the march, again this year, taking more movie film—I think he is planning something.

JACK COATS. Well it took Jack 15 years to make up his mind to come down and see us again. We know you only live at Woy Woy, about 50 miles from Sydney, so don't make it so long between visits Jack. It was good to see you again and to see you looking so well.

MICK ANSELM. Mick tells us he is retiring from the Queensland Railways in about 12 months time and that he will be living in Sydney when he does retire. I guess we will see more of him then. Mick had the good fortune to win the dozen bottles of beer we raffled and in the real Pioneer spirit he shared it all around with the boys. Thanks Mick.

ROY BOUNDS. Did anybody know Roy could sing? Well you ought to have been there, Roy brought along a couple of his mates in Keith Dalberg and Les White and with the help of Ivor Garner, Bluey Walsh and a few more Pioneers they put on a sing song. Nice going boys.

It was a good day wasn't it, nice to see you enjoy it. Roy also brought us best wishes from Donny Crooks. Don is the proud father of five children, and he is living at Islington in the Newcastle area. Thanks for your best wishes Don. Our very best to yourself, wife and family from the Association. How about coming down next time.

Broken promise! I had a promise from **JACK GRIFFITH, DICK SEDDEN** and **SID JOPSON** that they wouldn't miss the Anzac March, we'll be there was their cry, but was they there—no. What happened to you fellows? I told everyone you would be there. You let me down—apologies please. I can excuse Sid because I believe he was sent to Griffith, N.S.W. as Relieving Accountant for the Bank of N.S.W., and sent his apologies by phone to Max Herron. But I'm still waiting for two apologies.

CHARLIE O'NEIL. "Borrie Ram" to the boys, nice to see you again Charlie. I believe that you are now living at the famous Kings Cross, Sydney, looks as though we can still call you the Ram. I also understand that you work for the Transport Department out at Waverley Depot. All the best Charlie, but remember boys can get into a lot of trouble at the Cross.

R. T. (Bob) LANG. Had a visit from Bob who looks very well. Bob tells me he is living at Sutherland and I believe they have a very good up and coming Rugby League Footy Team. I'm a St. George man myself Bob—the greatest—let's have an argument! All the best Bob.

ERIC HAWKINS. A lot may have forgotten but Eric was the Pioneers R.A.P. Sergeant, Medicine and Duty No. 9 and all the junk. Nice to see you Eric. I would like to say here just how well Eric looks—he's a gas man! No I haven't gone all hep. Eric is a gas man he still works for the Australian Gas Light Company. I think he's been with them for 50 years or something.

Anyhow he's only got about another six to twelve months and then he retires. Eric lives at Caravan Head, via Como, and the grand-father to six children. Nice going to Hawkins' family. Like to see you again Eric. All the best to you and yours.

Best regards! Here are the names of fellows who were at the reunion and would like to send their best regards to other members who were not fortunate enough to be present.

Regards to you all from **A. E. (Bull) GREEN, CHARLIE SCHMIDT, VINCE PETRICH, CHARLIE O'NEIL, JACK (Bluey) MOXEY, PAT (Bluey) WALSH** and yours truly.

Wedding Bells! **TED SCHOLES** is to be father of the bride when his daughter Shirley becomes the wife of Chris Corcoran at Parramatta on the 9th September, 1967, and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of each and every member of the 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneer Battalion Association to offer Shirley and Chris our congratulations and to wish them both all that they wish for themselves and that life for you both will be an abundance of health and happiness and prosperity.

To Ted and Mrs. Scholes, we offer our congratulations and hope that everything will go just the way you have planned it on the 9th September. I know that you will all play your part well on that day, particularly our Ted, when he escorts Shirley down the aisle, our best to you all.

Wally (Desso) Page

THE RATS OF TOBRUK ASSOC.
(NEWCASTLE BRANCH)

COUNTRY SMOKO

ON SIX-HOUR WEEK-END
AT PORT MACQUARIE

30th September, 1st and 2nd October

All Pioneers and friends welcome.

Further particulars write to:

Jack Bertram (2/1 Pnr.)
Secretary, R.O.T.A.
247 Lawson Street
Hamilton, N.S.W.

2/1st Anzac Day Jottings—

By Reporter, GORDON FINLAY

Some out of town visitors first:—

JOCK GILLESPIE, down from Brisbane, had a great day going around everyone.

MICK ANSELM, also from Brisbane, is becoming a regular visitor to our reunions. Even won the dozen of beer too.

BILL GORDON, of "A" Coy. Tobruk days came over from Adelaide to see the old gang.

MICK BASKET, up from Moruya, is not quite as heavy as the old footballing days, but fit enough.

BILL JOLLEY came in from Mildura way to see his daughter graduate at the University and decided to include Anzac Day in his stay.

ALBERT BROWN has moved from Canberra and is now out at St. Marys.

BOB STEVENS, from Moree, offered to give me a trim for nothing if ever out that way, so must be doing O.K.

STAN (Doc.) GOULSTON was seen outside the hotel looking as young as ever.

ERIC HAWKINS was another of the medical staff to look us up.

Some members of 8 Pltn. "A" Coy.: **ROD PEGG, BERT HOLMES, FRANK GILLIAN, BRUCE SMITH, DON SLATER, HENRY ALLAN, NED CALDERWOOD, BILL GORDON, ERIC GUTHRIE, JACK HYDE, GEOFF ROBINSON, STAN JONES, JIMMY TROTTER, "SAILOR" HALL, ERIC CAVANAGH, JACK HILL** and **GORDON FINLAY** (and I didn't buy them a drink).

PERCY PENROSE had a quiet day (with his foot in plaster he had to) with some more of "A" Coy. who were not quite as quiet: **"STRAWB" DALE, BILL ARTHUR, FRED CALLAWAY, MICK DODSON** and **GEORGE BATES**.

BOB LAKE had a gathering of drivers too, fifteen of them altogether. How they conned Viv Parkinson into buying them a drink I don't know, but they did.

There was a goodly gathering of Don Coy. too. Max Herron had a list of names as long as my arm. I kept away from them.

"C" Coy. was well represented and I had to rack the old brain to catch some of the names: **JUSTIN SULLIVAN, "PUNCHY" BANNISTER, BILL CHISHOLM, KEV. CURTAIN, LEO MORRIS**.

"CASEY" BROWN (no fixed Coy.), **GORDON WALSH** and **RAY HORNE** had a corner to themselves to talk over old football games until "SNOW" HEMMINGS arrived. Was there anyone at the reunion who wasn't shown a photo of his grandchild?

A few old faithfuls gathered together in the foyer: **DOUG. SHEARSTON, MAX HERRON, BOB MCGREGOR, MICK DODSON, JACK WESTWOOD, WALLY PAGE** and **JOE BIRD**.

A late visitor was President **ALLAN McINNES**, from the 2/2 Reunion. He brought **HARRY HUGGARD** along to look up a few old friends.

BILL HOFFMAN brought news of **PETER PRIEST**, who is on a caravan tour of Australia. Should have been at Alice Springs for Anzac Day. Bill also brought apologies from **LEO FERRIS, PETER BELL, OEC. BLANCH, RAY SMITH, JACK SHERMAN, TOBY HALE, GEORGE SCHOLES**, of the 2/1sts, and **EDDIE WESTON** and **KEITH MASON** of the 2/2nds.

RAY GARDINER, "BIMBO" BELL, GEORGE TOLMIE and **PETER CRAIG** send their regards to Blue McCloud.

The boys from St. Mary's would like us to thank the licensee of the Rex Hotel, St. Mary's, for refreshments supplied to the train travellers who came down for Anzac Day, namely **HENRY ALLAN** and **ALBERT BROWN**.

Some of the younger generation enjoyed themselves too. The two Pike boys (Clarrie's sons), **George Benfell** (in uniform) and **Bob Lake's** intended son-in-law. Think he was keeping an eye on Dad.

Our thanks again to the girls behind the bar, they all did a terrific job. Found out Doreen's father was an old digger—34th Battn.

DON Company had a good roll up as follows—16 Platoon: **HARRY NORMAN, PETER O'BRIEN, GEORGE BROOKS, PETER CRAIG, RAY HILL, PAT MURPHY, BOB GALES**; 17 Platoon: **JACK COLLIS, BOB GRATTON, JACK LLOYD, KEN OLIVER, SYD. PERCIVAL, BILL HODGES, JIM ANDERSON**; 18 Platoon: **R. MCGREGOR, MAX HERRON, PAT WALSH, RAY GARDINER, ALBERT BELL, CLAUDE McKEIG, DICK CHALMER, HARRY MOSTYN** and **GEORGE TOLMIE**.

TRANSPORT Platoon had a roll up as follows: **ROY JARDINE, "WAGGA" GRICE, JOE BIRD, VIC WHITELEY, BOB LAKE, PAT DWYER, ALLAN BLACK, NOEL SCHOMBERG, HARRY BROWN, BERT HERNE, "WIMPY" COOKSON, JOE BARKER, CYRIL BIRD, BOB SCOTT** and **JACK PEARCE**.

"PIONEER NEWS"

The "Pioneer News" is posted on the 1st April, 1st July and 1st November each year.

Copy must be lodged with the Secretary six weeks prior to these dates.

Letters must contain — Surname, christian name, nick-name (if any), Platoon, Company, Battalion and present address. When forwarding your new address, please include your old address.

The cost is 50 cents per annum.

FORMATION OF THE 2/1 PIONEER BATTALION

By H. MONTAGUE

During the first week of June, 1940, parties of recruits from various military reception centres and camps at Wallgrove, Ingleburn, Bathurst and in Northern New South Wales began arriving at Silver City, Greta, to become the nucleus of this new Army Corps.

The final intake of personnel from the Sydney Showground arrived there late on Monday, 10th June, thereby bringing the Unit up to full strength. Next day all personnel were sorted out, posted to their various companies, and given information about the procedure of barrack and general army doings.

The officers were: Lt.-Col. P. McGillicuddy, C.O., Major A. Brown, 2/1.C., Capt. Tom Ledgerwood, Adj., Capt. Stan Goulston, R.M.O., Lieut. Harry Tope, R.Q.M., Padre J. Dransfield, W.O.I. Sellick, R.S.M. "A" Company: O/C Major H. White, 2/1.C. Capt. Coleman. "B" Company: O/C Major Norm. Neal, M.C. "C" Company: O/C Major Geoff Graham, 2/1.C. Capt. Patterson. "D" Company: O/C Capt. Braddon, 2/1.C. Capt. Tunbridge. "H.Q." Company: O/C Capt. Bob Egan, 2/1.C. Lieut. Harry Hugh. Bandmaster—W.O.II Jock Armour. Paymaster—Sgt. Frank Wakelin. Transport—Sgt. Curly. Postal Duties—Cpl. Dick Hansen. Provost—Sgt. Williams. B.H.Q. Orderly Room Staff—S/Sgt. Ces White, Sgt. John Harnetty and Cpl. Norm Goodchap.

"THAT'LL BE THE DAY"

If all the seas were made of beer,
And all the land was cheese,
And lobsters grew already cooked,
Like leaves upon a tree;
If banknotes fell instead of rain,
And all the grass was gold,
Summer days were not too hot,
And winter not too cold;
If houses sprouted in the night,
And motor cars cost nil,
And everyone was full of vim,
And no-one ever ill.
If every man had fifteen wives,
And all were dumb,
And diamonds grew like hazel nuts,
And cows provided rum;
If bandits spewed out jackpots
With every single pull,
And Commos' threats turned out to be
Just a lot of "bull".
... Ah well, 'twould be a merry world
... but some perverted owl, some pessimistic, bloody fool, would find a cause
to growl.

----- CUT OUT FOR POSTING -----

2/1-2/2 PIONEER BATTALIONS ASSOCIATION

Hon. Sec., Max Herron, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills.

Christian Name..... Surname.....

Unit..... Company..... Platoon.....

Address.....

With this form send a newsy letter of your doings and your subscription of 50 cents per annum to keep the "Pioneer News" in circulation.



Once again we commence on our usual quota of letters from the southern city of Melbourne, the western districts of New South Wales, on over the border into the sunny state of Queensland, plus of course a few notes from the Newcastle mob, and again from local Sydney and suburbs.

With the response still being maintained once again we will give the boys from the 2/2 first pick at the column, but don't worry, we know quite a lot of the boys from the 2/1 can write, and some time we will really be overwhelmed.

FRANK CHEAL (ex 2/2) and now a member of the Commonwealth Bank at Melbourne sends along a few lines and a sub. Quotes he does not see a lot of the boys down that way but does mention Fred Snackenber, of Box Hill, and that Lou Northby is still working at Pentridge, but not as an inmate. Frank hopes to attend the re-union in Melbourne on Anzac Eve and is looking forward to seeing a few old faces. Frank also sends a message to Jeff Williams, reminding him of the days when Jeff was his cubmaster at Singleton.

EDDIE MOREY (2/2), and now at Red Cliffs, Victoria, where he spends his time and energy growing dried fruits. We sincerely hope that it is a profitable pastime Eddie, and wish you every success. Eddie mentions a Corporal Curtis of the 2/1 with whom he was in hospital at Gaza in 1941, but cannot remember his first name. However, he was tall and blonde so if you read this paper Corporal, Eddie sends his best wishes. Your subs to hand O.K. and in the worthy treasurer's department.

BILL BARNES (2/2) is out at Warren, N.S.W., where he fulfils the role of Western Superintendent, Water Conservation Commission. With an area ranging from Burrendong Dam near Wellington, up to the Queensland border, he really puts a bit of dirt beneath his feet in a year. Bill speaks of Snowy Tomlinson and wife Joyce, who are still on the Tyree closer settlement block and with excellent prospects of having his property enlarged in the near future.

ARTHUR (Chum) BROWN, also on the land near Gilgandra, was over at Warren for the local Rodeo but owing to some softness round the middle, declined to try the steer riding, although offered Bill's boots. It's possible Bill, that more than boots are necessary to ride one of those things. Bonny Fowler also about the district, while Bill Morris seems to be one of those lucky people who does not age, this could possibly be attributed to his unmarried state. Bob Molineaux still at Lightning Ridge,

although Bill has had the misfortune to miss him on each trip that way.

GIL SHORT (2/2), now residing at Oatley, New South Wales, sends a short note with some subs and a change of address. Gil has recently renewed acquaintances with Arthur (Bluey) Calvery and requests that he be placed on the mailing list. This Gil, we will be only too happy to do, but you did not enclose his address in your letter, so a short letter to Max would fill the gap, O.K.

MICK BYE (2/2), of Brahmam Stud, Walgett, N.S.W., sends along quite a newsy note and apologies for not having done so sooner. However Mick, you have been in a few times before so you are up on quite a lot of names I could mention. Mick mentions that he has been the Legatee for the Goodooga district for some years now and finds the work very rewarding, helping with the problems facing the widows and the children of deceased servicemen.

Mick visited Goulburn not so long ago and had a nice time with Jack Crouch and his family (all too short). He had not seen Jack since 1944 but promises a much more lively time in the near future. Mick also mentions George (Tich) Watson, he is still a jockey, riding in Queensland and lives in Toowoomba. With regard to Frank (Scotty) Howard, we can be of no assistance Mick as his name is not on our address list. To finish off, Mick quotes that he often reads of some pioneer doing a trip and states that should they ever get lost and end up out that way be reckons that a bed and a cold bottle would always be found and glad to see them. Thanks for the sub, Mick.

BERT HUTTLEY (2/2), and now a resident of Bloomsbury, via Mackay, Queensland, sends along a good letter, and one telling of the local R.S.L. Anzac Day Service. The event was held at Proserpine, where about 60 odd members marched to the Cenotaph. After the Service a return to the club where a sit down lunch was prepared and served by the Ladies Auxiliary. There were nine veterans of the 1914-18 War, and one Nurse 1940-45 War. Good harmony from the voice and piano, plenty to eat, plenty to drink, which eventually took its toll, and our Bert had to go for a sleep before making the drive home to Mackay. Good thinking Bert, why spoil a perfect day by some silly little mistake. Bert sends a special cheerio to members of 1 Platoon 2/2 Pioneers.

FRED DAVENPORT (2/1), of Lawn-ton, Queensland, sends along a cheque,

a photo of the original band at Greta, good wishes to all and especially 9 Platoon and an apology that as he is the owner of a small shop in Lawnton, it was impossible for him to make the trip to Sydney for the Anzac Day Services. We realise this Fred, and know that although you are miles away, the spirit would be in the thick of things down here. I showed your photo to Ivor Garnon, and he just about named the whole band—he was also in the photo, after which I passed it to Max, who in turn posted it on to Allan Shaw on the 14-5-67, so he should have it by now.

PHIL CRAMSIE (2/1), also of Queensland, Eagle Junction to be specific, sends along a cheery note with best wishes to all on the Anzac Day in Sydney. Phil, by some chance had to call into the new Mitchellton Brisbane Hotel, and sure enough, he meets Bill Simpson—Cpl. of 15 Platoon C. Coy. Needless to say by the day's end there was no drought in this spot. Bill apparently left Canberra some 10 years ago for the sunny state and has not been receiving the news. However, he is now back on the mailing list and Max has sent along the last two issues, November 1966 and April 1967. Hope he continues to receive same and that you both keep sober.

NOEL PETERSON (2/1), and still at Wyong, sends along a short note, sub, and the word that he had quite a good day at Newcastle on Tobruk Sunday. No need for thanks to Bob Lake, Noel, may have a small job for you myself one day of which I will write about later, a letter I mean—you could be of some assistance I feel sure. Good luck and regards to "Mum".

DAVE DENNY (2/1), of Lismore, sends a very short note with a sub, and states that the News is worth its weight in gold. We go along with that, but remember, it's you fellows and your letters that make it so.

TED STRATFORD (2/1), also of Lismore, writes and boy, what a blast. Sorry Ted. However, as you say, at least we now know that three of you did try. Up till now we thought it was a rock job. Thanks Ted, like you say, if we could combine the Kyogle contingent with the Lismore area we may really get somewhere and at a committee meeting we discussed the idea of an approach to Ray Smith who seems to be able to get things done, and see what his feelings on the idea would be. It would appear that your letter to Harold Leese did go astray, because I feel sure that Harold would have been in it up to his neck had he received same. However Ted, we are not to be outdone and

MAIL BAG—Continued

although it puts it back a little, we will continue along the same lines and hope that we can make it right perhaps for next year. This may seem a long way ahead, but as you know, as we push on a bit that old father time really races the clock along. Keep sober Ted and just keep needling the word along.

MRS. D. STAMP, wife of the late John Stamp, of B. Coy., sent a personal note of thanks to our Secretary. While you wish to receive the News it will be posted to you each issue and we sincerely hope that you gain some little satisfaction from it and the esteem in which your husband was held in the unit.

JOE BLANCH (2/1), ex Kyogle and now resident at Beaudesert, Queensland, sends along a letter with subs and quite a bit of news. Joe has had holidays and spent time with his son who is in the bank at Lismore. He had visitors over the Anzac period so did not get to Kyogle. However you mention brother Cec and that he is doing OK. Glad to hear from all of you fellows up there, and as you know, it helps us with the paper. Joe is now with a transport firm, claims a lot more leisure time, but does not say just what he is doing so we shall have to be informed of this at a later date. All the best Joe to yourself and Mavis.

LLEW JONES (2/1), and now enjoying life at Bexley North sends a few lines. Apparently Mrs Llew has stronger words about lack of pen to paper, hence the letter. Llew quotes that women are never happy, you buy the little woman a lawn mower, hammers, chisels and saws to make the work easy and they still complain. Good show old mate, keep trying. Your sub is in the hands of our efficient treasurer.

CLARRIE GARDNER (2/1), past president and life member of his sub branch out Vacluse way, apologises for lack of attendance at our functions. However I assume Clarrie made up for this lack on Anzac Day with all the boys from B. Coy.

BILL STEERS (2/1), and now up at Marks Pt. out of Newcastle, sends in a sub and a few lines that he does not see a lot of the old blokes around the area. Well Bill, this is a little difficult to imagine, with all the boys from Newcastle that must be within your range of travel. Glad to know that you struck Billy Nicholson and had a few, but I reckon you should try Newcastle, Bill, I can't see how you could miss.

FRANK MOODY (2/1) sends a note of four lines. Frank is out at Peak Hill, and two of his lines are to inform us that the second donation in the envelope is from Steve Clarke who is the Commonwealth Bank manager at Parkes. Thanks a lot Frank, but how about a little more news about yourself and what goes on out at Peak Hill, and to Steve Clarke, how about a little news from yourself personally. Strikes me its a long time since I wrote your name on a news item.

MRS. BILL MACDONALD, wife of the late Bill of C. Coy. sends along a very nice thank you letter for the continuance of the News and we sincerely hope that you derive some satisfaction from some of the articles in same. We thank you for the good wishes that you bestow on the Association and its members.

JACK BERTRAM (2/1), and now very active as Secretary to the Newcastle branch of the Rats of Tobruk, sends a note of thanks to the Pioneer Battalion for the donation of the volume "Tobruk and Alamein", which was presented to the Singleton High School on behalf of the 2/1, 2/2 Pioneer Association. Jack has mentioned that the Rats of Newcastle are planning a reunion at Port Macquarie on the Eight Hour weekend and are about to commence on the detail. If the Pioneers are willing it would not take a great deal of effort to include them and is willing to work to this end. Now all you chaps that would be interested in this venture, would you kindly contact Max Herron or Bob Lake and don't leave it till the last minute.

Thanks a lot Jack for the letter and also the very generous offer toward the boys, we appreciate same very much.

DICK SEDDON, also of Newcastle Rats enclosed the following list of Pioneers that attended the Newcastle branch, Tobruk Sunday—Lt.-Col. Norm Neal as the honoured visitor, with the following Pioneers in attendance: Bob Stevens, Bruce Mitchell, Sandy Abercrombie, Ted Simpson, Sid Jopsen, Jack Bertram, Noel Peterson, Bob Juleff, Ken Newling, Jack Griffiths and Dick himself. That is quite a great roll call of 2/1 Pioneers and I can realise what a day it must have developed into.

Dick apologises for his non-attendance at Anzac Day, but suggests that when it gets toward a Friday again, that the big city will see his fighting figure once again. Dick also mentions he became a grandfather again recently for the third time—another grandson. Congratulations.

AUB. BRAZIER, our bugler for all the Pioneer functions, fulfilled all his obligations to our Association, and then toddled off to Wellington for a period. Aub reports of trips around Kandos, Gulgong, Charbon, Mudgee and Wallerawang. The big news around Wellington of course, is the copper exploration by the American company "Placer Holdings", and they believe that a copper vein has been found. Aub also has been around Gulgong and around the old diggings where the modern day fossickers still pan a little gold for the fun of the game. Well Aub, a really newsy letter and I can see that you are really enjoying yourself up around the western districts, keep up the good work and continue to enjoy everything that the world has to offer.

BERT MOORE ("D" Coy. 2/1), of Kirribilli, is a very staunch Committee member, and like all keen committeemen

is always on the lookout for new members. So it was no surprise to receive a letter from him to say he had met Barney Stevens, of "D" Coy. 2/1, at the Randwick races, and enclosed Barney's address (written on a page torn out of the race book).

Together with the address, came Barney's subscription for this year and the past three years, so the Secretary will be sending you back numbers, and welcome to the Association, Barney.

CECIL HANDLEY (H.Q. Coy. 2/1), of Portland, writes to say he is so far behind with his subscription, that perhaps we thought he was dead. Many thanks for your generous donation Cec, and I feel sure the Treasurer would agree you are now up to date.

It is nice to hear your kind regards and remarks regarding the Association Cecil, and to hear you enjoy reading the "Pioneer News". So sorry you could not make it on Anzac Day as you missed a really good day—never mind, try and make it next year.

Many thanks for address and subscription of new member George Creasey. I will arrange for the Secretary to send him back numbers of the Pioneer News, as well as future copies. Cecil sends regards to all his mates in the Pioneers.

ALLEN STONE ("D" Coy. 2/2), of Gateshead, Newcastle, sends along his subscription, for which we thank you. How about some news of what you are doing in private life next time Allen—we know your mates would like to hear all about you.

ANECDOTES ON MOTORISTS

Three fellows travelling to Sydney by car, were practically neck and neck with a train and a crossing coming up, the driver claimed he could make it—his companion in the front seat said not, much arguing, more speed, when no, three piped up, let's hope its not a dead heat.

* * *

A new fire engine acquired by a small country town and the superintendent suggested that an appropriate motto be mounted over the station. After much thought, due deliberation, one old chap suggested "may this fire engine be like the old maids of this village. Always ready, but never called for."

* * *

An old chap acquired a car which became his pride and joy. Cleaned, polished, spick and span, never in trouble, always driven well within the limit, was motoring down Parramatta Road, when coming toward him, a car being driven a little recklessly and bang?? his new car mangled—out gets a lady driver, her husband, a big executive in the city, gave his card and said, "my fault, sir. My husband will pay the damage". The old gent replied, "my fault. I saw you coming four cross streets away, and if I'd had any bloody sense I would have turned into the first one until you had gone by."

PIONEER NEWS

759-5491

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

759-5491

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

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President:
ALLAN McINNES

Vol. 12. No 3.

1st November, 1967

Price: 50c Per Annum

REUNION AT HAMILTON STREET

Once again it's time to think and talk about our Bi-Annual Renuion, but this time it's a Bi-Annual with a difference and also with added advantages. This year your Social Committee has decided to hold our Bi-Annual at a new address and this one will be held at the British Ex-Services Club in the Third Floor Lounge at No. 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney. For those who don't know, Hamilton Street runs off Bond Street on the Circular Quay side of the round Australia Square building.

Now for the added advantages—first of all it's close to Wynyard Railway Station for train and bus transport, also Pitt Street buses. You may come to the Club straight from work. You will be able to buy your evening meal at the Club at the Third Floor Lounge from six o'clock, I will be there at 5 p.m. myself.

In past years our Bi-Annual finished at 10 p.m., but this one starts at 7.30 p.m. and goes till 12 p.m. Your beer and spirits can be bought at Club prices. To add to our comfort the Third Floor Lounge is large and carpeted throughout and there are tables and chairs for everyone, this will be like drinking at home in your own lounge room with your friends.

During the evening everyone will be given—free of charge—a nice supper of fish pieces, meat balls, biscuits and cheese, etc. Anyone that attended our last Annual Meeting can tell you how nice this Club Lounge is. Now don't forget you are able to buy your dinner at the Club from 6 p.m. Our reunion starts in the Third Floor Lounge at 7.30 and finishes at midnight.

Once again our new venue—The British Ex-Services Club, 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney. So apply for your leave pass now for the 17th November. It's not too early, we have made our arrangements, now you make yours.

I will see you there fellows.

Wally (Desso) Page

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

SUNDAY, 12th NOVEMBER, 1967,
AT THE CAMPSIE METHODIST
CHURCH, BY REVEREND STAN
CLAUGHTON.

On Sunday, 12th November, at 7.30 p.m., Reverend Stan Claughton (2/2 Padre) will conduct a Remembrance Service at Campsie Methodist Church, Campsie Street, Campsie.

All 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneers are cordially invited to attend and supper will be served by the ladies afterwards, when no doubt Stan will relate more tales of war days.

This service is increasing each year, as last year saw twelve 2/2 members and three 2/1, so make an effort and show that WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION

We request next of kin of a member to notify Jack Collis, our Welfare Officer, immediately a Pioneer enters hospital, or even before if possible.

Contact by letter or phone Jack Collis, 22 Fisher Street, Auburn, N.S.W. Telephone 648-1509.

WELFARE REPORT

Since our last Pioneer News, many of our mates have been in and out of hospital, some for a week or two and some for quite a long spell.

Roy Cheers (2/1), was down from the country for a visit in Royal Prince Alfred, but has now been discharged. Also in R.P.A. for a long spell and a serious operation was Bob Lee (2/2). I'm also pleased to report Bob is on the mend. Must be the home cooking his wife Joan is giving him. Charlie Vickers has been in Liverpool and Camden Hospitals for a spell and was also discharged in the care of his wife.

Barry Taylor had several months in Concord with a troublesome ulcer and an old friend in Bluey Jones (2/1), was also there for several weeks. Harry Olde and John McCracken (2/1), had a couple of return visits but have since been discharged.

Mick Flynn (2/1), had quite a spell in Concord and has since been discharged to Lady Davidson Convalescent Home for a well earned rest. Ivor Evans and Taffy Lawrence both responded to treatment and were discharged after several weeks and at the present, still in Concord, are Fred Loveless, who has had three rather nasty operations.

Jack Westwood back in with his old heart condition and George Woods (2/2), who has been in Ward 310, Concord, for many weeks.

Just as I am closing this report I have heard that Wally Brown is in Royal North Shore with a broken arm and Phil Pittman is in Concord. We well get over to see them as soon as possible.

Many thanks to the people who informed me when one of theirs was going into hospital and a big thanks to Mick Dodson and Gordon Finlay, for the books they gave me.

J. COLLIS, Welfare Officer.

LAST POST

We are indebted to our Welfare Officer, Jack Collis, for sending along the following information regarding our former members:—

NX52933 Pte. T. S. BROWN, 2/1.
NX172015 Pte. C. J. GRIMSON, 2/1.
NX22127 Pte. J. PATRICK, 2/1.
NX19312 Sgt. J. FERGUSON, 2/1.
NX78267 Pte. G. HAYES, 2/1.
JACK ALLEN (2/1), of Holland Park, Queensland.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to all the above-mentioned members.

STRANGE, BUT TRUE

The facts set out here are strange but true; they are most interesting and they are intriguing. They concern two U.S.A. Presidents, Lincoln and Kennedy.

Lincoln was elected President in 1860, and Kennedy in 1960. Both were shot on a Friday in the presence of their wives. Lincoln's assassin, Booth, was born in 1839, and Kennedy's assassin, Oswald, in 1939. Both were Southerners, who supported causes in disfavour with the general public, and both were murdered before they could be tried.

Both slain Presidents were succeeded by men named Johnson, Lincoln by Andrew Johnson, born in 1808, and Kennedy by Lyndon Johnson, born in 1908.

Lincoln's secretary, whose name was Kennedy, urged him not to go to the theatre where he was slain. Kennedy's secretary, whose name was Lincoln, urged him not to go to Dallas. Booth, the assassin of Lincoln, killed in a theatre and was arrested in a warehouse. Oswald, Kennedy's assassin, killed from a warehouse and was arrested in a theatre.

Fantastic, isn't it.

Wally (Desso) Page

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THE DOCTORS DID TO YOU?

Do you remember when the Army doctors counted your arms and legs; told you "Say Ah!"; counted your teeth; got you to jump up and down; then slapped you affectionately on the backside, said "All Army material" and booted you out to get back into your civilian clothes for the last time?

I was reminded of this rather forcibly when I had to undergo a recent Public Service medical examination. The circumstances may have changed, but the medical methods haven't.

The doctor was a benign old soul. He quizzed me over the top of his glasses and remarked "H'm, that's an odd name you've got. I once knew a chap with a name like that who did 15 years for embezzlement. Was he any relation of yours?"

I denied this with all the quiet dignity I could muster. But how can you muster much quiet dignity when you're sitting in a doctor's chair peeled down to your underpants?

"First of all, we'll test your eyesight," said the doctor, leading me gently by the hand. "Can you see that chart of letters over on that wall?"

"What wall?" I said, remembering the favourite joke when I became a handcuffed volunteer in the A.I.F.

The doctor let this pass, and coached me through the Swahili cuss-words you always see on optical charts.

ISSUED BY THE WAR OFFICE

After he'd done that, the doctor passed me over a little card of test types (marked "Issued by the War Office") and asked me to read to him the smallest type I could see on it.

I had to get out my reading glasses to do this. It wasn't easy making sense out of those little characters that you see in vest-pocket prayer-books.

"Well," said the doctor, when all this was over, "I wouldn't say your eyesight was too bad, but just the same, I wouldn't waste any time putting a deposit on a Seeing Eye Dog!"

Then he led me inside to one of those slabs that you see in all the best morgues, only this one had a sheet and pillow on it.

"Before I examine you on the couch, I'd better check your weight", said the learned man of medicine.

He put me on a sort of weighbridge, checked my avoirdupois against a set of barbell ends they use in the Olympic Games, made a few calculations on a sheet of paper, and commented:

"I'd say you were a chunky kind of character. In fact, you've got what the police call a solid build. But to be truthful, you've got a comic-cuts on you like a barrage balloon. It might be an idea for you to go on a diet of rye biscuits and cold water for about six months.

"If you don't feel like doing that, I'd wear a hat when I went out, or somebody's likely to mistake you for a run-away gasometer!"

JOHN HARNETTY ("C" Coy, 2/1st)

Insulting people, some doctors!

He then produced one of those evil-looking boxes full of glass tubes, rubber pipes and elastic bandages.

He put a bandage around my arm, pumped some air into it with a thing that looked like a rubber custard apple, put on his earphones, and started listening in to the Test scores, which must have been coming in loud and clear in my right wrist.

Suddenly, there was a loud pop, and the apparatus blew up. The doctor stood back bemused, then commented, with a wry grin, "That's the first time that's happened to me since I took the blood pressure of the fat lady in a travelling circus.

"And that blood-pressure of yours is a lulu. It's higher than a loan-shark's interest for a short-term credit on a gold-plated Rolls-Royce.

RYE BISCUITS AND WATER

He passed some more remarks about rye biscuits and cold water, then turned his earphones on to my chest.

He listened, tapping his foot, and commented "Struth, you'd make a fortune at a Highland Gathering. Your left lung is wheezing 'Rakes Kiddan' and the right one is belting out 'Paddy Kelly's Stump'. Got any Scotch in you?"

I replied stiffly that I was a total abstainer during Lent.

"That's a phenomenon and a half," said the doctor. "I'll write an article for the Medical Journal about it."

Then he whipped out a chunk of painter's scaffolding, rammed it down my gullet, and murmured reassuringly, "Just say 'Ugh'." (That bit was dead easy. What the hell else can you say when somebody's trying to throttle you internally with a lump of four-by-two?)

After he'd shoved the timber down about as far as my rib-cage, the doctor retrieved what was left of it, and remarked, "Pretty rough job they did on your tonsils. Did they operate with a buzz-saw?"

I replied that the surgical marks were just the results of a party joke when I swallowed a packet of razor blades without the wrappings.

"And that tongue of yours! Cripes, I haven't seen a fur coat like that since I was in the R.A.A.F. and the navigator plotted us down in the Aleutian Islands among the Polar bears when we should have been in Montreal", he said.

"That navigator must have been a prize mug," I commented sympathetically. "In fact, he sounds like the kind of clot who couldn't find a corner pub with a compass and a road-guide. Were you the flight-surgeon on that flip?"

"No!" said the doctor testily. "I was the navigator!"

Having got over this bit of bad judgment on my part, the doctor went on with his examination. He examined my skull, and gave a very professional "Tsk! Tsk!" as he fingered the scar that adorns my balding crown.

"A nasty crack you have there," he murmured, with just a mite of sympathy. "Was it a shrapnel wound?"

"It happened in Korea," I said remissly. "And all because I was a big enough dill to whistle 'The Battle of the Boyne' at the St. Patrick's Day celebrations of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers."

"Ah, well, now we'll have a look at your teeth," said the doctor, as he pulled out another length of painter's scaffolding.

He was kind about my teeth. He said he hadn't seen such gaps and holes since he took his wife on their honeymoon trip to Jenolan Caves.

TAPE MEASURE ON LIVER

He got down to my liver. He played a bit of a Bach Fugue on it, and his fingering was delicate, particularly in the pianissimo passages. Then he took out an inch tape and measured the liver. I might add that he nearly ran out of tape.

"What's the matter with it, doctor?" I exclaimed anxiously. "Are you going to send a description of it to a specialist?"

"Don't be a dope, you dope!" he snarled. "I'm sending these figures to the Rugby Football League. They'll make a design for a ball that will make me famous. But don't worry. I'll cut you in on the royalties. That's all. You can get dressed now!"

Then, as an afterthought, he said, coyly, "Before I forget it, you'd better go over and see Sister, and she'll arrange for you to give a Specimen."

Brethren, have you ever tried to give a Specimen, when your body says you can, but your mind says you can't?

I worked on this job with running taps, and succeeded in producing enough of a Specimen to fill the bottom of a particularly small eye-dropper.

I shamefully covered the pathetic Specimen with the towel provided, and embarrassedly confessed the drought to Sister.

She merely laughed, and said comfortingly, "It's always like that, so don't worry about it. You'll find in about ten minutes you'll be gushing like Burrinjuck Dam!" She was right!

I went back and clambered into my clothes, and the doctor was writing busily on his little pad. "Here's a chap I think you should see down the road. He may be able to help you."

"What is he, doctor?" queried I, with voice all a-tremble. "Is he a famous pathologist or some other sort of ologist?"

"No, dear boy, he's a lawyer, and he'll draw you up the nicest little will you've ever seen. That's all, I think. Goodbye!"

Somehow, I didn't like the tone of finality in that goodbye!

[Editors' Note: Thanks, John, for this excellent article and we do hope you will keep more coming along.—Max and Bob.]



Another Mailbag to hand and, as usual with this time of the year, news from all and sundry is very scarce. I would say about one dozen letters, so I have nothing to cry about with writer's cramp.

This issue only two from the 2/2 boys, however they have been very good over the last few issues so will forgive them this time.

JIM DARRAGH (2/2), and now a resident of Gladstone Street, South Melbourne, sends along a big hello to all, with a special mention for "Speed" Gordon, "Chum" Brown, Alan Stone, Bill Barnes, and Syd Booth and Eric Lyndsay, both of whom he saw when they were holidaying Melbourne way. Jim attended the local Melbourne reunion and saw many old faces and enjoyed the company—a good time was had by all. Thanks for the sub., Jim. It is now in the hands of our worthy treasurer.

VICTOR CLARK (2/2), and now at Ringwood East, Victoria, sends along a sub. and a request for the earlier editions of the "News". Victor was in Sydney some years back. Well, Victor, I should imagine that your request would have been forwarded by the time this goes to press, so I can only wish you luck in regard to getting some news of your old mates. However, as you know, new names keep cropping up all the time.

RAY WISEMAN ("D" Coy. 2/1), and now at Hurstville, Sydney, sends along a cherry letter, but one that contained the unwelcome news that he would have to resign from the committee. Well, Ray, we have to accept the resignation with regret. Sorry to hear of the ill fortune with your father and mother and hope she is able to recover from her illness. Ray is also secretary of the B.M.C. Bowling Club and is kept rather busy with that job. Looking forward to seeing you at the smoko in November.

JACK MARSHALL ("D" Coy. 2/1) is now a man of the country area—Glen Innes. Jack speaks of the new R.S.L. Club at Glen Innes and of Jack Rodgers, who is the cleaner. He quotes that they are to supply Jack with a bike when building is finished so that he may complete his duties in the one day.

Of course, what Jack is intimating is that the new building is on the big side. Joking aside, Jack speaks of Tom Manuel, who has had a few x-rays for a bad back (getting a bit old for that now, isn't he); of Ted Felton, foreman of the timber mill in Glen Innes and

owner of a fast-receding head of hair—that's in the letter, Ted, I didn't make it up (Lakey).

Now, here comes the scandal! It appears that both Jack Marshall and Leo Ferris have daughters of the Gold Coast age and both girls spend their holidays at same. Some of them anyway, because they also spent some time at Glen Innes and at Kyogle (purse strings must have got undone somewhere). However, everything must have went off o.k. and Doreen Ferris, after a well-earned holiday, toddled back to Perth, where she is a sister in a hospital.

I'll just say one thing to that: they can never say that girl hangs on to the apron strings—it would be a fair string that stretches from Kyogle to Perth. So much for news, Jack, it's a personal hello and good wishes from Peg and Max Herron, David and Lynn, and let's have no more of that "don't know what to write about" kind of letter.

ALBERT WINDON ("Singapore Joe", "B" Coy. 2/1), and now living at Palm Beach, joined the Pioneers in New Guinea with his brother Donald. Albert only writes a few lines, but makes special mention of Jack Westwood. Albert works on the waterfront in Sydney and often runs into Clarrie Pakes, Laurie Fitzhenry and Jack Lloyd. Your message to Jack Westwood passed on personally, Albert, not through the paper.

JIM IRELAND ("D" Coy. 2/1), and now at Toowong, Queensland, writes a bit of news plus a few new addresses. Copies of previous issues have been sent to these members, Jim, keep up the good work. Jim works for the Repat. in Brisbane and welcomes any fellow Pioneer who wants to call at Brisbane. Jim's list of new members is as follows:

Desmond Owen (2/1), Leslie de Tenson (2/1, from the 65th Batt.), Thomas Burston (Lt. 2/2), John Quoyale (2/2) and Harold McCarthy (2/2). Good work, Jim, it all helps to keep the roll book full.

MRS. JAMES RAINE, of McMaster's Beach, writes a nice letter to the secretary with a news contribution. Jim Raine was sergeant in the 2/1 Pioneer Btn. in Tobruk and the family were long friends with our C.O., Arnold Brown, and family. Jim volunteer for a special duty behind the enemy lines, where he was captured and became a prisoner-of-war. Thanks a lot for your letter, Joan Raine, and we hope that you get some enjoyment from our little paper.

WAL. SMITH ("B" Coy. 2/1), and now of Sans Souci, sends along a subscription for the "News" and the excuse that he somehow got tied up at the local R.S.L. and found it too late to come to our turn-out. Must have had a good day, Wally. Who took you home? However, as long as everyone had a good day, I suppose that is what really counts, but keep in mind the Biannual in November.

IVAN PEPPER ("B" Coy. 2/1), and now at Mayfield, via Newcastle, sends along a letter with the passing parade—Jack Smith ("B" Coy.) Stan Wilson often sees Don Crooks, where he is a pretty good R.C. at the Parkview Hotel, Islington. Ivan did not make the grade on Anzac Day, but at least his reason was almost original—reckons he can't take mid-week hangovers. After last year, old boy, I think I might go along with you on that.

ERNIE LUNN ("C" Coy. 2/1), and now at Carinda, out Coonamble way, sends along a cheque and the information that his Anzac Day was quite up to the standard. He travelled over to Walgett for the day, but took things fairly quietly, as he had a 44-mile drive home. Ern. is a stock and station agent at Carinda, and remarks that though the town and district are still recovering from the recent drought, there is good feed about, which makes the outlook so much brighter. Recently said good-day to Mick Bye, from Goodooga. All were over at the Barwon R.S.A.A.A. Sports in Walgett—an all school event, where teams from Walgett, Collarenebri, Goodooga, Carinda and Lightning Ridge compete in an athletic carnival.

BERN REINERS (H.Q. Coy. Sig. Pln. 2/1), of Corryong, writes to say how pleased he was to see his old mates Doug Shearston, Bob McGregor and Max Herron when he recently flew to Sydney.

Bern. was only in Sydney for two days, but in that time the Herrons took him everywhere and wore him down, so that in the end he was pleased to return to quiet home life.

Bern states in his letter that he missed out on an invitation to open Murray I Power Station with Harold Holt, but perhaps Harold may call on him for other important functions.

Bern. and Mona send their regards to all. Many thanks for your donation, Bern.

ERIC REYNOLDS ("D" Coy. 2/1), of Coogee, writes to say he recently had a holiday at Canberra, and on visiting

(Continued on page four)



REUNION

BRITISH EX-SERVICES CLUB, 5th FLOOR, 5 HAMILTON STREET, SYDNEY
FRIDAY, 17th NOVEMBER, 1967, AT 7.30 P.M.

MAILBAG—Continued

the Australian War Memorial found on the Honour Roll names from "D" Coy. 2/1 like Keith Jones, Ray Smithers and others.

Previous to his stay in Canberra Eric had a few days at Jenolan Caves, where he relaxed at the hotel. He said the meals were very good, the beer even better and, of course, the wine was the best of all. No wonder Eric was called "Bombo" in the Army days—looks as though he still lives up to it.

Daughter Alison could not go with them this time, as she starts her third year nursing at the Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick and has just completed her three months' course at the Women's Royal Hospital, Paddington. We wish you every success, Alison.

Eric still works at McPhersons Ltd., and states he always has plenty to do.

Many thanks for your most interesting letter, Eric, and please give our regards to your wife and family.

MICK ROBERTS, of Leeton, was instructed by Phil Mahey to write and send a donation. Thanks, Mick and Phil, for the donation and your praise of our work at this end.

Mick sends regards to all his mates and in particular to Max Law, in South Australia.

Well, mates, that is the Mailbag for this issue. I am sorry that there is not more, but it's up to you blokes to make it better reading, as I've said in previous editions. I could name a score of chaps who could put a pen to paper and give some local news of their district. Still, we will see what happens in the next issue and see if we can get some marked improvements in the newspaper.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Ivor Garnon, Sitting Master of the Hunters Hill Lodge, extends an open invitation to any Masonic Brethren of the association to attend a Remembrance Service on the second Thursday in November, 9th November, 1967.

This Lodge is well known for the dignity and sincerity of this very impressive service and I do trust that the Pioneers will be well to the fore on this important occasion.

I will be grateful for your support if any Brother wishes to come along. Please write or ring me.

Ivor Garnon, NX19777,
Ex-2/1 Pnr. Bandsman.

116 High Street
Hunter's Hill. 89-4837.

VALE KEITH GARLAND

NX85076

It is with regret that we report the passing away of Keith Garland (2/1), of Balgowlah.

Keith died of a heart attack on the 4th September, and we extend our sincere sympathy to his wife, Norma, and children, Philip (24), Tony (21), Vicky (17), Kathy (16), Elizabeth (14) and John (11).

Philip is a Bombardier in an Artillery Unit at Holdsworthy, and is shortly to go to Vietnam. To you Philip, and your wife Rosemarie, we wish you the very best of health and happiness.

THE KOKODA TRAIL, 1942

This year the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fighting on the Kokoda Trail, a battle recognised as the most crucial in Australia's history, will take place. The following description was prepared by officers of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

The year 1942 saw the gravest threat to Australia's security in the history of this young nation. The victorious Japanese armies controlled the area within an arc which embraced the Western Pacific passed through the Solomons and New Guinea and south of the Indies to Burma. This arc pressed down almost upon Australia whose nearest friendly neighbours on either side, the United States and India, were now disadvantageously placed. Japanese triumph was at its height and it seemed that, at a time of their own choosing, they could take Papua—the sole remaining area held by our troops north of Australia. Port Moresby, the principal town and port of Papua appeared ripe for the picking.

The Owen Stanley Ranges campaign in the second half of 1942 was the third prong of a Japanese attack to gain possession of Port Moresby.

The enemy's first attempt a naval movement, had been frustrated in the Battle of the Coral Sea in May, 1942. An attack on Milne Bay in the following August also resulted in defeat—his first reverse of the war on land.

The third prong, a drive over the Owen Stanleys from Gona-Buna, came perilously close to success, reaching to within thirty air miles of Port Moresby.

On 21st July, 1942, Japanese troops began to land near Gona, a few miles from Buna on the northeast coast of Papua, and started to move inland at once. The role of this force was to test the possibilities of a track which began in this area, ran to the village of Kokoda and then across the Owen Stanley Range to Port Moresby. Kokoda itself was vital because of its position on the route and especially because it possessed the only airfield in the rugged mountain country. This track was little used and was considered by military authorities as impassable to any large-scale military movement and quite impassable in its main length to vehicles of any kind.

At the time of the Japanese landing at Gona the garrison at Port Moresby consisted mainly of two untried militia brigades of infantry. To oppose the Japanese advance over the beginning of the Kokoda Trail there was only the

Papuan Infantry Battalion (a native unit with a watching and reconnaissance task led by Australian officers and N.C.O.'s) and elements of the 39th C.M.F. Battalion. These few hundred men, known as Maroubra Force, were pitted again nearly 2,000 Japanese.

The first clash occurred near Awala, a few miles inland, on the 23rd July, when about 150 Australians, with some Papuan Infantry, found themselves engaged first against Japanese patrols, who rode bicycles, and later against about 600 well-armed and well-equipped infantry. After a brief fight the Australians fell back and, heavily outnumbered, began a fighting withdrawal across the Kumusi River at Wairope, through Gorari and Oivi to Kokoda. Here the enemy attacked in strength early on the 29th July and the Australians were forced out of the village. The enemy did not hold the position with all his strength and a counter-attack by the Australians drove him out. The triumph was brief, however, and by 10th August overwhelming pressure again forced the small garrison out of Kokoda.

Additional Japanese units were thrown into the fighting and on the 26th August, three enemy battalions attacked the worn-out Australians at Isurava and the withdrawal began again. Meanwhile the first A.I.F. brigades of the 6th and 7th Australian Divisions, which had returned from the Middle East earlier in the year, began to arrive in Papua. The first elements of the 21 Infantry Brigade A.I.F. arrived on the 13th August, 1942. These were the men of the 2/14th Battalion.

At this time the intentions of the Japanese were not exactly known. They had, as stated above, landed at Gona and pushed through the hills of Kokoda to determine the feasibility of the track for a large-scale movement to Port Moresby.

Favourable reports by the Japanese commander, Major-General Horii, based on the success of his advance at that stage, prompted General Hyakutake in Rabaul to issue orders for the overland attack on Port Moresby, the capture of which was planned by 21st September, 1942.

(Continued in next issue "News")

● CUT THIS OUT AND PUT IN YOUR POCKET AS A REMINDER

Place: BRITISH EX-SERVICES CLUB
Address: 5th FLOOR, 5 HAMILTON STREET, SYDNEY
Date: FRIDAY, 17th NOVEMBER, 1967
Admission: FREE — ONLY CHARGE IS FOR DRINKS
Membership: ALL 2/1 AND 2/2 PIONEERS AND FRIENDS
Reason: BI-ANNUAL REUNION
Time: 7.30 P.M.