

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

Correspondence: Secretary, MAX HERRON, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills. 2209

Treasurer:
DOUG. SHEARSTON

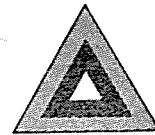
Editors: J. HARNETTY,
R. LAKE and M. HERRON

President:
ALLAN McINNES

Vol. 14, No. 1

1st April, 1969

Price: 50c Per Annum



ANZAC FUNCTIONS, 1969

It appears we have just finished balancing our books on our bi-annual, and here it is time to start our annual functions. As you all must realise these things just don't happen, there are many hours of work go into the arrangement of the following functions, your committee works hard for you but we don't want your thanks we just want you to turn up at all of the following:

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

THURSDAY, APRIL 24 (2/1 and 2/2)

The 2/1 and the 2/2 Battalion Association will be laying wreaths on the Cenotaph in Martin Place, Sydney at 7.30 p.m. to pay homage to our fallen mates and to those who have passed away since 1945. To us this is a very important part of our Anzac functions. Each year our ranks get a little bigger, so how about this year making it a real whopper, we would like that! So please meet us at 7 p.m. outside No. 19 Hunter Street, Sydney on Thursday April 24, 1969.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 24 (2/1 and 2/2)

Immediately after our wreath laying ceremony the 2/1 and the 2/2 Battalions Association hold their Annual General Meeting. This is where you get your chance to have your say in how your association should be run and who should run it. As most of you fellows will be at the wreath laying, there is no need for me to tell you where the meeting will be held—just follow the committee, but for those who simply can't make it to the Cenotaph, the Pioneers Annual General Meeting will be held at 8 p.m., Thursday, April 24 on the third floor of British Ex-Servicemen's Club, No. 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney. Please join us.

ANZAC DAY MARCH AND REUNIONS

FRIDAY, APRIL 25 (2/1 and 2/2)

Now there is a good day to have a march—we have two days to get over it before we don the harness again. Again we would like to see a big roll up to follow our banners to Hyde Park. We are going to impose on Bill Jolley again to get us a band as he did last year.

And now for our starting points for the 2/1. They assemble in Phillip Street at the King Street end. For the 2/2 they assemble in Macquarie Street outside the Sydney Hospital.

The 2/2 Battalion will be holding their reunion at the York Hotel situated in King Street opposite the Grace Building, and are looking forward to a really good roll up.

Any of the 2/2 are more than welcome to join the 2/1 Reunion at the quarter deck lounge of the Castlereagh Hotel on the corner of Castlereagh and Park Streets after we break off in Hyde Park.

AFTER THE MARCH

As in previous years, we are again going to give all who join us at the Castlereagh Hotel a free hot meal. We will endeavour to have everyone fed before the bars open at midday. Then again during the afternoon we will have quite a large free snack for you. All we ask for for our efforts, is a big roll call and a fine day.

One last request—we ask every member to wear his medals at all these functions.

—Wally (Desso) Page.

LETTER FROM OUR BUGLER

Snowy Mountains Hostel,
19th February, 1969.

Dear Max,

Please forgive the official letterhead, I couldn't find any other paper. "Dawn" roll is far too thin.

At the moment I am working down here in the Cooma Inspectorate, amongst the Alps and the various power plants the Snowy Mountains Authority have built since 1950. Most of the work has been completed. There's only Blowering Power Plant, Tumut Power Station No. 3 and Jounama Dam to do — expected to be finished by 1972.

The scenery here is breath-taking; great mountains that reach up into the sky. All the tunnelling feeds water from Lake Eucumbene into the Murrumbidgee, which is known as Snowy-Tumut Development. The other section runs water into the Murray, known as Snowy-Murray Development. The scheme will cost \$800 million, expecting to take 75 years to repay, but after you have seen what great vast areas of N.S.W. and Victoria will be irrigated, the farmers do not pay for the water, only electricity; which power lines travel up to Sydney and down to Melbourne also. It's a working tour, most enjoyable.

Aub. Brafler (Bugler)

JOCK ARMOUR AND THE 2/1 BAND

I was indeed very pleased to meet up again with Jim (Jock) Armour who was the Director of our Band, which was one of the very best in the Second A.I.F.

Between twenty-eight and thirty fellows from all over the State, complete strangers to one another, formed our Regimental Band and old Jock took over as the master, and what a colossal job they did under his direction. He was an accomplished musician himself, having travelled widely in that profession, and being Master of the N.S.W. Tramway Band. The 2/1st Pioneer Battalion was indeed very lucky to have him as their Regimental Bandmaster.

Much could be written of their activities at Greta, Dubbo and even going over to the Middle East on the "Johan De Witt" where every evening the band would assemble on the fore deck and render community items.

One recalls how enthusiastic the Dutch crew were when they played "The Windmill's Turning" and how loyally they sang to it.

My mind goes back to Dubbo where immediately after "Reveille" the Band would march around our Camp Area playing "Good Morning" which was one of the top hits of that time. This was on every morning, but on one occasion they did not march which caused great speculation. After many enquiries it transpired the cooks were not woken up early enough to make the coffee for the Band.

Well, old Jock has now retired from the Dept. of Road Transport at Rosebery, and conducts the Gallipoli Band at the Leger at Randwick, and would love to meet any old Pioneers.

He also has a troupe of musicians which do a lot of travelling around the Suburbs doing Night Clubs and Socials.

Anyway, we had a great old chat, and later I sent him all the old Pioneer News available which he was very thankful for.

Jim has asked me per medium of this Journal to send all his good wishes and regards to all the old Pioneers and invites Pioneers out at Randwick to call on him.

Harry Montague.

1968 BI-ANNUAL REUNION

It disheartens me to have to report once again that our Bi-Annual Reunion in November last was very poorly attended. We expected and catered for 60 members, but our attendance was only 34 members.

We can't understand the reason for this, but we are accepting the view that most members patronise their own R.S.L. clubs rather than come along and meet their own mates. We consider it isn't much to ask for you to patronise the two functions a year that we arrange for you (namely our Bi-Annual, and Anzac Day). Your Committee works for you, they work to keep the association alive for you, so next time how about showing your appreciation by making an appearance.

Those who made the effort were treated to a sit-down dinner, free of charge. We had ladies to serve our drinks, all members remarked what a good night they had. For those who have not been to the British Ex-Service-men's Club, let me tell you it's just as comfortable as being in your own lounge room at home, only you have more company. Remember you won't feel like a stranger at our Bi-Annual. We are all mates.

BI-ANNUAL CHIT-CHAT

ROY BOUNDS. Was at the Bi-Annual, nice to see you, Roy. Although Roy looks well at times he doesn't feel it, he moved down from Newcastle to Maroubra, so that he could be closer to Repat. for treatment for his heart complaint. Thanks for coming, Roy, look after that "ticker".

TED SKOYLES. Is one bloke that always makes it up from Wollongong. We wondered why Ted didn't make it up to the Grafton Reunion. He told us that his wife was very ill and he couldn't leave her, we understand that Ted, we wish both you and your wife well and hope by this all is perfect. Ted tells me that he is enjoying his long service leave. Good luck to you, see you Anzac Day.

JACK BERTRAM. Here is another one who is always with us. Thanks for coming down Jack, how did the wedding go? Keep up the good work for us up North, we appreciate what you have done for us. Good luck to you and yours.

JACK COLLIS. Down from Umina (near Woy Woy). Jack tells me that he and Billy Tasker were both selected to represent N.S.W. R.S.L. Clubs in cricket. Jack, although he lives at Umina, plays cricket for Auburn and Bill plays for Hurlstone Park, Canterbury. They played for N.S.W. against Victorian R.S.L. in Victoria over Christmas, I haven't got the results but we hope we won, I know this series is very serious cricket. Good luck to you both.

NIP KERSLEY. Down from Ourimbah to say hello and enjoy our Reunion. Nipper tells me he has sold his property at Ourimbah and at the moment is a gentleman of leisure, but he's too young to retire as yet, he still has a lot of life in him. Good luck, Nip.

SAM LEWIS. Came along to have a drink with us and he look well too. Sam was living at North Ryde, but now is with the upper class at Dee Why. Nice to see you Sam.

SNOWY HEMMINS. He's George to some people, but Snowy to his mates. Snowy is another one that looks too young to be on Long Service Leave but The Sydney County Council says he has earned it so he gets it. Good luck Snowy or do I have to call you George.

BOB LAKE. Came along with his son Bill. Bob's throat trouble doesn't affect his drinking and he enjoys himself as much as anyone else. Nice to see you Bob and our wishes for a complete recovery go to you.

MONTY MONTAGUE. Is helping Jack Collis with hospital calls, and our thanks go to you Monty for the wonderful job you're doing. I know Jack appreciates your help and we all know what a stirring job Jack has done in the past, thanks to you both.

Monty told me he received a letter from Claude Campbell, thanking him for visiting him while he was in hospital in Sydney. Hope you are O.K. now Claude, our best to you.

CLAUDE McKEIG. Nice to see you Claude. Claude told me that three course Kelly was driving a coach in the TV series of "Whip Lash." I don't know how true it was but I'm not surprised.

ALBERT BROWN. Was with us as he was on Anzac Day and again he extended the hospitality of his farm at Badgery Creek, so Bob and Joyce McGregor, their two daughters, Jill and Linda and son-in-law Pat Doyle, Daisy and Harry Mostyn, Mick Dodson, Gordon Finlay and of course Wal and Lall Page and son Ross all accepted the invitation and turned up expecting to have a good day, which we more than did. It was a terrific day which Albert and Eileen Brown put on for us, we enjoyed it so much, that we are going back.

But we will be in touch with you before we come Albert and Eileen, thanks again for a wonderful day, our best to you and your family.

MICK REGAN. I had a talk with Mick at the Reunion, and I asked him to see if he could encourage more of his 2/2 mates to come to the Reunion. I would like to say to you 2/2 boys, you aren't separate from us you are with us in this 2/1-2/2 Association. We are all one now so join Mick and come along. Thanks for coming Mick, come again and bring a mob with you. Our best to you all.

JACK HARVEY. Thanks for your letter Jack about the lawn bowls, so far you're the only one to answer my request for bowls players, so here I will make another appeal. We have three players who would like to get enough Pioneers to have bowls matches once

a month. We can find the greens all we need is your name and a promise to turn up, how about it fellows. Incidentally Jack Harvey is a member of the Ramsgate R.S.L. Bowling Club. Let us know where you play, even if you play golf, let us know your club. Maybe we can get up a golf day for the Pioneers, we are open for suggestions, we are here to help you.

Let's hear from you, Pioneers.

Wally (Desso) Page

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

With the increasing number of members in hospital we now have two welfare officers on the job in the form of Jack Collis and Harry Montague, so we do suggest you contact either of these gentlemen when going into hospital.

Jack visits Concord Repatriation on the weekends and can be contacted at 24 Hobart Avenue, Umina, 2257.

Harry visits Concord Repatriation every Thursday night and public hospitals on Sundays. Harry notifies us that he can arrange accommodation for the next of kin of country members who are on the dangerously ill list. Harry can be contacted at 46 Pomeroy Street, Homebush, 2140. Phone 76-6657.

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT

The past three months have been busy ones with eleven visits to Concord Repatriation and 22 visits to Public hospitals.

Age seems to be taking its toll but these visits with a chat of old times and the gifts of sweets and books cheer up the members considerably.

It is also a help when in Concord Repatriation to hear of another member in another ward and a reunion that follows usually extends over many days, because some of these members have not seen one another since discharge.

In regard to Pensions, members are advised by our Welfare Officer who to contact at the Hospital and many cases have been successful.

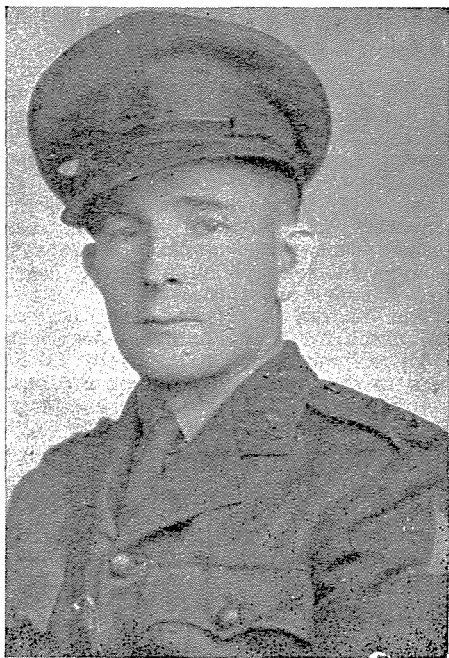
Six new members have been enrolled and this is mainly due to the staff on the gate at Concord Repat., who have the names of members ready for the Welfare Officer.

We send out an appeal to all members to call on two of our members who are very sick and they are:— Vic Walmsley of B. Coy. (2/1), who is at the Aged Peoples' Home, 600 Victoria Rd., Ryde. Viv Parkinson is at Calvary Terminal Hospital, Kogarah.

The following members have been visited at Concord Repatriation and some on numerous occasions as figures denote.

2/2: Robert Hopkins, Roy Swanson 4; 2/1 H.Q.: Fred Loveless; A. Coy.: Tom Crick 7, Hubert Gill 4, Norm Pittman 2, George Cook 6; B. Coy.: Syd Wickens 4; C. Coy.: John Hart, Joe Hickey, John Carrol, John Morton 2, George Baines 4, John Maund 3; D. Coy.: Norm Stafford, George Buckley 2, Stan Barling 5, Ernie Warner 6, Herbert Weedon 3; H.Q. Coy.: Bill Thomas 2, Lance Wilson 4, Frank De-lander 3.

H. Montague.



The late Phil Elliston, C. Coy., 2/1 Pioneer Btn.

A VETERAN OF TOBRUK

Narooma residents — and in fact the whole district — were shocked and sorry to learn of the sudden death of Mr. Philip Elliston. Phil, as he was affectionately known was one of nature's gentlemen; liked and esteemed by all with whom he came into contact.

Born at Walton-on-Thames in Surrey, England, he arrived in Australia with his new bride, Doreen, in 1937. In 1938 he joined the Militia Forces and was called up for service with C. Coy. of the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion, Second A.I.F., on the night the announcement of the war was broadcast.

He saw active service in the Middle East and was one of that loyal and determined body of men who withstood the siege of Tobruk, being commissioned as a lieutenant in the field. He later took part in the epic climb of the Kokoda Trail.

For some time Phil was a traveller for a large firm of wholesale grocers (PDS), his territory covering most parts of the South Coast and Southern Tablelands. He was so taken with the beauty of Narooma that he purchased and settled on his property, "Sunbury", overlooking Fosters Bay. He had a fine turn of wit, was exceptionally well read and was most knowledgeable.

At the time of his death he held the position of district clerk with Bega Valley County Council; he was a member of the R.S.L. sub-branch and the Masonic Order, and a former Legatee, to all of which he gave most loyal, courteous and conscientious service.

His untimely death at the comparatively early age of 55 has left a void which will be hard to fill.

Cremation took place on August 14 at the Wollongong Crematorium.

The deepest sympathy of all goes out to his widow and their two sons.

Vale, Phil!

—Courtesy Moruya Examiner.

THE LAKE STORY

Each year the Pioneer News gives its members a story about one of the Committeemen, and you will remember we have covered famous personalities like Max Law, Alf Carter, Jack Westwood, Jack Collis, Allan McInnes, Vic Whiteley and Bob McGregor—well now, we give you a coverage on one of the Editors—Bob Lake.

As a member of the Association, Bob Lake's name appeared in the minutes of the Inaugural meeting of the Association held at the Deaf and Dumb Society rooms, Elizabeth Street, Sydney, on Wednesday, March 13, 1946.

Naturally enough, Bob's name appeared as a proposer for a Smoko to be held on Anzac Day, 1946.

From that date Bob has been a very keen Committeeman, holding such positions as Master of Arms (which entails marshalling of Troops at marches, and attending to refreshments at our functions), Pioneer News Editor and Mail Bag Editor.

Bob joined the A.I.F. in June, 1940, and joined the 2/1 Pioneers at Dubbo. He sailed on the Johan De Witt with the reinforcement company and on arrival at Julis Camp, Palestine, 1940, he transferred to the Transport platoon, where he remained throughout the war.

On returning to Palestine from Tobruk, Bob was elected to be the Colonel's driver. Bob was with the 2/1 Pioneers right through to New Guinea and Borneo.

Members would no doubt know Bob best as the bloke on the door at our functions with Bob McGregor.

BOB, JOAN LAKE AND FAMILY

Bob and his wife Joan have three children: Bill, Eileen and Gail. They live at Brookvale and Bob is a very keen football follower—he plays golf when time permits and of course he still likes his jug of beer.

On taking over the Mail Bag in 1963 from Vic and Peg Whiteley, Bob called on his daughter Gail to assist by doing the typing. Gail very quickly took up the challenge and continued to do the typing up to the time of her marriage in 1966. Gail and her husband Jim live

at Frenchs Forest, not far from Mum and Dad, and are the proud parents of a son Gary (some people claim he has the misfortune to look like his grandfather).

Number two daughter Eileen now took over from Gail and carried on the good work of doing the Mail Bag typing. Eileen is to be married on March 8 and the happy event will be over by the time you read this paper. However she has volunteered to carry on the Pioneer News Mail Bag until such time as she retires from her position at the A.B.C. which (barring accident) should be about two years.

Both girls have enjoyed the task of the Mail Bag and still enjoy meeting members and their wives at functions such as the Wreath Laying ceremony and social gatherings.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE AT LAKE'S

Each February the whole social committee proceed to Bob and Joan's place for their Annual Social Committee meeting and Joan turns on a really scrumptious supper. All members come away from such a friendly gathering with renewed energy to handle the affairs of the Association in the forthcoming year. Like me they feel all the better for knowing such people like Joan and Bob Lake and family.

—Max Herron, Hon. Sec.

2/2 NEWS JOTTINGS

● Had a visit from Frances Shea, wife of Col. Shea, of 2/2. Frances came over from Melbourne to farewell their son, Bernard who sailed for Vietnam on the H.M.A.S. Sydney.

Bernard is a National Serviceman who volunteered for overseas service.

All Pioneers wish him well and a safe return to his family.

● Our condolences are extended to Rev. Stan Cloughton on the passing away of his mother, aged 87 years, on November 16, 1968.

● The Rev. Cloughton will be conducting his usual memorial service at the Methodist Church, Wetherill Street, Leichhardt, on November 9, 1969, and he is looking forward to a good attendance of the Pioneers and their families.



~~~~~  
*AT RIGHT: Bob Lake posing with his two daughters, Eileen, on left, and Gail.*  
~~~~~

THE FIGHTING SHIP THEY COULD NOT SCRAP

On Thursday, February 13, the R.A.N. destroyer H.M.A.S. Arunta capsized and sank 60 miles east of Broken Bay, while being towed to a Taiwan scrap yard.

The destroyer was being towed unmanned, guns spiked, by the Japanese tug, Toko Maru.

Arunta was launched from Cockatoo Dockyard in 1942 and only a few months later sank the Japanese submarine, RO33, off Port Moresby.

It fought in the savage full-scale naval battle off the Suriago Straits, leading a column of destroyers in a close-range torpedo attack on Japanese ships.

It figured in the battle of Milne Bay and the recapture of Manus, Biak, Noemfoor and other stepping-stones before taking part in the massive landing at Leyte.

Arunta later served in Korea and Malaya. Then came 11 years in reserve and final sale for scrap. Her two sister ships, Bataan and Warramunga, had already gone to the breakers' yards. But this grand old ship decided this was not for her and instead she "turned turtle".

ARUNTA ESCORTS D COY. (2/1)

The story of the Arunta capsize no doubt brought a lump to the throat of every D. Coy. (2/1) member who sailed on the M.V. Anshun from Brisbane on the 29th August, 1942, en route for Milne Bay.

After leaving Townsville on the 2nd September, the Anshun was escorted by the Arunta and on the evening of the 4th September a Japanese cruiser took up the chase.

The captain of the Arunta brought the destroyer alongside the small Chinese supply ship and informed the Captain, per medium of a megaphone, that the Jap cruiser was following them and asked what was the fastest speed he could go. The Anshun Captain replied with eight knots and was then told to clap it on and that the Arunta would move east and attempt to draw off the cruiser.

The Anshun arrived at the Gili Gili jetty, Milne Bay, on the 5th September

and after D Coy. (2/1) had disembarked was sunk by the Japanese cruiser.

At the same time the hospital ship, Manunda, was only a mile away, but the cruiser did not harm her, even though they shone their searchlight all over the ship.

It was reported that Catalinas sighted the Jap cruiser the next day and led our bombers to her and was very smartly sunk.

THE BATTLE FOR MILNE BAY

The full story is one of high courage and human endurance; a story of unbelievably difficult conditions, of nerves and stamina strained to breaking point, of an enemy whose fanatical resistance was equalled only by his barbarism. It is a story of drama, but not of dramatics.

Much has been written of atrocities alleged to have been committed by the Japanese. Some of this was propaganda, but it has been established beyond doubt that the Japanese committed barbaric acts against our troops which branded them as the lowest order of savages. Evidence of specific cases of enemy atrocities existed, as did evidence of their barbarism.

Japanese savagery also manifested itself in the shooting of their own troops attempting to surrender, and the shooting of wounded who could not be evacuated. Japanese have posed as dead and have shot those of our men about to give honourable burial to the enemy dead.

It was easy and understandable when the Japanese triumph was at its height, and when the threat to Australia was most grave and imminent, to regard the Japanese as a super soldier. Just as Europe regarded the German when Hitler's jack-booted legions stormed across prostrate countries to the Baltic Sea, the English Channel, and the Atlantic Ocean. Of the Japanese soldier it has been said, though not in these

words, that he was the nearest thing in human form to a bush animal. That is very true. Coupled with treachery, quick cunning, and a standard of living lower than that of most domesticated animals, with slavish obedience to his superiors, an ability to withstand conditions that would appal a European, and an ideology which preferred death to surrender or capture.

But he was no superman and he was no match for Australian and American soldiers who could be trained, as he was, in the wiles and strategy of jungle warfare. If the Papuan campaign proved anything, it proved that.

PLAN TO TAKE MORESBY

To recount this history of the campaign as concisely as possible, it is necessary to recapitulate, briefly, facts relevant to the commencement of hostilities. The enemy planned to capture Port Moresby by the third or fourth week in September 1942 with a triple offensive movement from Milne Bay along the south-western coast, by naval assault of the south coast, and through the Owen Stanley Ranges.

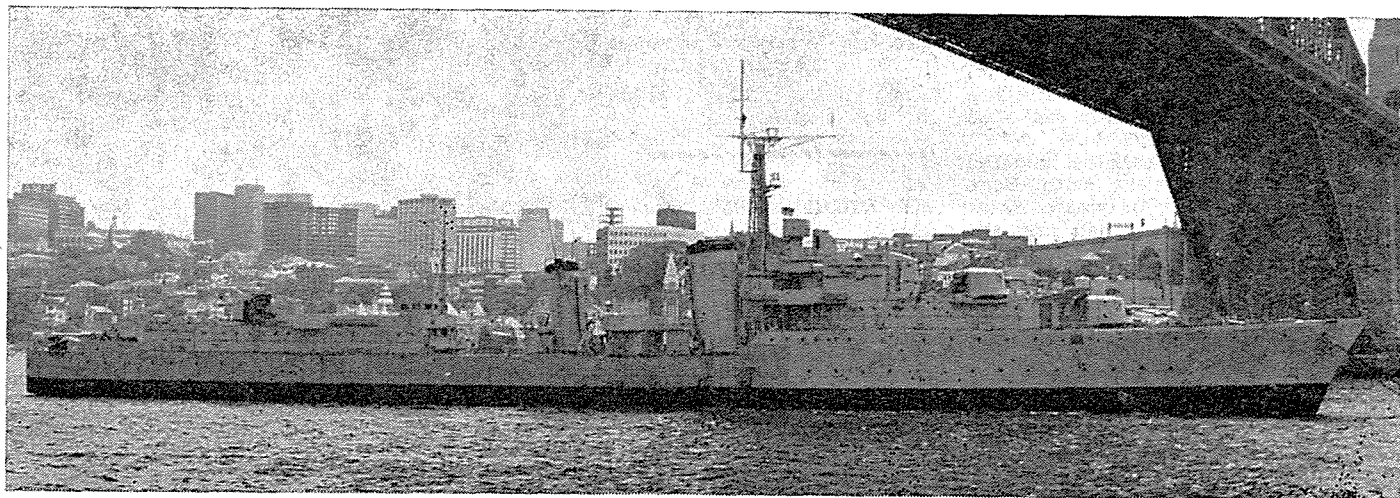
Australians smashed the Japanese landing forces at Milne Bay, American naval forces had a decisive victory in the Coral Sea in May 1942, and the battle of the Owen Stanley Ranges followed by the battle of the beach-heads completed the enemy debacle in Papua.

JAPS LAND

The enemy landed by barges on the north shore of Milne Bay near KB Mission in the early hours of the 26th of August. Our bombers attacked the enemy force during the landing operations and although they sank one ship and inflicted other damage, the majority of the Japs got ashore.

Two platoons of the 61st Battalion who were returning by ketch to Gili Gili

BELOW: The famous Tribal class destroyer H.M.A.S. Arunta passing under Sydney Harbour Bridge on the end of a tow rope to the breaker's yard at Taiwan. (Photo by courtesy "Daily Telegraph", Sydney.)



from the north-east coast of Milne Bay, ran into a concentration of enemy landing barges about this time. Troops on the leading ketch opened fire and inflicted casualties on the enemy but their craft was soon sunk. The second ketch was able to escape in the darkness.

One company of the 61st Battalion at KB Mission was in action soon after the initial Jap landing and at dawn was still holding the enemy east of the Mission.

The Japs had landed light tanks and one of these broke through our position during the night. It was immediately attacked with hand grenades and was forced to withdraw.

Next day another company of the 61st Battalion moved forward, and in the afternoon an attack by both companies, supported by artillery and aircraft, was launched. The attack made some progress but was eventually halted.

A further enemy convoy of about six ships landed more troops and supplies on the night of August 26-27 and towards dawn our troops were pushed back to Rabi, about one and a half miles west of KB Mission.

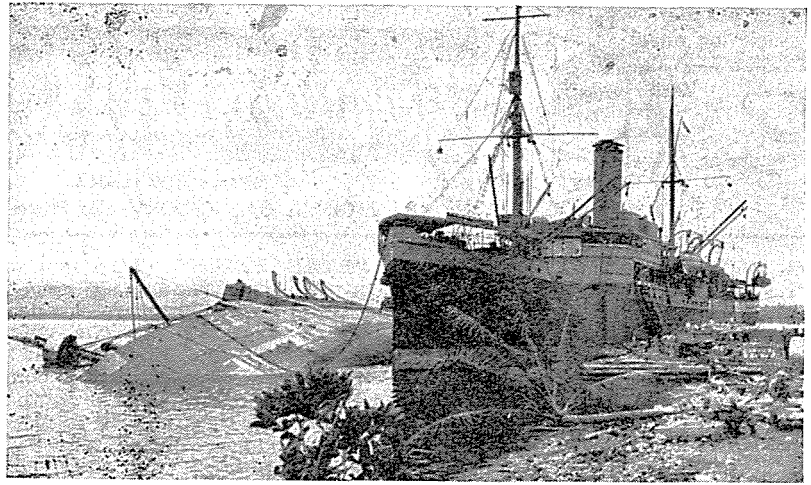
At dawn, however, the enemy withdrew eastward and the 2/10 Battalion moved forward to KB Mission which was reached late that afternoon without opposition.

The enemy heavily attacked the 2/10 Battalion with tanks, equipped with brilliant headlamps, on the night of August 27-28. The battalion held for about two hours until the Japanese, using their tanks as a spearhead, forced their way down the track, cutting the battalion in two. Our troops withdrew to the rear of No. 3 Strip, where Brigadier J. Field, with the 25th and 61st Battalions, had organised a strong defensive position. Driving on to this strip the Japs were halted by the murderous belt of fire put down by the two battalions. Several attacks were made on our position, but all were held at great cost to the enemy, and by nightfall of the 28th of August, the position remained unchanged.

A third enemy naval force arrived in Milne Bay on the night of August 29-30.

WE ADVANCE

Brigadier G. F. Wootten now commenced our advance by pushing the 2/12 Battalion east towards KB Mis-



ABOVE: The M.V. Anshun shelled and sunk by a Japanese cruiser at Milne Bay. (Aust. War Memorial photo.)

sion on the morning of August 31. Overcoming considerable opposition with much hand-to-hand fighting, the battalion surged forward and reached KB Mission by afternoon and took up positions for the night. A strong enemy counter-attack on the rear companies of the 2/12 Battalion which had been reinforced by a company of the 2/9 Battalion, was driven off in the early hours of the following morning and during that day our forces consolidated their positions. The advance continued against stiffening opposition on September 2 and about 1000 yards were gained. That night more enemy warships arrived in Milne Bay but they took no apparent offensive action. During the night the 2/12 Battalion repulsed further strong counter attacks.

The 2/9 Battalion now moved forward through the 2/12 Battalion and on September 3 launched a strong attack with artillery and air support. The opposition held until late afternoon, when our troops smashed through to gain a further 600 yards, and on the following day fought their way past Goroni, two miles east of KB Mission. On September 5 Waga Waga was reached and the main enemy opposition encountered. Our attack was held.

Enemy warships were in Milne Bay during the night of September 3-4,

and again on the night of September 5-6 when, it is believed, elements of the Jap force were embarked.

MILNE BAY

Geographically Milne Bay is shaped like a semi-ellipse. From China Strait on the East the sea flowed through an entrance approximately seven miles wide and from the West some 20 miles.

Gili Gili was near the head of the bay. Heavily wooded mountains pressed in from three sides, leaving only a narrow coastal strip, soggy with sago and mangrove swamps, bush covered except where a few coconut plantations stood in orderly rows. On the north shore the mountains came down almost to the sea leaving only a ledge which was rarely more than a mile wide and in places narrowed to a few hundred yards.

Along the coast never more than 100 yards from the sea a 12 foot track crossing many streams ran from nine or ten miles from Ahioma, through KB Mission to Rabi whence it rounded the nor' west corner of the bay and travelled to Gili Gili.

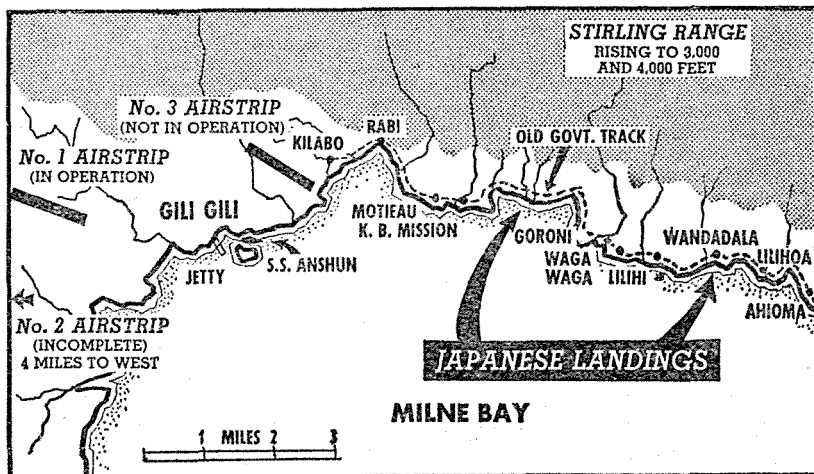
Almost the entire coastline offered suitable landing places though the mangroves of the sou' west corner of the bay would make landing operations more difficult than elsewhere. The place was notorious for torrential rains.

The defence of Milne Bay cost the Australians 373 battle casualties, of these 24 were officers, 12 officers and 149 men were either killed or missing. Of the Americans, one soldier of the 43rd Engineers was killed and two wounded in ground actions, several more were killed or wounded in air raids.

It is difficult to estimate the enemy casualties in this campaign but at a conservative figure more than 700 Japs were killed by our ground action.

What was far more important was that the enemy attack on Milne Bay, first phase of the plan to take Papua, was utterly smashed, and left the enemy without the convenient air base from which he could support his attack on Port Moresby.

—Max Herron
D Coy. 2/1





ERIC REYNOLDS (Don Coy 2/1) now a resident of Coogee, N.S.W., sends along a letter with a few notes plus a donation to the Battalion Welfare Fund. Thank you Eric—a donation in the hands of worthy Treasurer. With good health being enjoyed since the war, apart from a little blood pressure, Eric has been fortunate, as has been the lot of quite a lot of us. Eric has just completed a holiday to New Zealand and as he wrote from New Zealand I will quote here verbatim.

Whakatane, N.Z.
10/11/68

We are now in New Zealand—the wife and daughter, Alison, who is in her last year nursing at the Prince of Wales Hospital. This is the last time she can come on holidays with us. We flew to Christchurch and being my first flight felt pretty proud of myself (not sick) and sitting up with a can of beer and roast chicken. We toured the South Island for eight days, 31 mad Australians on the tour bus. Saw lots, Mt. Cook, a ride on a chair lift, climbed to the top of the mountain and rolled back to the chair lift. A few launch trips on the Sounds—they are over 1000 feet down. Good hotels and motels, good meals and drank beer every day. There are plenty of sheep even as far south as Mt. Cook.

Then we flew from Christchurch to Wellington—one hour. Went to a Maori concert in Rotorua—steam coming out of the ground and hot mud pools, and sulphur flowing everywhere. We left the tour and stayed with friends for three days whom we hadn't seen for 10 years. Then on to Auckland where we flew back to Australia. It is a terrific sight to approach Sydney from the aircraft and to look down and to see your own city as one big picture. Cheerio from that old Pioneer—Bombo Reynolds.

OSSIE THURLING (2/1) and now living at Newcastle. Sorry, New Lambton, sends along a short note with an enclosure to the treasurer and not much else. However Ossie, dues are subscribed until 1969 so that should see you O.K.

TOM CONNOLLY (2/1) and now at Wallabadah, N.S.W. sends along a little news and a donation to the Association to help keep things moving. Tom declares that he takes things quietly over the last couple of years after a bad attack of cardiac asthma.

Tom reads the paper from front to back and gets quite a kick out of reading what the boys are doing in their different parts of the country. Tom and wife had a car trip just before writing, down to Broken Hill then down to Victoria via Wentworth. Also had a letter from Tommy Budd at Wagga. Tom has had a few upsets but is on the mend again now. Tom sends his regards to

PETER PRIEST (2/1) now at Mt Gravatt, Queensland, and who writes the letter—wife Dorothy, this is really good news and shows the wife does take an interest. Dorothy and Peter were in New Zealand for a couple of months. However, Peter's mother became ill and they had to return. They are now doing a working holiday around Australia, started two years ago with a 19ft. caravan and Landrover and quotes Australia is a wonderful place and what a wonderful life. Spent 12 months up around Alice Springs where the scenery is really something, with a mention of Ayres Rock and the Olgas worth a casual glance. Peter and Dorothy are now in Canberra where they called on the Rees family on the way through, both Merv and Betty in the pink. After Canberra, their intention is to go to Perth then up the west coast of Australia. Well done Dot, it's really good reading and thanks a lot. We are glad that you enjoy the news and we hope that you continue to give us the good tidings of your travels, in fact we consider that the wives give us more news than the husbands so keep at it won't you?

THAT GOES FOR ALL WIVES

CHARLES SEXTON (2/1) now resides at Belfield, N.S.W., sends along a three-page letter plus a donation (very handy that). Charles is now employed at Port Kembla so is a little handicapped as to travel. I suppose that by now you have had the operation at Concord and we hope that everything is going along fine for you. Your thanks to Monty is passed along and we agree that he is doing a terrific job for the blokes that have the misfortune to have to attend Concord for treatment. Keep the chin up Chas and once again everything will turn out for the best.

TOM (SCOTTY) ANGUS (2/1) now living at Mt Gravatt, Queensland, sends along a letter with his best wishes and a donation to the Association. However, unhappily, we have to acknowledge the loss of Scotty's wife, something that no words can ever hope to convey and certainly cannot replace your loss. Our sincere sympathy Tom, and as you quote in your letter, you will make the trip to Sydney sometime. I sincerely hope that you make it soon and that we can try to show you a little of what we try to do down here. Chin up, old mate, keep smiling.

ALLAN SHAW (2/1) now at Ryde, sends along a letter with regard to the publication of a Regimental History and Allan has some photos and negatives. Well Allan here is the story—Max was on holidays when your letter

arrived so was not able to contact you at the time you requested. However, Allan, should you wish to send a few photos along, it is essential that they be postcard size 8" x 5" very clear and black and white only. Thanking you for your consistent letters and offers of help and photos and I sincerely hope that we can use some of the copy.

BOB JULEFF (2/1) now at Cardiff. A short note and (wow) from wife Jean, this is what we really want, all the wives to write in but not to tell what rogues the blokes are. Just how good they are will do fine. Bob meets Jack Bertram, Dick Seddon and Joe Hickey at the Rats Meeting at Newcastle each month. That will be a nice old show. Jokes aside, Jean, thanks very much for the letter and the donation and we hope to hear more from you. I only make one request, no ganging up, I don't know whether we could beat a mass gang of the Newcastle ladies.

RAY (JOE) BLANCH (2/1) now at Beaudesert sends along his usual couple of pages of news and his apologies for not attending the Grafton Smoko. However, as this particular Smoko fell on Joe's holidays, preparations for which had previously been made, so no Joe. On his trip north they called at Caloundra then a week at Nora Heads and the rest of the time at Maryborough. Also called out to the sugar mills at Bundaberg and witnessed the rum making. You did not say whether you tasted or not. Joe's boy Bill has got himself engaged and plans to marry in about 12 months and at the same time hopes to transfer out of the dry climate from Mingindie to the cooler climates. Joe had a quick visit from Noel Schomberg and wife but the stay was too short for much talk. Thanks for the letter Joe and your subs are in the hands of the worthy treasurer.

Mrs. VIC HORDER, wife of the late Vic Horder, sends along a short note telling us of the death of Vic. She also sends along a cheque to the Welfare Fund. Thank you so much but I would like you to remember that all widows are life members automatically and no donations are expected from you ladies no matter how much we may appeal for funds. However, we are always more than pleased to hear from you at any time.

MAX LAW, an old stalwart from way back and still down in the State of the pubs and churches, sends along the information of **ERN HAYDEN** who we quoted had applied for a commission at Vietnam. Well, Ern made it, and should be up there by now. His address if anyone should like to drop him a line is:

449915—W.O. 2 Hayden, E., H.Q. Coy, I.A.T.F. A.F.—PO. 4, C/- Sydney, N.S.W. 2890.

Sorry we neglected to mention the donation, Max, a slip of the pen, however, your donation is well and truly in the hands of our Douglas.

G. R. B. PATTERSON (2/1) now at Warrabina Ave., St Ives, sends along a card, and a donation to the Fund. However, George I must confess I am a bit stuck to try and make up some news from your card. However, you may be able to dig up a little bit later on. I suppose you know that you are not very far from Col. Geoff Graham, who lives at Frenchs Forest.

So much for the Mail Bag this time, except that you may remember in the last issue I was going on holidays myself to Shoal Bay. Both my wife and I had a marvellous time and I was very fortunate that on the Sunday we had a social visit from the Griffiths, Bertrams, and Seddons. We had a marvellous day and I think the ladies enjoyed themselves also. Like always we men talked a lot of Pioneers but we did let the ladies in on it occasionally. Thank you all again Newcastle. I hope we see you on Anzac Day this year. Also ran into old Bluey Anderson at Shoal Bay and we tossed a few down on quite a few occasions.

RAY and **SYLVIA HORNE** send a Xmas card to the Secretary with just a short note to say he now has the Imperial Hotel at Portland. States he has plenty of beds for the Herron family so you can rest assured Max and Peg will visit you soon Ray.

CLARRIE PAKES, of Erskineville, writes to congratulate the Committee on the fine job they are doing in producing the Pioneer News. Thank you Clarrie for your very kind words and also for your generous donation.

BERNIE and **MONA REINERS** wrote to the Secretary stating they would be holidaying at Narooma over Xmas and made arrangements for the Herrons to come down for two days. Max arrived New Year's Eve and as Bernie wanted to go to the Club they had to borrow some "smart" clothes for Max, who arrived only in shorts. Our Secretary did not mind the "smart clothes" as no one knew him at Narooma. The first person they encountered in walking into the club was Ray Jardine, who was also holidaying at Narooma.

HENRY SMITH (2/1). Letter and donation—thanks Henry.

BILL SIMPSON (C Coy, 2/1) writes to say he has been busy looking after his three children, but is trying hard to find time to make a trip to Sydney—sends regards to all his friends. Many thanks for the donation Bill.

ERIC HARPS (2/1) writes to say he has retired after 25 years service. He retired while a W.O. II and has a War Service home. Eric sends regards to all his friends—many thanks for the donation, Eric.

a deep compassionate feeling for his fellow men and his untiring efforts to assist them at all times.

It is a privilege to be a friend, and an honour to have served in the same company with such a fine soldier.

"Robbie" Bill Robertson,
Ex Don Coy., 2/2 Pioneers

W.O. ARMSTRONG (2/2)

The sight of hesitant young civilians stepping from a bus on to an Army parade ground is familiar to Warrant Officer I, Maurice Armstrong.

He has been in the same situation himself.

Maurie Armstrong is Regimental Sergeant Major of the 1 Recruit Training Battalion, Kapooka.

Victorian born, W.O. Armstrong enlisted in the British Army when he turned 18.

In 1935, he was commissioned and served as a lieutenant in India for four years.

Early in 1939 he resigned his Commission and returned to Australia.

At the outbreak of World War II he enlisted as a private.

In Syria he was wounded and returned to Australia.

After attending an officer-training unit in N.S.W. he was again commissioned a lieutenant in 1941 and served in New Guinea and Borneo with D Coy. of the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion.

He was transferred to the British Army while serving in Tarakan and appointed captain in command of B Company, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

ADJUTANT IN BURMA

Promoted major he became adjutant of the regiment in Burma, serving also in India and Palestine.

He declined an offer to become aide to Field Marshal Montgomery.

Offered a commission in the Australian Regular Army, W.O. Armstrong refused but accepted a Warrant Officer Class II appointment.

He served as R.S.M. to a number of C.M.F. units, again refusing to accept a captain's commission.

"I was doing a far more worthwhile job as a W.O.," he recalled.

At the outbreak of the Korean war he was appointed R.S.M. of 3rd Battalion, R.A.R.

In 1962 he left the Army again to set up in business.

But the Army was in his blood so he rejoined in 1963, being posted to the 1 Recruit Training Battalion.

Appointed R.S.M. in 1966, W.O. Armstrong is today filling one of the most important posts in the Army—training young men for service with the Australian Army.

Editor's Note: On receiving this newspaper clipping we asked for "Robbie" to comment, which he does as follows:

My impressions of Maurice Armstrong are as vivid today as they were in those days of sweat and toil.

Maurie had the attributes that make a good soldier.

A sincere dedication to being a better soldier himself, and the character, strength and knowledge to instil in others a similar spirit.

As a Platoon Commander of 18 Platoon DON Coy., 2/2 Pioneers he revealed a whimsical sense of humour which no doubt sustained him and his men through the long hours of boredom when on active service.

I remember him best as a man with

Turn to Col. 1

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

ST. KILDA, 3182.

12th November, 1968.

My Dear Old Maxie and Bobbie,

Many thanks for the batch of Newses, which arrived yesterday. I was grieved to see that Old Tal and Tommy Loy and Herb Goodwin were named in Last Post. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. You can't say more, can you?

I have written a story about Tal, and it may find space in the next issue. There are also a few paragraphs about Tommy Loy, who was well and favourably known to me—among many other good blokes—when I became CQMS of C. Coy.

I still haven't made that trip over to the Smoke, but it's getting closer and closer, please God. Then we shall have a chance to cut up a few old touches, by gravy!

I wonder if Cyril Amies is still working on his history of the old mob? If he is, I wonder if you're in touch with him that you'll tell him, with kindest regards, that I'll be glad to give any help I can in this project. We old ink-slingers have to stick together!

In case Cyril needs it, and hasn't a copy, I still have Chester Wilmot's "Tobruk". It will have been out of print long ago, and Chester Wilmot, one of the greatest war historians of this or any other time, died in an air crash a few years ago. If Cyril could use this book, in which the 2/1 gets a lot of favourable mentions, I should be glad to send it to him. It well may be that Cyril already has it, but I should think it unlikely, because the book was published in 1944, and I had an advance copy from Halstead Press, whose boss in those days was Bill Kirwan, a very good friend of mine. Incidentally, it was Bill Kirwan who wrote the treatise on two-up for the Australian Encyclopaedia. He was an old original Anzac, and was a lovely bloke, but it had to be his trouble—Irish will out—that when he had a few jars under his belt-buckle, he felt impelled to sing sentimental Irish songs. I'm a good Irishman, but some of those saccharine ballads about dear old Mother Machree give me the jumping jim-jams.

The old mob had two chaps, incidentally, who could sing Scottish and Irish songs tunefully and sincerely, and I'm referring to Clem Moroney and Peter Bell. I hope they're still around. They both had good voices!

Well, Max, I had better churn out a bit of copy, as mentioned above, and enclose a little something for the family sock. I think I'm a bit behind with dues, and that won't do. I'll have to ease my conscience with Doug Shearston. If you'll give my most sincere fraternal greetings to Doug, to Allan, the worthy Pres., to Bobby Lake, bless his old thinning thatch, and take some for yourself and memsahib, I'll be your debtor.

Yours ever,

John Harnetty.

R.S.M. Talberg - 2/1

So the Last Post has sounded for Warrant-Officer Herbert Talberg, sometime 2/1 R.S.M., an old "retread" from World War I who copied the example of so many ex-Digs who put their ages back, and came in to box-on again.

Tal was a man of many parts, and many words, according to those whose ears he bashed, either on the parade ground or off it.

But his many parts included those of principle and courage. It takes a good man to survive a bad chest wound in France, and front up for another issue.

It was something of a marvel to me that he got through the medical, but you'll remember that in the bad old days you were A1 if you had both legs and both arms.

It might also be remembered that old Lennie Rodda was an ex-Imperial who wore Pip, Squeak and Wilfred (the Star, GS and Victory Medals of the first big stoush) and collected a Military Medal in Tobruk. Life in the old dogs yet, eh?

Few know that Group-Captain (ret.) Wilbur Talberg, O.B.E., was Tal's son, a graduate from Point Cook who got his R.A.A.F. regular commission about the time Tal joined the 2/1.

I remember that Tal sent him the Regia Aeronautica (Italian Royal Air Force) insignia from a bashed-up Caproni bomber we found in a Tobruk hangar which had received a very efficient dusting-over from the R.A.F.

To show the state of Mussolini's air force, the insignia was on doped fabric. The Italians hadn't got up to building their aircraft out of duralumin. That came later.

However, they didn't have that on their own. We were using quite a few of the old canvas-and-wood 'planes in those days, but the Hurricanes and Spitfires were getting their laurels.

Also, it's not generally known that Tal was made a substantive W.O. before we embarked. Up to that time, all N.C.O. or warrant ranks were acting or temporary.

Tal got his distinction for an incident at Silver City, near Greta, where the Battalion was formed and encamped for early training after recruit-concentration at Ingleburn, and before our move to Dubbo.

GROG MADDENED NEWCOMER THREATENS MATES

Unarmed, he took a bayonet from a grog-maddened newcomer who was threatening to cut up his hut-mates, and was in quite a frame of mind to do it.

There was a yell for the guard, and Tal, as its Sergeant, fronted up to the bayonet-wielder, and dared him to have a go. The bayonet was surrendered, and its owner finished up behind the wire. There was a court of inquiry, and the boy with the bayonet got a "snarler."

Since conditions didn't provide at that stage for a gallantry award, they gave

Tal the next available thing—a permanent W.O.'s brevet.

I don't think I'm breaking a confidence in revealing that Tal's son was told about the incident and its promotional consequences in a letter from the Adjutant, Capt. Tommy Ledgerwood.

REGIMENTAL SERGEANT-MAJOR TALBERG

Came the Western Desert, and Tal, as acting-R.S.M., was quartered with the Bn. H.Q. team (including yours truly) in a reasonably undamaged bungalow near the rubble of the Italian Naval headquarters.

Col. Brown and the officers of H.Q. were next door. Tal had sole use of one of the rooms, and its dominating piece of furniture was a vast cask of the "rough red wine of the country." Like the French, the Italian Army had wine on the ration-scale, and there was plenty of it about, if you knew where to look.

There was also a goodly quantity of unrefined anisette, but it was good stuff to leave alone if you didn't want to go blind or die in the screaming horrors.

Came a night when a section from the M.P.'s brought in a bunch of Italian prisoners who wore Red Cross brassards, and were a burial party working in the Cimeterra Inglese.

Because I spoke pidgin Italian, I was given the job of interpreter, and the Battalion was made responsible for their safety under the terms of the Geneva Convention.

Since they were all warrant or N.C.O.'s, and there was nowhere else to put them, Tal was their host, and I "interpreted" the chit-chat between him and the Italian Sergente-Maggiore, named Aldo Lalli, if I remember correctly. We gave them a meal of bully and dog-biscuits, because we had nothing else, then set about drinking to the sacred cause of peace in guglets of Tal's red wine.

ITALIANS TOAST KING GEORGE

That was a good night, and interesting. The Italians very solemnly toasted King George, and we replied with a toast to King Victor Emmanuel. The only mention Mussolini got was a heartfelt declaration from a be-whiskered old Italian senior corporal that Il Duce's parents weren't very well acquainted.

He said, furthermore, that Mussolini was nothing but a toad, or, to be more picturesque, he had a face like the south-eastern aspect of a fat cow walking north-west.

Well applauded for this expression of hostility, the old boy (whom I christened "The Mexican Bandit") went on to say that he had fought on the Allied side in the First World War, and any-

body who wanted to play footsy with power-crazed nuts like Hitler wasn't right in the head. We all cheered, and knocked off some more plonk.

So that was that. I saw old Tal on and off after the war, as we all did, either in Bathurst, Katoomba or Yaralla. When I was at 2GB, I bumped Tal one day in Sydney, and he proposed that we visit a pub run by an old 2/1 bloke.

No names, no pack-drill, but we didn't get a very enthusiastic welcome, so we took off to another hostelry where the temperature was not so chilly, and talked of this and that.

The last time I saw Tal was in Yaralla, and he didn't look the best. However, I understand he came through that unpleasant spell, and the last I heard he was working with the Education Department in Bathurst, I think.

Now he's joined the ranks of the departed, having done his best in two World Wars. Let's hope that his family have some comfort in the fact that Tal served well and truly, and that he has many old friends to mourn his passing.

—John Harnetty, C Coy, 2/1

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Campbell, A.C.T.
2601. 20/2/69

Dear Mr. Herron,

My husband, Roy, returned home a few days ago after spending three weeks as a patient in Concord M.H. We come from Melbourne originally and had to shift to Canberra when my husband's job was transferred here. I mention this so that you'll appreciate that we are strangers to Sydney knowing no one there.

Each Thursday evening Roy had a visit from your Mr. Montague — Monty — and we would like you and the members of your organisation to know how much we appreciate Monty giving his time so freely and cheerfully—great company—and the cigarettes from the association. Monty's visits really did something for my husband — and for me too.

In this pressurised age in which we live, it is most heartening to meet someone like Monty who is rendering a very real, though hard to assess, service to Old Pioneers.

With best wishes to you and Monty and all members of your association.

Yours sincerely,

Phyll Swanson (Mrs.)

POST CODING WRAPPERS

Your wrapper has now had the Post Code added to your address.

This has entailed an enormous amount of work by the Secretary in dealing with 1,300 wrappers and he would appreciate notification of any that are incorrect — Thank you.

When writing please state your Christian name, surname, present address, old address, platoon company and unit whether 2/1 or 2/2.

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

Correspondence: Secretary, MAX HERRON, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills, 2209

Treasurer:
DOUG. SHEARSTON

Editors: J. HARNETTY,
R. LAKE and M. HERRON

President:
ALLAN McINNES

Vol. 14, No. 2

1st July, 1969

Price: 50c Per Annum



PASSING OF THE WILD COLONIAL BOY

So Tommy Loy has gone, according to an earlier issue of the News, and many will lament the passing of this Wild Colonial Boy who gave the old 2/1 some of its wry humour, some of its handiness with all lethal tools from bare knuckles to Bren guns, and some of that old Anzac spirit which wasn't so hot on respect for the Manual of Military Law, but was 100 per cent keen on observance of mateship.

I think it was Snowy Lloyd who christened Tommy "Bongo," for reasons which have become dim with the passing of the years.

But I know I was the one who changed the nickname to "The Mighty M'Bongo", because it had some of the qualities of the names handed around among the Matabele and Zulus.

These people are—or were—noted for a sense of humour which didn't prevent them from taking it out in a bit of pulling and hauling, and that was like Tommy, to my recollection.

Others with Tommy when Ern Greenwood became Sergeant Cook were Snowy Lloyd, Arthur Neuss, Jack Hickey, Con Fitzgerald (how's the railway business, Cornelius?) and Cecil Hart, who's probably back in the biscuit business, and making a very nice little score for himself. Anyhow, we hope so.

If I've left any names out, forgive me. It's been a long time, and any omissions are due to lapse of memory, but never to lack of goodwill.

It will be remembered that C Coy was among the selectees to offload the American LST's which often came into Yellow Beach at Balik Papan with assorted goodies.

The arrival of the LST's often used to coincide with hostile incursions by Japanese bombers from the Halmaheras.

At those times, it was necessary to douse the floodlights on the landing craft, and in the friendly darkness, lots of those American goodies reached destinations that weren't on the U.S. Supply Corps' manifests.

As a result, you'll remember, we literally lived high on the hog, because ham and fresh flour and sugar and coffee that weren't on our legitimate ration scale got on that scale by illegitimate means.

It might be mentioned that the crews of the landing craft not only turned a blind eye to this freebooting. Rumour has it that they drummed the boys up to where some of the choicest items were stowed.

UNLOADING PARTIES IN THE FAMILY WAY

Getting the stuff ashore called for ingenuity, because even the best of armies have their phizgigs. So if members of the unloading parties returned to the company lines looking very much in the family way, they soon regained their smart and soldierly figures when the "borrowed" tucker emerged from beneath shirts and from trouser-legs.

Arthur Neuss, being a baker, found a ready use for the U.S. Army flour and Dri-Balm Yeast for the making of fresh rolls. Assistant bakers, as I remember, were Tommy, Snowy, Jack, Con, Ern, and even my old pal Nugget Lawrie and myself tried our skill at dough-bashing. And butter? Not the sour canned stuff on issue, but Minnesota's best, provided by the unwitting generosity of the U.S. Army—and none of it on Lend-Lease!

I wonder if Tommy recalled those days over the years that lay between them and his impending death? I wouldn't doubt it, because they were days when we had some good times when the Japanese weren't bunging it on with what they had left.

It's 23 years since then and now, and Tommy's another to find his way into the Great Silence.

There's the bitter consolation that a man starts to die from the hour he's born. But you can inject a bit of colour and humour into the intervening period, with just a few punch-ups to add to the flavour. I think that's how Tommy liked it!

—John Harnetty, C Coy, 2/1

2/2 REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

SUNDAY, 9th NOVEMBER

Leichhardt Methodist Church
Wetherill Street, Leichhardt

SERVICE COMMENCES AT 7.30 p.m.

2/1 and 2/2 Pioneers are invited to attend this service conducted by Padre Stan Claughton.

News Jottings

DICK WATTS (C Coy. 2/1) was another Pioneer receiving medical treatment at Concord. He particularly sends his best wishes to all his cobbers and thoroughly appreciates and enjoys reading the News. Dick has a large property at Moulamein, south-west Riverina, near Hay, and wants it known a most cordial invitation is extended to any members of our association who may be in that area at any time.

LEN HUMPHRIES (C Coy 2/1) is the president of the Blacktown R.S.L. Club and extends a cordial invitation to members of this association to call in and relive old times. He was most anxious to have an open day there for all members and arrangements have been made by Wally Page for the committee to have a social afternoon at the club.

FRED DAVENPORT (A Coy. 2/1) and his wife left Brisbane recently for a trip round Australia by caravan and had a pleasant journey to Mount Isa. On leaving that centre, with the refrigerator well supplied, some very bad roads were encountered and a stop was soon made for a night's meal and rest. On entering the caravan, Fred found that the frig. door had come open and the floor was covered with bacon, eggs, meat, milk, butter, vegetables, etc. After finally cleaning up they set sail for Darwin, where they have arrived safely. Good luck to you, Fred, for the rest of your trip.

COL. GEOFF GRAHAM, our respected patron, was a patient at Concord recently for a check up. During a conversation with "Monty," he expressed thanks for the visits, and we are pleased to report that Geoff is now back in circulation felling much better.

KEVIN DAGG from Kyogle wishes to convey his greetings to all Pioneers. When the Kyogle fellows joined up with our unit, Kevin was rejected because of his age (15). Not to be daunted he went to Queensland and enlisted and was posted to an infantry battalion. All attempts to join the Pioneers were unsuccessful. On discharge, Kevin settled in Sydney and will always be very welcome at our social functions.

Doing the rounds at Concord, "Monty" discovered VIVIAN LEMESURIER (C Coy. 2/1). He resides at Katoomba and is a great golf fan. Not being a member of the association, Viv had lost touch with old cobbers, but has now been enrolled and will certainly be kept informed per medium of the Pioneer News.

2/2 ANZAC DAY

By DON LAWSON

After the march on Anzac Day, the 2/2 held their annual re-union at the York Hotel in King Street. With an attendance of about 50, it was something different to reunions held in the past and was a great success.

Among those attending were Gus Pike from Tamworth, Bruce Ragg (an original from Melbourne), now living at Parramatta; Pat Collins, with his son Gordon and son-in-law Richard Nichols; Charlie Firth (late of Grafton), now of Lane Cove; Kev Neville, with us once again after a serious illness; and two of the boys from Lismore, namely Dick Walker and Ken Wilson. Dick is working for the local council, of which Eddie Weston is the Deputy Mayor. They brought news of Alan Muter, who is one of the local barbers.

Alan Gatehouse was present with his father, and Bob Ginnane was along with his pal, John Hunt, ex-British Air Force.

Jim Field was also there, looking better than we have seen him for a long time, accompanied by his son-in-law, Kevin Bosanko.

Ron Healy had an enjoyable day; also a Vietnam veteran, Ces Jurd. Among others were Claude Knight (now deceased), Michael Whitely, Wilfred Ryan, Ron Swanson, Harold Knudson and Edward McNully.

News was received of Bill Reilly, who is a meat inspector at Byron Bay. Bill is also a member of the Debating Society of N.S.W.

Ran into Frank Locane just prior to Anzac Day. It was his intention to spend Anzac Day in Dubbo with "Podge" Sullivan and Vince Digghes.

A letter was received from Norm Phillips recently containing the bad news that his brother and sister-in-law were both killed in a motor accident in Dubbo and, by a strange coincidence, the first person to arrive at the accident to give assistance was "Podge" Sullivan. Our deepest sympathy go to Norm and family.

As usual, our Padre spent a couple of hours with us and is looking forward to seeing quite a few of the boys at his Remembrance Service on Sunday, 9th November, at the Leichhardt Methodist Church, Wetherill Street, Leichhardt. The service commences at 7.30 p.m. Please make a special effort to come along.

2/2 NEWS JOTTINGS

It was wonderful to see such a good attendance at the March, about 70 in all. Some new faces were noted, including Bruce Ragg, an original H.Q. Coy. 2/2 member, now living at Parramatta. A few regulars were missing this year, but it is hoped that next year will once again see them back in our ranks. We missed Major Bill Robertson and Padre Claughton. However, the Padre turned up at the reunion after his commitments allowed.

GUS PIKE, down from Tamworth, brought news that he sees Dave Jones, ex-cook C Coy., now living at Warialda, and Dave sends his regards to all C Coy. boys.

CHARLIE FIRTH (C Coy), of Lane Cove, also wished to be remembered to all country members.

NEVILLE O'CONNOR (D Coy.) was down from Ballina recently and met up with Allan McInnes at North Sydney Oval during Rugby Union trials between City and Country for South Africa team selection. Nev's eldest son, Jim, was representing country as a winger. From this match Jim was selected to play in the Australian Probables versus Possibles in Brisbane and was considered very unlucky to have missed selection in the Wallabies' tour of South Africa. Keep up the good work, Jim, you may yet get to wear an Australian jersey.

Nev. was then off to Grafton to see his youngest son, Tony, playing for the North Coast open schoolboys, where he is doing very well. Nev. has two other sons—Michael, who has graduated and is a schoolteacher at Deniliquin High School, where he plays Rugby League, and Brian, who has had to hang up his boots because of recurring injury while representing New England. The only daughter of the O'Connor household is doing her nursing training in Brisbane and plays basketball for Queensland. Nev. sees Kevin Raywood, Phil Barnett, Eddie Weston, Pat Malone and Ken Wilson quite often and says they are all doing well. Thanks for the subscription, Nev. and congratulations on your family. You must be very proud of them.

TALENTED YOUNG ARTIST

DAVID McINNES, eldest son of Allan and Mary McInnes of Balmoral, is one of six young Australians to win a round-the-world ticket for post-graduate studies overseas. This is given each year by "The Australian" newspaper and Qantas.

David, who is an artist, was described by the selection panel as "one of our most talented younger artists." He received his Diploma in painting last year from the National Art School, Sydney, at the end of four years' training—instead of the usual five.

David will continue his post-graduate training in London, but will be visiting New York and Paris also. Latest news is that he intends leaving Sydney in October. David recently won the Young Contemporaries Art Competition at the Blaxland Galleries and has been invited to exhibit in Canberra and Melbourne, as well as two exhibitions in Sydney.

Congratulations, David, and the best wishes of the association go with you on your overseas trip.

2/1 PIONEER BATTALION HONOUR ROLL

In response to an inquiry received at our reunion about a Roll of Honour for the 2/1st, I promised to get all information possible on this important subject, but despite every possible endeavour, the only kind people who would assist were the staff of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

They generously forwarded a photocopy of the list of our personnel whose names appear on the Roll of Honour in the Hall of Memory, Canberra.

I would bring to your notice, in addition to those who lost their lives during the war years, there are included the names of men whose deaths up to June, 1947, were accepted by the Repatriation Department as attributed to war service.

W. M. Aitken, J. Backhouse, G. D. Bennett, R. N. Bourne, E. Box, S. E. Boyd, R. Brown, S. J. Bubb, F. C. Burnett, C. H. Callagher, C. J. Campbell, L. Cheney, W. J. Clark, C. J. Cleary, H. Cox, A. R. Crossingham, R. J. Dale, E. Day, J. T. Day, J. R. Deuchar, C. Mach Duckworth, R. H. Duncan, M. Edwards, G. H. Fairman, A. E. Fletcher, W. A. Fogarty, L. J. Franzway, J. W. Fraser, D. F. Gibson, C. W. Gilbert, W. J. Golden, J. T. R. Goodfellow, J. A. Harper, A. J. Harvie, A. C. Holland, C. S. B. Hopkins, S. H. Hynes, J. C. Irons, W. D. Jeffery, K. H. Jones, A. H. Lambkin, R. J. Lincoln, E. J. Maples, J. J. McCue, J. MacIntosh, A. T. Marks, F. J. Moroney, R. A. Morrissey, E. W. Noake, C. G. Norris, P. O'Connor, J. J. Parker, J. F. Paterson, S. T. Pearson, W. L. Pijier, H. Porter, R. P. Pratt, G. J. Purcell, J. Ratcliffe, L. V. Raward, E. E. Ricketts, T. D. Riis, M. B. Rooney, H. R. Rundle, C. E. W. Scudts, R. E. N. C. Seymour, J. E. Smith, R. G. Smithers, R. Sorenson, H. B. Steel, R. E. Stone, W. B. Symmons, A. W. Tolley, J. H. Warby, A. R. Whewell, H. S. White, B. B. White, E. J. Wilks, H. E. Williamson, D. C. Wood, K. W. Woodbridge.

—Harry MONTAGUE

LAST POST

We are indebted to Jack Collis for supplying the following information in regard to deceased members.

NX52385 Pte C. R. J. Gardner, 2/1
NX173088 Pte. L. C. Clifford, 2/2
NX96203 Pte. N. C. Furness, 2/1
NX30081 Pte. W. Prophet, 2/1
Capt. A. H. J. Ross, 2/2
NX69655 Cpl. C. Brennan, 2/1
NX23677 Lt. W. J. Dickson, 2/1
NX25002 Pte. W. Jones, 2/1
NX37201 Pte. L. G. Brown, 2/2
NX30724 Lt. P. Elleston, 2/1

LAST POST

CLAUDE KNIGHT, 2/2, ex-R.S.M. of Btn., in Concord Hospital.

ALLAN BEGGS, 2/2 (Kewpie), ex D Coy., suddenly, at his home in Summer Hill.

CLIVE FAIRBURN, 2/2, ex D Coy., at Cairns (Qld.), where he was licensee of the Pacific Hotel.

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Your sub. of 50c should be posted to

M. HERRON, Hon. Sec.

3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills. 2209

2/1 ANZAC FUNCTIONS

By
H. MONTAGUE

WREATH LAYING

Our annual wreath laying at the Cenotaph saw 50 members present for this, our most sacred pilgrimage. It was also pleasing to see such a roll up of our ladies' auxiliary, which comprises the wives, widows and relatives of members.

On being formed up the contingent was headed by Jack Lloyd, marshal, with Wally Page carrying the 2/1 banner, and Jim Fields doing likewise for the 2/2. They marched from the assembly point in Hunter Street to the Cenotaph in Martin Place. Once in position Bill Jolly laid a wreath on behalf of the 2/1 battalion in the shape of our old triangle patch in grey, purple and white flowers. Allan McInnes, our president, laid a similar wreath for the 2/2 battalion, and Mrs Harry Montague laid a sheaf of flowers for the ladies' auxiliary alongside the other two wreaths and the three expressed our thoughts for such a hallowed occasion.

The ode was recited by Allan McInnes and Bill Jolly, with all present saying their part. The bugler then sounded the last post, followed by reveille.

We Will Remember Them.

THE RE-UNION

After taking part in the traditional Anzac Day March, and attending the Remembrance Service in Hyde Park, we made our way to the Castlereagh Hotel for the annual gathering, feeling famished, and indeed very thirsty.

On arrival there all were greeted and welcomed by Bobby Lake and Bob McGregor, who ushered everyone into the dining room, where a hot meal awaited us, which was kindly donated by the association.

Jack Collis, Wally Page, Harry Mostyn, and others were the waiters, and they did a colossal job in feeding the troops.

Later the bar opened and after such a good meal those beer taps were kept at top speed trying to keep up with the demand.

All through the afternoon all kinds of food was freely provided. The social committee, in arranging and making such an event possible, are to be congratulated.

ANNUAL MEETING

After the wreath laying the members adjourned to the British Ex-Services' Club for the annual general meeting, where refreshments awaited.

On declaring the meeting open our president extended a warm welcome to all and said how pleased he was with the attendance at the general meeting. Allan McInnes spoke of the work his committee had done throughout the year and thanked them all for a job well done.

Our secretary gave his very interesting report on his term of office. His business-like methods and the way the association affairs are so well attended to by him makes one feel proud to be a member of such an organisation.

Our treasurer came next with his report. Doug Shearston presented his

annual audited balance sheet, which was, indeed, very healthy and fully explained our financial position and he deserved the congratulations he received from all present.

The social secretary came next and Bob McGregor spoke on behalf of his committee. He mentioned the interesting doings of the last 12 months. He also outlined a great programme which his committee had resolved for the welfare of the members in regard to social activities.

Time came for all positions to be declared vacant and nominations called for to fill all positions. Bill Hoffman, the returning officer, officiated. Briefly the ballot resulted in all members who officiated last year being re-elected to the same positions.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

Approximately 300 Digger coppers gathered at our usual rallying point for the Anzac march, and with such a colossal roll up it shows how enthusiastic the members are in keeping our association going. Some were on parade for the first time since the cessation of hostilities and they certainly were made to feel very welcome.

Four battalion members came from Queensland. Three came up from Victoria and two journeyed all the way from Adelaide just to be with us on such an occasion.

We were also very proud to have the company of quite a few mates who had travelled many miles from distant parts of this State for this annual event. It was good to meet so many of our old pals and we wish occasions such as this

could be more frequent as all present enjoyed themselves renewing old acquaintances.

After being formed up, our battalion was headed by Wally "Desso" Page carrying the unit's banner, and commanded by Colonel Norm Neal, and Captain Stan Jones. They marched the route very smartly and certainly merited the applause which was accorded them by the thousands who lined the streets.

On arrival at Hyde Park our unit took their allocated space in front of the War Memorial with other ex-Service associations, and joined with them in the solemn remembrance service which was brief and very good.

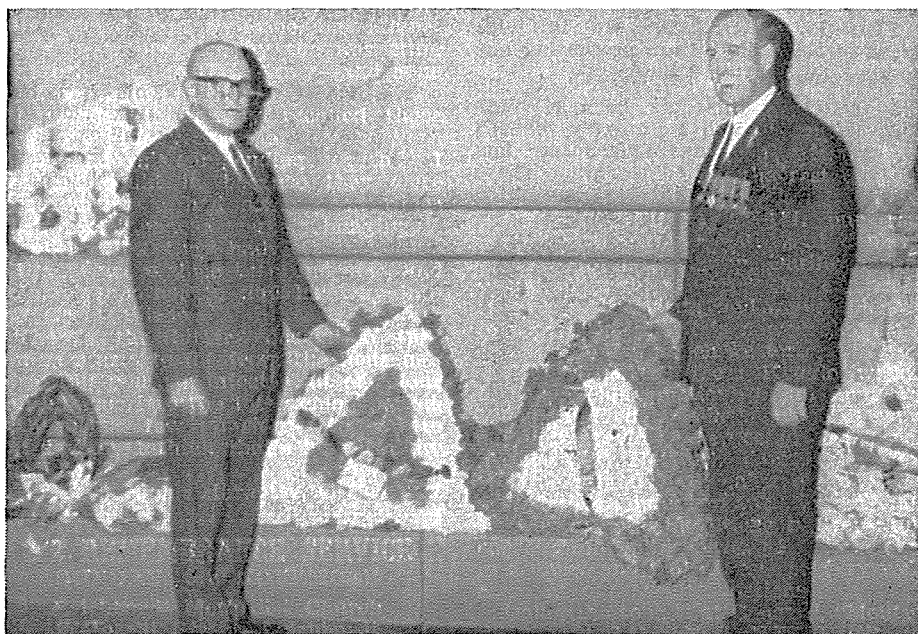
At the conclusion we were dismissed and we were proud that we had paid our respects.

REUNION JOTTINGS

GEORGE BROOKS (D Coy), in coming from Queensland expected to see a good roll up from D Coy. 2/1, but could only count 12 faces. He wants to know where was Ray Wiseman, Jack Lammerton, "Axe-head" McDonald, Bob Morrow, John Maxwell, Jim Gray, Ray Gardner—just to mention a few.

JIM ANDERSON (D Coy) was also disappointed at the low attendance from his Coy., so promises to come along next year with his piano accordion to entertain the lads.

ERIC REYNOLDS (D Coy) was drinking in a group with "Bluey" Jones, Bert Moore, George Brooks, Max Herron, George Talmie and made the statement that as "Bluey" Jones had "shouted" at D Coy. so much as a sergeant, it was about time he shouted D Coy. a drink—Bluey very smartly shouted for the boys.



Bill Jolley, vice-president (left), on behalf of the 2/1, and Allan McInnes, president (right), on behalf of the 2/2, placing wreaths at the Wreath Laying Ceremony, Cenotaph. Photo by courtesy of L. E. Vella, official photographer, 12 Paul Crescent, Wentworthville.

2/1 ANZAC DAY

By
GORDON FINLAY

Once again we had a near perfect day. I say near perfect because we did not have a band at our immediate front.

Bill Jolly had a band for us, but someone else thought they were more entitled to it. But, dispensing with the band, it was a perfect day. Our roll call was good, the weather was wonderful and the crowd was the cheeriest.

Several people remarked on the people lining the route being a large and happy crowd and as I have already said, the

cheeriest. It has been noticed that there are very few marchers dropping out these days since the march route has been shortened to three-quarters of a mile.

Well, there isn't much more one can say except to repeat oneself and say our roll call was good, the weather was wonderful, and the crowd the cheeriest.

The committee wishes to thank each and every one who attended our march and reunion.

As usual, as each association member arrived at the Castlereagh Hotel, they were offered a large meal of braised steak or curried prawns and rice—free of charge—all meals had been eaten by midday when the bar was opened and all present had a chance to wash down the very nice meal with some very nice ale, and I might add that some enjoyed it so much they were still there at 6.30 p.m.

But everyone there enjoyed himself and it brought to a close just another wonderful day of "remembrance" and celebration of meeting some of our old coppers.

Here I would like to give you names of some of the boys that were there—see if you can remember them.

Bill (Starvo) Thomas and Curly Bentley. It's many years since we have had these two and I might add Curly hasn't lost his singing voice—he came good with a few songs later in the day.

John Baldwin was another one we hadn't seen for a long time. Nice to see the boys.

Bill McIntyre, I think, if my memory serves me right, was at the march, but didn't see him at the reunion.

Snowy Foulks, Doug Watson, Dick Chalmers, George Johns, Jim Anderson—hope you had a good time, boys. When I last saw you you were.

George Brooks was down from Queensland.

Fred Davenport was also down from Queensland—good to see you boys come again. We like to see interstate members at our functions.

Harry Allen, Len Humphreys, down from Blacktown. Len is president of Blacktown R.S.L.

Fergus Brown down from Picton. Fergus and his better half are now in Hawaii enjoying a holiday—good luck to you both.

Albert Brown was with us. Albert has a dairy farm at Badgery Creek.

Geoff Robinson, Bruce Smith, Jim Trotter, Eric Guthrie, a bit of old "A" Coy, Jim (Shadow King) Drummond came up to see some of his old mates in the 2/1. He was accompanied by our president and 2/2 man, Allan McInnes.

Jack Griffiths, Peter Sedden, from Newcastle. Thanks for coming down, fellas. Bluey (Ted) Eather, now living at Haberfield (Sydney), Jack Coates from Umina—nice to see you Jack.

Fred and Nell Davenport are travelling around Australia by car and caravan—all best wishes from your association Fred and Nell for a happy trouble-free trip.

Just a few more names of some of our mates who were at our reunion—Steve Clark, George McGuire, Don Slater, Ron McIntosh, Dardy Sellwood, Gordon Walsh, Ray Lester, Cecil Peake. Had a few inquiries as to the whereabouts of Ron Maher; anyone know? Let us know if you do! These are just a few of your old mates you didn't see if you wasn't with us.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Allan McInnes, president.

FELLOW PIONEERS—It is with great pleasure that I am presenting our Annual Report for 1968-69.

I feel that this has been a most successful year and I am very pleased to report that this Association has marvellous unity and co-operation. These facts make us one of the best ex-service associations in the State.

My thanks go to the Executive and Committee for the efficient way the large volume of business has been handled.

OUR SECRETARY has had a most trying year with all the usual work and this year post code numbers had to be added to the whole file of members (over 1,000). This involved a tremendous number of extras hours' work. However, Max has been able to do all this in his capable and efficient way.

OUR FINANCIAL STATEMENT is a very healthy state and as it always seems to do shows an increase on the credit side. Our treasurer has worked hard to keep us in the position we show on this statement. I feel that the association is most fortunate that our affairs are so capably managed on this very important side by Doug. I would also

like to thank our auditor for his co-operation and help at all times.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS for the year have been successful, i.e. wreath laying ceremony, annual meeting, Anzac reunions, bi-annual smoko, Grafton smoko and social committee meetings. At all these functions the attendances were better than previous, with the exception of the Grafton smoko, which we are sorry to report was not terribly successful.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS for the year totalled four, with an average attendance of 14 members.

NEWSPAPER WRAPPINGS. Three editions of the Pioneer News were edited and posted and I would like to pass a vote of thanks to the faithful members: Bob McGregor, Olive and Gordon Finlay, Roma and Doug Shearston, Lal and Wal Page, Peg and Max Herron, Mick Dodson, Don Lawson and Gavin Todd. We need more helpers, three times a year for some three hours, to wrap these newspapers for posting. Please assist by giving your name to the secretary if you can help.

WELFARE WORK. This has been carried out by H. Montague, who has visited all members in hospital once a week and left a parcel. Our very sincere thanks, Harry, for this very fine work over the year. Our thanks are also due to Jack Collis for his continued assistance from up at Umina.

PIONEER NEWS. As usual three issues have been edited, produced, wrapped and posted. Our editors, Max Herron, Bob Lake and John Harnetty have given us three very good editions and our thanks go to them. Many thanks also to Wal Page, our publicity officer, for his efforts during the year. All members are asked to please write and contribute news.

SOCIAL SECRETARY. Bob McGregor has been very able on this side and has worked very hard—I say thank you, Bob.

In conclusion I wish to thank all members who assisted in any way to make this year a very successful and happy one for all Pioneers.

ALLAN MCINNES

THE HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME

By ARTHUR "SAILOR" WITHAM—2/1 H.Q. Coy

Today my wife and I commence what I am sure will turn out to be a holiday of a lifetime, because this is the day we leave by the one class liner Northern Star for Southampton and then on to London, the home of tradition, pageantry and splendour. Probably a lot of people would not agree with my views; from my point of view and my wife's there are thousands of places of great interest and of historical value to see.

On the way over to Southampton we are going via Panama, and we will be calling at such ports as Wellington (New Zealand), Rarotonga, Tahiti, Acapulco, Cristobal, Curacao, Trinidad, then Southampton. At a later date when we pass through these places I should like to give a brief description of what we see, the people and food, and so on.

We will be away from Sydney for approximately nine months. We intend making London our headquarters. From there we hope to do the following tours: 15 days in Spain and Portugal, 29 days in the Balkan States, visiting such countries as Belgium, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, then 16 days in the Scandinavian countries, passing through Holland, Northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. We are also going to Ireland for 15 days, and 8 days in the South of England (Devon and Cornwall). After each tour we return to London for a rest, but before we return home we hope to pay a visit to Gay Paree. There are plenty of tours to Paris from London for three, four, or as many days as you can afford.

On the return voyage home we are calling via Cape Town, Durban, Fremantle, the ship being the Oriana.

As my briefing and descriptions are to be sent from time to time, after each batch of correspondence it will be signed "Sailor." To all those who were in the 2/1 Pioneers, I am sure they remember "Sailor Witham," the "Babbling Brook" of Headquarters Company.

We left a little after midday today, the weather is really glorious and the run down to the Heads will always be something I will not forget for many years to come. After passing under the Bridge and past the Quay, the approach to the "Opera House" (or Cahill's Folly as it is often known) on one side, and the Zoo and houses on the northern side gives one a feeling of great pride; it is such a beautiful sight. From about Bradley's Head the view is breathtaking, with all the small craft of sail and power in their hundreds, with Rose Bay and Vaucluse as a background makes a perfect picture.

One has to stand up forward to see both sides of the harbour at once. It only takes about 40 minutes to reach the Heads. It is worth being late for lunch to see it all.

I have been up and down Sydney Harbour many, many times before the

war as a member of some ship's crew, but I have never appreciated the beauty of our harbour until today.

The run from Sydney to Wellington was calm enough, but very cold and windy, and it rained all day Monday. Tuesday was much better, still windy, but a nice sunny day, so we were able to get out on deck more.

The ship, I think, is quite comfortable, and so far the meals have been very good, but some complain. The food is not lavish, but there is plenty of it. Of course, the dishes are mainly English. In our cabin we have had three bowls of very nice fruit, Jaffa oranges, bananas, and a couple of William pears.

On reaching Wellington the ship stays for two days. We will not see a great deal of the city as we are going to friends of ours who have a sheep property about 80 odd miles away.

The harbour of Wellington is rather attractive, and I am told it has very deep water. It has been compared with many places of beauty such as Hong Kong, Valparaiso and San Francisco. As the ship steams up the harbour to its berth, from the sun deck one gets a unique panorama of the city, harbour and the green suburbs perched on the hills behind the city blending into a perfect picture. According to all reports the climate of Wellington is free from extremes, the average temperature in July 40 degrees to 42 degrees, and in January between 68 and 70, and has an average rainfall of 48 inches a year. The day we arrived was a beautiful sunny day. I have been told they average 2,000 hours of sunshine a year, giving the city congenial weather all the year round.

I was surprised to learn today there are about 60 passengers who are doing the round trip. When they reach port they see all they can during the time the ship is in port. That would not suit me. After travelling so far I would want to see more of a place like Australia.

Just a few things more about Wellington. On the morning of our arrival we did a tour along the Marine Drive. It is a seafront drive beginning at Oriental Parade and runs for 30 miles through 21 bays without leaving the city limits. This is thought to be one of the longest marine drives in the world.

One of the few attractions in Wellington is the cable car running from Lambton Quay at sea level, to the suburb of Kelburn, which is 500 feet above the central city area.

At the top terminus of the cable car there is a magnificent view of the city and harbour. There is also access to Kelburn Park with its spectacular centennial fountain, to the Botanic Gardens, 64 acres of native bush, shrubs, beautiful plants and garden walks.

There is also the carillon which was erected as a war memorial and opened on Anzac Day, 1932. The carillon has a peal of 49 bells, on which are inscribed the names of battlefields of World War I

on which New Zealanders fought. Other notable memorials are the Wakefield and Sedan Memorials, all located near Parliament Buildings.

Our run to the country was very pleasant. Where we were staying is very like the rugged parts of Tasmania. That is about all about Wellington—our next port of call will be Rarotonga where we only stay three hours to take on and set down passengers.

Rarotonga is the administrative centre of the Cook Islands, a very scattered group in the Central Pacific, covering an area of 850,000 square miles, the actual land being an area of only 93 square miles.

The people of the Cook Islands are Polynesian and closely related to the Maoris of New Zealand. The high islands are produced by undersea volcanic activity and are the tops of extinct volcanoes. They have a much greater land area than the surrounding atolls and their rich volcanic soil produces a variety of crops, including citrus fruits, bananas, pineapples and tomatoes, which are exported to the New Zealand market.

Rarotonga's sharp peaks form a serrated pattern against a hard blue sky, and the island presents itself as one of the most attractive in the South Pacific.

The highest peaks are Te Manga, 2,140 feet, and Te Atukura, 2,095 feet, which together form the island's highest pinnacle. There are 10 other peaks over 1,000 feet high and others of lesser height. All are climbable, and all are covered with thick evergreen bush.

For more than 60 years the islands were ruled by the missionaries until declared a British Protectorate in 1888. In 1901 the Cook Islands were included within the boundaries of New Zealand. The efforts of the London Missionary Society are visible today through the Cook Islands Christian Church, to which the majority of the population belong.

The Roman Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists and Mormons also have churches throughout the group. Most of the islands in the southern group and Palmerston Island were discovered by Captain Cook in 1773. He gave the world its first detailed description of these islands and the accuracy of his observation is illustrated by the fact that, despite nearly 200 years of European contact, the Admiralty charts are still those drawn by Captain Cook in 1774.

We only stayed at Rarotonga for three hours to pick up a few passengers, so we were not allowed ashore, but the natives were permitted to come aboard and sell fruit and souvenirs. Our next port of call is Tahiti.

Now a little about the Northern Star. The ship is fully air-conditioned. In the public rooms such as lounges and restaurants, etc., it is too cold and nearly everyone on board has had a cold. There have been repeated requests from the passengers to have it cut back a little. I am sure the last couple of days it has

not been quite so cold in these rooms; in the cabins one has a thermostat so you can adjust the air to what suits you. Although it is only 24,000 odd tons, it is very easy to get lost as the passages run in all directions and sometimes, when you want to get from port side to starboard you have to go up and down stairs to your destination.

There are two restaurants, one forward and one aft. They are in the central parts of the ship. To illustrate my point, here is an example—our cabin is on the restaurant deck, sternwards of the after restaurant. To get to it from, say, the sundeck, we take the lift to the main deck, walk along a passage, then down two flights of stairs and we are on our cabin level.

It is no use taking the lift to the restaurant deck as you are not allowed to go through the dining room while a meal is being served, and between meals the dining rooms are kept locked. There is a sun deck where the two swimming pools are, also where the sports are held, there is plenty of space for all up there. The next down are the three lounges deck. The forward lounge is very comfortable. In this lounge is an Italian electric organ which is played twice a day. It has a wonderful tone, with a lot of variations, and the organist who plays it certainly knows his job. On the same deck is the library, where there is a fine selection of books and where TV can be seen at night, but the reception is very poor, so it is hardly worth watching. Still on the same level are the smoke room and bar, also very comfortable, but I do not care much for the English beers. The tinned lager is not bad, especially the Tennant's Lager. Of

course, there are plenty of spirits, wine and cigarettes. All at greatly reduced prices. A carton of cigarettes like Rothmans' King Size Filter costs £1 stg. or \$2.20 Australian for 200. Spirits and wine are also very cheap. Then there is the cinema lounge which can be turned into a ballroom, and behind that is the Tavern bar. The Tavern is mainly for the younger set where they can let their hair down and really go to town.

The promenade deck holds mainly cabins and the hospital. Five times round the ship on this deck is one mile. The next deck down is the main deck, with more cabins, hairdressing saloons and the shop, purser's office. The next deck is the restaurant deck. There are a few cabins on this level. The two dining rooms are there with the galley in the middle. A and B decks are all cabins. The lower deck holds the ship's laundry and there is a small laundry for the passengers, where there are about a dozen small washing machines and also six revolving dryers.

It only takes about three-quarters of an hour to do a week's wash. I forgot to mention that on all cabin decks are ironing rooms, toilets and showers.

The ship cruises at approximately 20 knots and covers between 460 to 490 miles in 23½ hours. The clocks go back 30 minutes each night. We have not done a 24-hour day run yet. When we left Sydney, for the first two nights the clocks went back 45 minutes each night, then after leaving Wellington on Friday 8th, the next day was still the 8th, so actually, Sydney is a day and some hours behind our time on board ship. The two engines are steam turbines.

(Continued next issue)

WELFARE REPORT

By H. "MONTY" MONTAGUE

Over the past 12 months, I have visited the Concord Repatriation Hospital on 50 nights and paid 247 calls on members of the Association. Vic Walmsley has also been visited on 51 weekends at the Ryde Old People's Home, 600 Victoria Road, Ryde. It does cheer the members up to recall events, old times and personalities, and the visits are very much appreciated.

Everything possible is done to assist in any problems they may have, the greatest of these being those in connection with pensions. These are always referred to our good friends Max McAtee, Tom Gittens and Bert Humphries, the permanent pension staff.

The cigarettes, sweets, etc., distributed by the association are always welcome, and Mick Dodson is to be thanked for the cartons of reading matter he donated for distribution.

Accommodation can now be provided for the next-of-kin of any member of the association who is on the dangerously ill list at the hospital.

During visits there, I have enrolled 27 new members, 21 of the 2/1st and six from the 2/2nds. This was made possible by the gatekeepers, who always have a list of Pioneer patients waiting for me each week.

Jack Collis is now residing at Umina on the Central Coast, and does the visit-

ing around that area. He is prepared to visit up to and including Newcastle, and can be contacted at 24 Hobart Avenue, Umina, 2257.

Public hospitals, institutions and various homes are visited each weekend, as quite a number of Pioneers are in these establishments because they are unable to gain admission to Concord.

The following members have been visited at Concord Repatriation Hospital and the figures denote the number of visits: 2/2: C. Knight, M. Whitely, 1; H. Knudson, P. Dowd, 3; R. Hopkins 4; E. McEnnally 8. 2/1: E. Denver, P. Steiner, V. LeMessurier, S. Cooper, Col. G. Graham, 2; R. Staggs, J. Bird, W. Quayle, P. O'Brien, 3; S. Wickens, T. Crick, J. Young, 4; J. Buchanan 5; B. Burton 9.

For all welfare work, including hospital visitations, contact Harry Montague, 46 Pomeroy Street, Homebush, 2140. Telephone 76-6657.

VALE . . .

VIV PARKINSON (2/1). With regret we report the passing of Viv. Parkinson in March, after a long and serious illness. Viv. joined the Pioneers in Dubbo in 1940, and served with them in the Middle East and the Islands until the cessation of hostilities.

By his cheerfulness and willingness to help others at all times, Viv. won the respect and admiration of his fellow Pioneers, and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

"Monty" attended the funeral as representative of the association and a huge crowd of mourners from all walks of life gathered to pay their last respects. Many had to stand outside for the service. At the Woronora Crematorium, "Monty" was invited by the Caringbah R.S.L. to represent the battalion in paying their last final tribute as the "Ode" was recited, followed by a bugler sounding the Last Post and Reveille.

JOE BIRD (2/1). The sudden death of Joe Bird in April came as a great shock to all who knew him. He had been visited on many occasions while in Concord Hospital by "Monty" and it was after his discharge from there that he died suddenly. Joe joined the battalion at Greta in 1940 and was posted to H.Q. Coy. as a transport driver. He saw service in the Middle East and in the New Guinea campaign. On returning to civilian life Joe worked at the Government Bus Depot at Brookvale and was their Depot representative in all industrial and social activities for many years, as well as their welfare official.

The funeral was held at Dee Why and his old workmates from Brookvale and other bus depots, plus a large representation from the local R.S.L.s, surrounding clubs, friends and members of this association gathered to pay their last respects and tributes. "Sailor" Witham, our official representative at funerals, was in attendance. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his widow, Joan, his daughter Helen and son Terry.

TOMMY CRICK (2/1). On 22nd May last, "Monty" attended the funeral at Fivedock of another well-known Pioneer, Tommy Crick. Tommy had been in Concord Hospital for quite some time, and had been very ill. The funeral service was attended by members of the Fivedock R.S.L. and many others, and "Monty" was extended an invitation to act as the association's representative in paying their last respects both at the service and the cemetery at Rookwood. On behalf of the association, "Monty" expressed our deepest sympathy to his widow and family.

RE-UNION RAFFLES

Who won the raffles? Well, I will tell you. Joe Barker won the dozen bottles of beer raffle by the 2/1st and he promptly donated it to the hard working band of paper wrappers. Gavin Dodd won the bottle of whisky raffled by the 2/2nd. He also had no hesitation in donating it to the wrappers.

Thanks, boys, for the fine gesture.



from the MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

43 AMOURIN ST., BROOKVALE, Phone 93-4696



JACK BERTRAM (2/1) and now a resident at Hamilton (Newcastle) was a disappointed boy because of his inability of being unable to attend the Anzac Day functions, but that quite a few of the boys would attend. The weather was terrific and a great day was enjoyed by all. However, like all good things, they must come to an end, and I can assure you, Jack, that it was just as you wished it. No regrets, just good luck.

SAILOR WITHAM (2/1) and now a resident of Waverley, N.S.W., writes a congratulatory letter to Max on the wonderful job the committee made of Anzac Day and suggests that it was the best we have had to date. Sailor, as you probably know, has just returned from a world tour, he and his wife having a wonderful time in England and Europe. Since his return good fortune continues to smile on the happy couple and only a couple of weeks back, had the second prize ticket in the State Lottery, so I have the whisper now that the travel bug has bitten again and they have planned a trip to New Zealand early in the New Year. In the interim Sailor has volunteered his services to the committee and attends the funerals of our unfortunate mates as a representative of the association. Thank you, Sailor, for the good thoughts and the good work.

BILL THEILE (2/1) and now at Flinders Park, S.A., sends along a cheery note, a bit late, but it did arrive. Bill, wife and family made the trip up to Queensland some time back and on the way home had a brief stay in Sydney, but not time enough to make social calls. In Adelaide on Anzac Day, Bill marched with Doug Waters and Bert Molloy (2/1) and Allen Olsen, Len Norman, Cecil Denton and Roy Frisk (2/2). After the march lunched at a city hotel with plenty of yarns and a bit of elbow bending. Bill still enjoys his golf and is a member of the Riverside Golf Club, where he plays his best shots at the 19th hole. Bill enclosed a cheque for \$6, being subs for Doug Waters, Bert Molloy and himself. Thanks, Bill, for a good letter and subs for the above are in the hands of the treasurer.

JOHN DOWD (2/1) and now at Woollooware, sends a subscription to the News and a noted address of Bernie Daley at Taree. Bernie dispenses the amber fluid at the Yachting Club and is always pleased to see any Pioneer. The previous copies have been dispatched to him and his now address noted.

JACK LLOYD (2/1) and now at Coogee sends along a good letter that he was very pleased and proud to have led the boys in the wreath laying ceremony, but wishes to emphasise his apology that in giving the order he

neglected the 2/2 boys. Jack is emphatic that it was an oversight and claims that given the same opportunity again will guarantee that the same mistake will not happen again. Thank you, Jack, feel sure that the 2/2 boys probably did not notice it. However, should you be in attendance next year, I, for one, will nominate that you be given the same opportunity.

J. WATSON now of Woonona sends a letter of thank you, and a cheque and would be obliged as to his financial situation. Consider yourself paid up for the year. With regards to Tom Ledgerwood, I as an editor can only say that I have not heard anything of Tom since he left our unit in 1943 or so. Whether anyone else has any knowledge of his whereabouts I do not know. However, this item in the paper may bring some sort of news to the fore. Thanks again for your letter, and I hope this item may help your inquiries.

CHARLES SEXTON (2/1) and now at Talbingo on the Snowy. Chas. has been in ill-health for the last 10 months and is on the mend again now. At the Snowy Charlie is working on the final and largest of the power stations. It involves nine hours a day, six days a week, or alternate day and night shift, and with temperatures at night below freezing. I am sure that there would not be too many of our city slickers trying to take your job. Charlie tried to make Anzac Day, but after driving from Cooma, some 300 miles, was not up to the event. Charles sends along a subscription and one bright spot on his horizon is to the effect that one of his tribe has struck the jackpot and presented them with a grandson. Good luck, Charlie, and may your health show much improvement in the near future.

BRUCE RICH, Narrandera, with a short note and an enclosure for \$2. Not a lot of news from Bruce—about eight lines and he quotes Bluey Evans as the only 2/1 bloke at Narrandera in good health, while the same to be said for Mick Roberts at Leeton.

IAN KIRKWOOD (2/1) and now of Wollongong and at time of writing is holidaying at Port Macquarie and (not on Flynn's Beach like some persons I know). I do not quite get the inference there, but it must mean something to somebody. Ian marched with the Port Macquarie R.S.L. on Anzac Day, but not a Pioneer to report. He also decided to go up to Dorriggo, tried to contact Fred Wheeton, who works at the bacon factory, but as Ian said, the road forks, so where the bacon factory is, he is still no wiser. Well, all I can say, you must be about the only bloke I have ever heard of as getting lost in Dorriggo. Ian also quotes that the only member he has run into at Wollongong was Leo Morris, who

has been having indifferent health for some time. Thanks for the news, Ian. Perhaps you may elaborate a little on the Flynn's Beach episode at a later date and your subs are in the worthy treasurer's hot little hand.

ROBBIE ROBERTSON, now a resident of Mosman, writes an amusing anecdote on old "Tal." 'Twas John Har-netty's article on same that sparked this off. It would appear that Robbie had to report to the R.S.M. old "Tal" at the fig tree in Tobruk and Old Tal offered him a cot for the night. Robbie slept like a top and was woken a.m. with a cup of tea, not from old Tal's batman, but the old bloke himself, and with the batman lying back on his bunk enjoying same. As Robbie says: that was "Old Tal" to his mates. Robbie kicked the tin with a couple of dollars and I sincerely hope that Max has made the correction to your name.

From **MONTY**, our reliable hospital visitation representative sends along a note with the new addresses of a couple of members that have been away from the flock. John Lewis, ex C Coy., and now of Camperdown, and William Quayle, D Coy., and now of Woollahra. Monty also met Eric Denyr, who is a taxi driver of Wollongong and spends his spare time writing musical scores and plays. Eric has written quite a few altogether, but quotes that like any other Australian artist, finds it very hard to get any reliable persons to take any interest. Keep at it Eric, and above all (keep pushing).

GERRY COLLINS (2/1) and now at Penshurst, writes a thank you to the committee and to the hospital visitors, and thanks everyone for a good day on the 25th. Gerry remarks that if you are out Penshurst way, you can always pick him up at the R.S.L. and another substantial lump of Pioneer in the shape of "Pear Shape" and now known as "Robber" Whiteley. Apparently the name of "Robber" is a new acquisition to Vic, but the whisper is that he has the habit of pinching boys from the other managers at the Youth Club for his team (I would guess this would refer to baseball), but like all smart moves, something goes wrong, and his team generally gets defeated by the team he robbed. Apparently their eyes are not judging as good as they did in the old days, Vic. Thanks a lot Gerry for your very interesting letter and keep reporting on that Whiteley bloke, he won't write, you know.

DICK SEDDON, Newcastle, notes and mostly of the Tobruk Day at Newcastle, where the Pioneer Battalion presented a book to be donated to one of the schools for the library. I think this is possibly about the fourth book by the Battalion Association and can assure all members

hat these gestures are well appreciated. Our association was well represented at Newcastle, led by our Lt. Col. "Nuggett" Neal, supported by Bob Stevens, Noel Peterson, Bob Juleff, Sandy Abercrombie, Ted Simpson, Joe Hickey, Glido Griffiths, Jack Bertram, Bruce Mitchell and Dick himself.

An excellent day was had by all. Dick also sends along the address of Merv Whippis, and this address has been noted in the register.

Included in Dick's letter is a three-page item from Harold Lees at Grafton, where we learn that Ted Felton has joined the Department of Agriculture, where Bruce McNaughton is the chief and Jim Casson also there. Easter weekend Harold went through to Brisbane where he called into Doug Turner's place only to learn that Doug had gone fishing with his brother.

Anzac Day and Harold was at Kyogle where he had a few with Joe and Cec Blanch and Jim Hall, who looks especially well—it's that good country air, suppose. The last news in Harold's note was to the effect that our old mate 'Bluey Eather' has forsaken the ill-effects of the Kempsey Club and has moved to the city, where he has shackled up with Frank Dynon at the North Sydney Anzac Club. I don't know whether his is correct, but we wish him well.

Thanks a lot, Harold and Dick, for your information. It is always especially good to get news of so many at one time.

That is Mail Bag for this issue—a dig cheerio to all our 1,200 members. We don't care if you all send a letter and a cheque, or either, or both. If you all write at once we will just stockpile it, or don't worry about us getting too much. And a special cheerio to a few, like the Newcastle crowd, the North Coast, the West and South and Jim Robertson all by himself down at Wentworth, with wife Margaret and family, of course. All the best till next issue.

JOCK ARMOUR (Ex W/O Bandmaster, 2/1), of Paddington, sends along a very welcome donation to funds and his good wishes for the success of the Jews. Jock finds it hard to catch up on his paper, as his playing takes him to other States and occasionally away on overseas liners, but was tickled to see that Ivor Garnon and quite a few of the bandmen are still going strong. He sends kind regards to them all and would really like to catch up with some of them one of these days. Jock also sends his best wishes to Monty.

GEORGE MCGUIRE (B.H.Q. 2/1) of Narramurra, sends notification of a new address, which has been noted, and apologies for neglecting the association. However, George made the effort to get to the Castlereagh on Anzac Day this time, but arrived late after a trip from Ullalla, where he had been holidaying with his wife. He met up with some of the boys though, and was particularly pleased to see Gordon Finlay again. Make sure your holidays don't get mixed up with Anzac Day next year, George.

BILL STEERS (2/1) writes from Marks Point with a contribution to the Jews. Bill has been in Western Australia visiting his daughter in Bunbury, also

2/1 MOVES TO DUBBO

After settling in at Greta, where the unit was first formed, the unit was moved to Dubbo on Sunday, 9th September, 1940, by two special trains.

On arrival at Dubbo the whole unit were ushered into the Victoria Hall where ladies of the Dubbo and Districts Societies provided a most welcome breakfast.

The Mayor of Dubbo, Ald. Errol Serisier officially welcomed the Battalion and stated all necessary arrangements were being carried out to provide amenities for the Troops stationed at Dubbo, and it was the ambition of the residents to make it the best place A.I.F. troops had stayed.

A large canteen had been commenced plus a large club, but unlike the canteen, the club would be dry. This brought a groan from the troops, and the Mayor continued to state, "But we know you won't be bone dry when you arrive at the club, so don't clutter up the footpaths like a lot of drunks, just go right through to the drunks room at the back of the hall and you will be well looked after." This brought down the house with whistling, clapping, cheering and laughter.

MAYOR WELCOMES COL. MACGILLICUDDY

The Mayor officially welcomed the 2/1 Pioneers to Dubbo by shaking hands with Colonel Macgillicuddy and stated this gesture symbolised the hand of friendship extended by all the citizens of Dubbo.

Responding on behalf of officers and men our Colonel told the large gathering that the whole unit appreciated the hospitality already extended to their members.

The Colonel went on to say that there was an officer in the unit who had received his schooling at Dubbo and that was Major Norm Neal.

As a tribute to Norm Neal and Dubbo, the Colonel intended stepping down, in favour of Major Neal, to lead the march through Dubbo.

With the reception over the march proceeded through Talbraga, Darling and Macquarie Streets and according to the local newspaper report it was the most spectacular parade Dubbo had witnessed.

With the parade over the unit marched the 12 miles from the town to their camp.

gadding about in Queensland and western N.S.W. to escape the cold weather. He often sees "Bluey" Reed, who was in the R.A.P., and they often have a noggin together. Bill looks forward to the News and sends his best wishes to all who keep it going. Thanks, mate, write again sometime.

TOM ANGUS (A Coy. 2/1) of Brisbane, was in Sydney recently and called in to see Allan McInnes on his way home after an inland trip to Melbourne. Nice to hear from you, Tom.

Training was very soon under way but there was still time for entertainment, and leave in town, and these consisted of theatre parties, social turn-outs in the homes of the locals, and visits to the many hotels.

2/1 PIONEER REGIMENTAL BAND

The Regimental Band was constantly in demand for concert recitals, etc., in the town, and in appreciation the licensee of the Railway Hotel presented a mace to the unit band. At the request of the bandmaster, Jock Armour, the drum major Porky Skeen received the mace.

The band's fame spread very quickly and they travelled far and wide, even up to Coonabarabran where they played for patriotic appeals.

There is enough material on the unit's exploits to write a book, and we had a good time at other places, just as we did at Dubbo, so how about other Pioneers taking up the pen and writing a story to our Editors.

If words and thanks could ever be found strong enough to express our gratitude to the Dubbo folk, for their hospitality, we would like to really know them.

—HARRY MONTAGUE.

"OUR SCOUTING SECRETARY"

It may interest a lot of members to know that Max Herron, our honorary secretary, not only looks after the minutes, the correspondence and editing of our newspaper, but he has recently been appointed an Assistant Training Commissioner of Scouting in N.S.W. He is also District Scout Master for the district of Kameragal. In the next three months Max will spend 8 weekends in camp, training boys and putting Scouters through courses.

His wife Peg doesn't see much of him, but Peg realises as we do that Max is doing a tremendous amount of good for a large number of the youth of N.S.W. I know all our association members will join me in a salute to a wonderful guy, doing a job big enough for two men.

Congratulations, Max, on your new appointment. Well done, Scouter!

—Wal Desso PAGE

BI-ANNUAL SMOKO

BRITISH EX-SERVICES CLUB

THIRD FLOOR LOUNGE

5 HAMILTON STREET, SYDNEY

FRIDAY, 28th NOVEMBER, 1969

at 7.30 p.m.

Free Supper

Printed by Wennholm Bros. Pty. Ltd., Hurstville.
Phone 57-0397

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

Correspondence: Secretary, MAX HERRON, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills, 2209

Treasurer:
DOUG SHEARSTON

Editors: J. HARNETTY,
R. LAKE and M. HERRON

President:
ALLAN McINNES

Vol. 14, No. 3

1st November, 1969

Price: 50c Per Annum

BI-ANNUAL REUNION

FRIDAY 21st NOVEMBER

That is the date to remember and the date for you to be with us at The British Ex-Servicemen's Club, Hamilton Street, Sydney. This is just another chance for you to see some of the fellows you thought so much of just on thirty years ago.

Don't let the time dull your memory or your enthusiasm for your association and the fellows you served with—so let's see a big roll-up for our bi-annual reunion at 7.30 on the 28th November, at the British Ex-Servicemen's Club, Hamilton Street, third floor lounge.

If you come straight from work you can clean up and have a meal at the club and later in the evening the association provides a bite to eat for you.

We were disappointed with the roll-up last bi-annual. Please don't disappoint us this time—we work for you, so come and let us know if you appreciate our work. So let's make a date—see you on Friday, 21st November, at British Ex-Servicemen's Club, Hamilton Street.

Editor's note: We apologise for the change to 21st November and do hope it does not inconvenience any members.

SERVICE PENSIONS

In view of the number of enquiries still being received in regard to eligibility for Service Pensions, the following particulars summarise the position.

A Service pension is the broad equivalent of age or invalid pension and rates and Means Test conditions are the same. It is payable to an ex-Serviceman who has served in a theatre of war and is either sixty years of age (fifty-five in the case of an ex-Servicewoman) or is permanently unemployable. It may also be paid to an ex-Serviceman suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis irrespective of the area in which he served, and to a veteran of the Boer War.

Its advantages for the ex-Serviceman are its availability five years earlier than for Social Services' benefit, and eligibility for medical treatment at Repatriation expense for most disabilities, whether or not they are war-caused.

The service pension is available in respect of service in the First and Second World Wars, in Korea, and in Malaya up to 1st September, 1957.

An ex-serviceman cannot receive a service pension for more than one of the above categories at the same time, nor can he receive an age or invalid pension from the Department of Social Services whilst receiving a service pension on the grounds of age or being permanently unemployable.

Where a service pension is granted to an ex-serviceman on the grounds that he is permanently unemployable or is suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, service pension may also be paid to his wife and for the first four eligible children.

A service pension cannot be paid to dependants when the grant to the ex-serviceman is on account of age.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

SUNDAY, 9th NOVEMBER
LEICHHARDT

A Remembrance Service is to be conducted by Reverend Stan Claughton, Padre of the 2/2 Pioneer Battalion, at the Leichhardt Methodist Church, Wetherill Street, Leichhardt, on Sunday, 9th November, at 7 p.m.

All the members and their wives and friends of the 2/2nd and 2/1st Pioneers are cordially invited to attend to pay homage to their fallen comrades.

After the service the Padre has a discussion group over a cup of tea and all members have really enjoyed this very happy gathering in past years.

So let us have a bigger gathering this year than ever before.

* * *

OFFICERS' ANNUAL DINNER

On Friday, June 6, 1969, the officers of the 2/1st Aust. Pioneer Battalion held their second annual dinner at the Imperial Services Club in Barrack Street, Sydney.

On this occasion 14 ex-officers turned up, with apologies from as many more. Some of those present had their first sighting since 1945.

If there are any ex-officers of the battalion who would care to join us (we don't have the address of you all, you know), please get in touch with Gordon Osborn at the Imperial Services Club (secretary/manager).

Roll call: Colonel Norm Neal, George Patterson, Gordon Osborn, Henry Nichols, Bob Wilson, Gordon Finlay, Cyril Morahan, John Morahan, Stan Jones, John Trevethick, Steve Clarke, Jimmy Drummond, Jim Norris and Gordon Kitching.

2/1-2/2 PIONEER ASSOC.

will hold a

BARBECUE SOCIAL

at the

ALBERT BROWN PROPERTY,
BADGERY CREEK

on Saturday, 14th February, 1970

For further particulars and
notification of attendance

Contact Bob McGregor, Soc. Sec.,
120 Glamis Street, Kingsgrove
Telephone 759-0313



Another Mail Bag and once again wives well and truly to the fore, so with all due respects to our members, we shall give wives pride of place at the top of the column in this issue.

MRS. EDITH LOY, wife of the late Tom Loy and a resident of Maclean, N.S.W., reports that the article written by John Harnetty of her husband in the last issue gave her a great thrill, and to know that Tom was so highly regarded by his fellow men. As Edith quotes, "Tom was really a great guy" and who could pass better judgment. Thank you for your letter, Edith, further copies of the paper will be posted to you until such times as you request otherwise.

MRS. DOREEN ELLISTON, wife of the late Phil Elliston, (ex C Coy.) and now a resident of Narooma, thanks the secretary for the copies of the paper and sincerely wishes that she could answer his appeal for more help at the wrappings and the other duties that are part of the committee duties. Doreen has applied and is now waiting the result for the war widow's pension and we can only wish you success in your appeal. With regard to your personal inquiries I am sure that the secretary has forwarded you the information you require. Thank you again, Doreen, for your very charming letter.

MRS. IRENE HEPBURN, wife of Francis Hepburn (ex C Coy. 2/2), and now living at Bankstown, sends along a cheery letter, a subscription to the treasurer and a suggestion that perhaps the family outings and socials that we had in years gone by be advertised in the News, the same as the men's Smokos. Well, Irene, I am afraid that the socials and dances that you speak of were not very well supported by the members and their families and so they were passed off the programme. However, the social secretary, Bob McGregor, does find time to arrange small get-togethers where all that are interested may attend and you will certainly be notified when the next little picnic or barbecue is on and we thank you sincerely for your interest and your suggestion.

GEORGE WALKER (18 Pln D Coy.), and now of Hurstville, was visiting his wife Joyce in hospital in August and was told by her that a Pioneer was in the next ward. On entering the ward he found our secretary, Max Herron, sitting up as large as life, enjoying the attention of pretty nurses floating around. George had a good yarn with Max and talked of the good times in Don

Coy. George states he has not been able to get to our functions because he has been in the Army until recently and is now on shift work, but will make every endeavour next year.

Apparently Max visited the ladies' ward quite often when there was no visitors and when the Sister was not around, and became friendly with Joyce and "the girls." He sends a big cheerio to you Joyce and says to drop a line sometime.

JACK BERTRAM (H.Q. 2/1) and one of the stalwarts of the Newcastle district, sends along a note that in company with other Pioneers, Joe Hickey, Bob Juleff, Jack Griffiths and Jock Russell, attended the funeral of the late Sandy Abercrombie—Jack also states that if any of the old mob would like to see the Newcastle crowd, they need only appear at the Fivedock R.S.L. Club on the 26th October, when the Newcastle branch of the "Rats of Tobruk" play Sydney in the fine art of bowls. As all members should know, the Pioneers are very well represented in the "Rats," both in Sydney and Newcastle. Also on the 23rd November, another bowling epic at "Old Bar," Taree, and once again all visitors would be made welcome. Jack quotes that he is not a bowler, but on these days concedes to throw one down, and sometimes it manages to stay on the green. Thanks, Jack, for your letter and the invitation and I sincerely hope that some old mates will take the opportunity to say "How are you going?" once again.

JACK MARSHALL (D Coy. 2/1), and now at Glen Innes, sends along the word that Leo Ferris' daughter was married at Kyogle. Owing to circumstances, Jack's wife was not able to attend, so Jack escorted his daughter Marlene. Miles as we know means nothing to the chaps that live in the country and this wedding was no exception. Some 159 miles, but they made it and had a very good time. Jack quotes that Leo and family are all well, with the male partner putting on quite a bit of beef and also mentions that as the forehead grows higher, so he has a lot more face to wash. News of the other boys is that they are all pretty well and that Teddy Felton has drifted away again. Jack also informs us that daughter Marlene is to be married in February; that's another lot of dollars to be paid out. Jack has also a son and daughter-in-law in the cotton growing and assures everyone that they would not be wasting their time if they happened to be that way and had a look at same. Thanks a lot for the letter, Jack, and the sub is in the treasurer's hot little hand.

TOM MANUEL (H.Q. 2/1), and now at Emmaville, sends along a sub to the cause and quotes that it is still good to get news of the old gang. Tom sees Jack Rodgers quite often at the Services Club, Glen Innes, and states that Jack has not altered very much, apart from the fact that he now drinks rum and beer shandies with a schooner chaser. Also quotes that he may have lost his sense of taste because they switched the drinks and he did not notice. Personally, Tom, I would reckon after two or three such drinks, it would not matter much what you switched I doubt very much whether anyone would notice. Tom is still a very keen worker for Legacy and is approaching the 20-year period with the same. Thanks a lot for your news, Tom, and we wish you well and all the others that you may come in contact with.

FRED LOVELESS (Ex-2/1) has recovered from his health problems and has written that he is back on the top and has been posted to the Diocese of St. Arnoud, Victoria. As you will have gathered Fred is a Minister of the Church and has been fortunate enough to be able to attend the last couple of meetings. Fred has just had the honour of officiating at the marriage of his niece at Cobar on the 26th July and was a very happy man on that occasion. On these lines Fred and his wife are now at "The Vicarage," Lascelles, Victoria, and any of the boys passing that way would be made more than welcome.

JACK "On The Wood Heap" HARVEY writes a few lines on the aspect of a holiday north, and a special request for Ivan Pepper's address. This has been forwarded to you Jack, and the trip, I should imagine would now be behind you—hope you had a good time, Jack; in fact, I can't see how you could have otherwise, providing you called at the right places. Jack has a son, a big boy, doing his half-yearly exam. But by the time this goes to press the butterflies could be a lot worse with the end of the year coming up. All the best Jack and our good wishes go with the boy, too.

REG LOWRY (2/1) and his wife, Joan, sends along a letter of apology, and with a lot of groans and grunts suggests that he should write a letter. However, Joan couldn't stand the horrible thought that maybe this lack of writing could go another 20 years, so she has taken the job on herself. We thank you Joan for your efforts and we appreciate the thought, as you have probably read in the earlier editions, we are greatly indebted to the wives for the support that they have all shown to the

paper. On the news side—Reg, Joan and the three boys—Bill, John and Noel, plus three tons of junk, “your own words, Joan,” have moved into their new home at Austral, beyond Liverpool, and Reg as usual has his usual luggage—a cow and nine hens. “Wot, not rooster” to help their six acres of land onto the path of plenty. We thank you sincerely Joan for your letter and we know that you have got the full support of your husband as you write the news of the family.

KEN STUART (H.Q. 2/1), and with a postal address at Turramurra and a letter address c/o Milbrae, California, U.S.A. As has been written before, Ken is in the States on behalf of Qantas. He has been there some 2½ years and could be still another 1½ years before they return. Has high hopes of Anzac Day 1971 in Sydney and we will all be glad to welcome you back Ken. The enclosed sub is in the treasurer's hot little hand and I have no doubt that it will be put to good use.

ALBERT BARTON (A Coy. 2/1), Naked Nut of the years gone by and now living at Yagoona, sends along his donation and his congratulations to Max Herron on his high appointment in the Scouting Movement. Alby is now working at the Navy Armament Depot at Silverwater and the mention of guided missiles, homing torpedoes and what have you, as he quotes, possibly the only safe place would be a burrow under Ayres Rock or a plot on the moon—not so sure about that last bit Alby, somebody might tread on your head.

GEORGE LEVY (2/1), of Hammondville, and at time of writing a resident of Ward 5, Concord Hospital, thanks Monty for his timely arrival on visitors' night. George has not enjoyed the best of health for some time now, but like all the boys, manages to keep up the smile and the old fact, there is always someone worse off than yourself. The subscription is enough to cover all costs until the end of the year George, so don't worry more on that score.

TOM MORGAN (2/2), and now at The Entrance, Tuggerah Lakes. Tom has finally made the effort and has got pen onto paper and his thanks with regard to our little paper are with us, and glad to receive same. Tom has had a spell at Repat. and while there met Cec Plumb (of D Coy. 2/2). Tom is employed by another 2/2 mate, Len Hope, and they are teamed up in the building trade. Len also has had his setbacks with regard health, but still manages to participate in an occasional game of bowls. Tom spends quite a bit of time at the local club—Tuggerah Lakes Memorial Club, and would like to see any ex-Pioneer. He can assure them of quite a really good time. (Keep this in mind fellows.)

JIM DARRAGH, South Melbourne and proprietor of the North Port Garage, writes, and I quote, “Regards to Gus Pike and all the boys. Sorry to be

late with donation, but here it is.” I am afraid that I can not make very much news out of that lot. However, Jim, try again sometime, it gets easier as you acquire practice.

BILL BARNES (2/2) and now at Warren, writes—While one always looks forward to receiving the Pioneer News and reads with interest its contents from cover to cover, occasionally an item of news or an article will strike a main-spring of memory which can recall events and faces with almost startling clarity. Such a case was the news clipping on W.O. Maurice Armstrong in your last issue. I was a member of the 16th, a sister platoon to the one Armstrong commanded in the 2/2. While I seldom saw eye to eye with him, one couldn't help but admire the man.

As a matter of fact he paraded me twice over some now forgotten disdemeanours to Bill Robertson (The Black Prince). Incidentally I can well recall substituting a more colourful adjective for Prince.

One can recall the images of Maurice quite clearly; the trim precise figure in jungle greens, with spotless webbing belt and gaiters, putting his platoon through its parade ground paces in Queensland. The drawn weary face on the long forced march from Tsili Tsili to Nadszab across the Markham River, stubbornly refusing all offers of assistance, although it was obvious to all that the earlier wounds taken in Syria were having their effect.

Then on the long probing patrols along the valleys and ridges of the Finisterres toward Mt. Pothero and Shaggy Ridge, constantly on the prowl checking to see if his “boys” were O.K., and again at the sea-borne landing at Taranakan, worrying some harrassed Q.M. for extra supplies for his men.

The man in those days was a living epitaph of all that was expected of a soldier and it comes as no surprise to learn that he is back in uniform. Any recruits who pass through his hands will be better for the experience.

Bill Norris (of D Coy. 2/2) is still on deck up here and would be happy to share a rink with any bowlers passing through. “Bonny” Fowler (also of 2/2) is in Ward 18 at Concord for a spell and would certainly welcome any visitor, and I'll personally guarantee anyone who visits “Bonny” will come away the happier for it. I am hoping to see Mick Bye out at Goodooga late this month when I will be spending a few days on our works on the Border River. It is amazing that although our range of operations covers over 60,000 square miles of N.S.W. from Wellington in the south, to Mungindi in north, and west to Tilpa on the Darling, the number of Pioneers I have struck could be counted on one hand.

That's the Mail Bag for this issue. Looking forward to brighter and better things.

Cheerio,
LAKEY.

MANY THANKS DEPARTMENT

All members who visited Blacktown R.S.L. Club at the invitation of its president (and a Pioneer) “Len Humphreys,” would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to him for the wonderful afternoon and evening that he gave us. Len took us for a grand tour of the club and what a grand club it is—if any of you fellows live in a radius of 30 miles of this club it's worth the trip, fine food, good entertainment and a very nice floor for dancing.

Our thanks once again Len for a wonderful time from all the boys and their wives that you entertained.

The next to come in for some thanks are Eileen and Albert Brown of Badgery Creek. These two very fine people invited practically the whole committee of the association to come and have a picnic in his backyard, so to speak. Eileen and Albert run a very large dairy farm up at Badgery Creek and Albert last Anzac Day asked me to get some of the boys to come up for a barbecue and open air reunion. So practically all the committee, plus their families and friends, turned up at the Brown's on Father's Day and what a Father's Day it was—you only have to say the word Eileen and Albert and we will be there again.

We will have to get our social secretary to make some arrangements with you both—you have one starter already in me—thanks again to Eileen and Albert for a wonderful day.

By the way, the results of the 2nd Mortdale Scout raffle that my wife “Lall” sold the tickets for, was won by one of the Scout fathers, a Mr. Hunter. It's just as well, because if a Pioneer had won it I would have to ask you to donate it to the “Paper Wrappers.” Oh, yes, and thanks to all those who bought tickets from the 2nd Mortdale Scout Group.

WAL (DESSO) PAGE.

BI-ANNUAL SMOKO

BRITISH EX-SERVICES CLUB

Third Floor Lounge

5 HAMILTON STREET, SYDNEY

ON

FRIDAY, 21st NOVEMBER, 1969

at 7.00 p.m.

FREE SUPPER

WELFARE REPORT

My visits to the Concord Hospital, various Sydney hospitals, institutions and convalescent homes have been many since giving an account in the last issue of the News. These visits are appreciated by our pals and they are cheered by talks of old times, personalities and places.

The parcels of chocolates, cigarettes and books so kindly donated by the association are appreciated.

It has been a pleasure to assist them with their problems wherever possible, and we are indebted to our many friends who have assisted.

Several letters from members have been received seeking financial assistance from our association, and I have personally visited them to explain our position. Some cases certainly merited urgent help, but it was pointed out that, as our association was registered under the Charitable Collections Act, no financial assistance could be rendered to members.

However, armed with their relevant facts, I contacted friends of mine connected with various Benevolent Societies and these people were able to assist our old mates and families.

* * *

HAVE YOU MADE A WILL?

Recently a widow of one of our late members sought advice on her husband's estate, informing me he had not left a will despite the fact that he owned the home, had a few hundred dollars in the bank and a late model car.

Obviously I could only refer her to a friend at the Legal Aid, who was able to assist her, but it will take some sorting out and be more expensive than necessary.

To save worry, family differences and finance worries, make a will if you have not already done so, and learn from this very unfortunate case.

* * *

HOSPITAL VISITING

Visitations are made to Concord Hospital each Thursday night and public hospitals and institutions each Sunday, so if you are in any of the places mentioned, write to me—Harry Montague, 46 Pomeroy Street, Homebush, 2140, or phone 76-6657 and you will receive a visitor on behalf of the association.

* * *

MEMBERSHIP BOOST

Our sincere appreciation is extended to the great fellows on the gate staff at the Concord Hospital for their kindness and courtesy in providing me with information regarding all members of the 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneers, who are inmates.

Through these wonderful fellows I

was very fortunate to meet the following Pioneers from both Battalions and enrol them as members of our association. All were happy to meet me and only too glad to be placed on our mailing list. Copies of the last issue of the News were handed to them and were appreciated.

New members.— 2/1: H.Q. Coy., John Stone, William Davies; A Coy., Cec Porter, Harry Gill, Jack Baylis, Leo Slater; B Coy., Roderick Hamilton, John Smith. 2/2: Harry Sheridan, Justin Fowler, Ernest Jansen.

* * *

VALE

It is with regret and sorrow that I report the deaths of four old original members of the 2/1sts—George Simmons, A Coy., Alex "Sandy" Abercrombie, and Herbert Weeden, both of D Coy., and William Burton of the Band.

All four had been inmates of the Repatriation Hospital for quite some time and fought gamely against their illnesses. They were always pleased to see me and chat about times we will never forget, and many the time I left them with sincere sad feelings. However, we have lost four good mates, but to us they shall always remain in our memories.

The association's rituals were given at the funerals and final services, and the organisation's deepest sincere sympathy was conveyed to the widows and families of our departed mates.

LEST WE FORGET.

Harry Montague, Welfare Officer.

THE HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME

CONTINUED BY ARTHUR "SAILOR" WITHAM (2/1 H.Q. COY.)

Since leaving Sydney we have had wonderful weather. Today the sea is like Sydney Harbour—hardly a ripple. Tomorrow we are due at Papeete, the principal port of Tahiti.

Let me give you an outline on the history of Tahiti. Tahiti belongs to a group of islands known as "Îles de la Société." There is little doubt that these islands were first seen by Quiros the Spanish navigator in 1606, but like many other Spanish discoveries, this was unknown or ignored by the rest of the world.

When the "Dolphin" of Captain Wallis (sent by George III to make discoveries in the South Seas) reached Tahiti on June 19, 1767, it was supposed to be a new discovery and was named King George Islands.

Wallis sent Lieutenant Furneaux ashore there to take formal possession of the island on April 2nd, 1768. The next visit was the most important as it drew world-wide attention to the island, that was in 1769, as it filled important gaps in scientific knowledge.

It having been recommended that the rare occurrence of the transit of Venus across the sun's disc should be observed at points as far apart as possible, Captain Cook, with an efficient staff of scientific observers, was sent to Tahiti in the Endeavour. The transit was observed on June 3rd, 1769. Captain Cook surveyed

"Île Tahite" to which he restored its native name of Otahtiti.

Cook again visited these islands during his second last, and his last voyage. Before his last voyage, however, the Spanish under Don Domingo Sonechea landed in 1774 with missionaries to attempt colonisation. Tahiti was also visited by Bligh in the Bounty on October 26th, 1788. The mutiny and return of the mutineers to Tahiti is a matter of history. Captain Edwards on the sloop Pandora sent in search of the Bounty, arrived in Tahiti on March 23rd, 1791.

Most of the great voyagers to whom we owe our knowledge of the Pacific used Tahiti as a stopping place.

Now for a short briefing of our visit to the principal port of Tahiti, "Papeete."

The approach to the wharf after coming through the break in the coral reef is a very pleasant sight, the township is on a strip of flat land and in the background there are two mountain peaks, the highest is 7,000 feet and the other 5,000 feet above sea level. The slopes of both peaks and nearby hills are a mass of thick tropical growth.

Papeete reminds me very much of

Suva in appearance, very nice in the front, but very dirty in the back streets. There are all kinds of tropical fruits and fish to be had. The currency is, of course, French, but there are a few shopkeepers and stalls on the wharf who will take sterling, but very few.

The temperature in the shade when we were there was 81 degrees F., and the water temperature was 83 degrees F., believe it or not. One goes for a swim just to get wet, not to cool off. Even the cold shower on board ship is like having a warm one, the humidity being terrific. It ranges between 90 and 93 per cent. It knocked me in the morning. I went to sleep in the cool lounge on board. After a nice cold lunch we went out to the reef in a glass bottom boat to see the wonders of the life below. There are fish of all shapes, sizes and wonderful colours swimming in and out of the coral.

In our party there was a French diver. He went below and fed something to the small fish and brought up from time to time specimens of coral and other marine life. We were out on the reef for 1½ hours and to me and a lot of other people was money well spent.

Everything in Papeete is a terrible price. Near where our ship was berthed were several ocean-going yachts, two from England, one American, two from

Sweden and one from South Africa, all doing a tour round the world. They stop at Papeete for repairs and supplies.

One other thing of interest is that most of the island scenes from the moving picture South Pacific were taken from an island called Bara-Bara, just a short distance from Papeete. The name was changed to Bali Hai, which is the title of the well-known song from the show.

In the evening the Tahitian girls parade the main street in their colourful robes, a flower in their jet black hair, and in most cases, bare feet, just like you see on the screen and on postcards. They make a perfect picture.

Our next port is Acapulco, in Mexico, where we stay for a day. We are due there on 22nd March, at 7 a.m.

For the last three days the women of all ages have been working flat out making lei, flowers and costumes out of coloured crepe paper. It is really amazing how attractive, effective and colourful most of the lei are.

All this effort is for a dinner and dance this coming Saturday, which is to be called South Pacific Night. Some of the teenage girls are making grass skirts out of rope which has been straightened and teased, a lot of tiring work, but effective. It is wonderful what can be done on these impromptu occasions. Of course, they have had help from a book on how to make these things, as well as the guidance of an experienced hostess, but which ever way to you look at it, there is a lot of time and money gone into each effort to make the night a success.

The dinner was a huge success. The dining room was all done out with palm leaves, etc., and the dance which followed, I am told, was a Ball. I saw a little of it, but it was too crowded for me. The Idea was to go native. I think a great many of the teenagers, especially a few girls, thought the idea was to go *naked*, as a few left very little to the imagination.

The majority of the passengers on this ship are middle aged and elderly retired English people and most of them were horrified at the way some teenagers carried on. By all accounts some really went to town and stopped at nothing in some cases. I believe the behaviour was so bad, some of the older passengers wrote to the Captain and complained about the way a few carried on, which is silly really, as there is very little he can do about it.

There are a lot of young and attractive girls travelling on their own, let's hope none regret their behaviour on that particular night—only time will tell.

The port of Acapulco is an incredibly blue bay, encircled by mountains sloping down to palm fringed beaches and rocky coves.

Acapulco derives its name from the Natuate Indian Language, the literal translation being "Place of Great Sugar Canes." When the Spanish first settled here, in 1521, it had been one of the principal ports of call on the west coast of Mexico, and it is considered to have the best harbour on that coast, resembling a natural amphitheatre encircling an oval-shaped bay, with 12 miles of beaches.

Acapulco is one of the most exotic places I have had the pleasure to see for many a day. In the morning we did a tour of all the principal attractions. The settings of some private homes and hotels take one's breath away. There are 273 hotels here, and more being built. The terrain is hilly, or rather, mountainous. Most of the houses and hotels are built into the landscape, or on a split level. The hotels in the surrounding hills have large gardens where tropical fruits and plants grow in profusion, and to add to the beautiful setting, there are several bungalows hidden in green foliage, and, of course, all have inviting swimming pools.

We saw four or five different shades of bougainvillea, mangoes and coconuts are growing everywhere. Plants that are grown indoors in Sydney flourish in the open here. There are countless numbers of plants with beautifully blended variegated foliage.

A number of American film stars have lovely homes here. There is John Wayne, who married a Mexican girl. They have a very beautiful villa with a marvellous view—we passed their home.

The other stars are Merle Oberon, Frank Sinatra, and Elizabeth Taylor was married to Michael Todd here. Mexico City is 300 miles from here and the yacht races for the coming Olympic Games are to be held here in the large harbour of Acapulco.

The place is very much like the Isle of Capri, but on a much larger scale—the roads are a pleasure to travel on. We had three hours sightseeing in a large comfortable and roomy taxi for £stg2 each, money well spent. There is a lot of game fishing done from here, we saw several large catches, but I am not sure whether they were sword or sailfish.

In the afternoon we went ashore again, poking about the shopping centre, and went to the native market. There are some smelly places there!

The Mexican is like the Arab or Gypsy to deal with, he always asks a high price, but you can beat him down, sometimes to half what he asked in the first place. Their currency is the Peso. A Peso is worth approximately eightpence. I got 139 Pesos for £stg5.5.

The ship anchored in the bay and launches bring you ashore, like Colombo and Aden.

To see Acapulco by night on board ship is a beautiful sight. The drive along the waterfront is a mass of neon signs and on the hills in the background are thousands of lights which look for all the world like twinkling stars.

We are now heading towards the Panama Canal and next stop will be Cristobal.

The first suggestion for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama was made by a Spanish engineer in 1530, and surveys were actively engaged upon by various companies between the years 1825 and 1890. In 1876 a concession to dig a canal was granted to a French company and in 1881 the work was undertaken by a company of which Ferdinand de Lesseps was nominal head.

This work failed. A new company was formed in 1894 and work continued on a modified scale until 1904 when the company's rights and properties were bought by the U.S. Government for \$40 million. The Panama Canal was opened to commercial ship traffic on 15th August, 1914. Since that time more than 360,000 ships of every category and more than 1.5 billion tons of cargo have gone through the waterway.

During the 50-mile trip through the canal, the "Northern Star" is lifted 85 feet up via the two chambers in Miraflores Locks (54 feet) and the one chamber in Pedro Miguel Lock (31 feet).

After passing through Gatun Lake, at one time the largest man-made lake in the world, she will be lowered 85 feet through the three chambers of Gatun Locks. During the transit Northern Star will cause 52 million gallons of water to be lost to the ocean from the canal, which will be compensated by rainfall. (This is only a very brief account. There is a great deal more, but it would take too long to write.)

Normally a ship takes between six to seven hours to go through the canal, but it took us 10½ hours. At the time of our passage there were riots in Panama City, and in Cristobal the other end, so we did not go ashore. Some passengers went, but we took the advice given us by an officer of the company and stayed put on board.

Our next port of call is Curacao, where we stop for a few hours to take on fuel.

A brief outline of the island of Curacao—the island was discovered when the famous navigator, Alonso de Ofida, sailing the Spanish Main, entered its natural harbour on the 26th July, 1499, the end of the decade in which Columbus discovered the western world. The Dutch, in 1634, took possession and drove the Spaniards out, and an iron-willed man called Peter Stuyvesant was made Governor of the island. Through Peter Stuyvesant, Curacao has a link with New Amsterdam, now known as New York, where his statue stands in Battery Place in honour of his success in saving the city from Indians who then threatened it.

In 1666 the English attempted to capture Curacao and from then until the beginning of the 19th century the English and French alternated in attacking the island. In 1800 Curacao was a British Protectorate, only to be returned to the Dutch two years later. In 1803 the British declared war upon both the Dutch and French. The "Peace of Paris" (1815) and finally the "Treaty of London" (1816) secured Curacao for the Netherlands. Curacao was also the slave trade centre of the Caribbean area, but in 1863 King William III abolished the slave trade and Curacao had to look back for other sources of business. In 1700 the first Jews settled on the island and began the cultivation of sugar cane and tobacco.

Today Curacao is a thriving island with a large oil refinery. Hundreds of ships call there during the year to take on fuel oil.

We were there only a few hours, so five of us took a taxi to the main shopping centre at \$1 or £stg.10/ per person each way. The shopping centre is very

attractive, most of the shops took Dutch guilders, sterling or American dollars.

There were some beautiful articles to be bought. All we bought were four post-cards for 2/ sterling. So much for Curacao.

Trinidad is our next port of call on 30th March, where we stay until 6 a.m., 31/3/68. A short introduction to the island of Trinidad, whose principal port is Port of Spain.

Trinidad is the most southerly of the West Indies Islands, and was originally part of the South American mainland, and therefore has the same flora and fauna as Venezuela.

On his third voyage to the New World, Columbus reached the island in 1498 and named it "La Trinity" after the three hills which surrounded the harbour where he anchored. At this time it was peopled by several tribes of Indians, whose name for the island was Lire, the Land of the Humming Bird. Although the humming birds are still there in large numbers, Trinidad today is probably better known as the birthplace of Calypso, Steel Bands and Limbo Dancing.

In spite of two centuries of contention between British, French and Dutch, adventurers Trinidad remained a Spanish possession until 1797, when it capitulated to the British. Finally ceded to Britain in 1802, it remained a British colony until granted its independence in 1962.

The island is famous for its Pitch Lake. You can walk on the lake with safety, but after heavy rain it is difficult to cross on account of labyrinthial water channels. Every hole dug fills up as surely as if it were an all liquid mass. For more than 80 years asphalt has been steadily removed from the lake at the rate of many thousands of tons each year, but during that period the level has only been reduced by about 30 feet. It is estimated that the lake contains 45,000,000 tons of pitch.

We did a tour to Maracos Bay, one of the many beauty spots on the island. On the way to Maracos Bay we passed many plantations, all well kept and laden with fruit. There are some really beautiful houses, all large and the old colonial style, with wonderful gardens. Pot plants that we grow in hothouses and indoors in Sydney grow in the open here. Orchids seem to grow, or I should say thrive, in the open.

There are a great number of English people who have retired to here, as houses and living are cheap compared to England, and labour costs very little. Above all, taxation of all kinds is reasonably low.

That is only a brief outline of the island. Our next stop is Southampton, where we are due at 8 a.m. on the 9th April.

A drama on the high seas early in the afternoon of the 4th April. The Northern Star's radio officer received a radio signal from the bulk sugar carrier, the Castle Queen, saying a member of her crew had had a serious accident and was in need of medical treatment. As the Castle Queen was some distance astern of us, we had to turn back to meet the oncoming ship. It took nearly nine hours steam-

ing before the ships were abreast of each other.

The Northern Star lowered and manned a power driven lifeboat and in pitch darkness made for the other ship, some 600 yards away. The injured man was lowered from his ship on a stretcher into the lifeboat, then the journey back to the Northern Star began. Fortunately the seas were fairly calm. The Northern Star had to turn slightly to give protection to the returning lifeboat. The whole operation of the transfer took just on an hour and a half. We were told later the injured seaman was a young lad of 17 years, on his first trip to sea. He was put in the hospital on the Northern Star and taken back to Southampton.

London, my, what a city! Or should I say what a country, because London is really a country in itself, to me London is the showplace of the world. In this vast city there is everything for the tourist and you can take it from me, tourists come from every corner of the globe to see what this marvellous place has to show. There are wonderful parks, with beautiful gardens and at the moment all the gardens are a picture with their show of early spring flowers such as daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, wall-flowers, primroses, polyanthus and primulas, to mention just a few. The flower beds are so laid out one cannot help noticing the wonderful range of colours. Very often one bed of flowers, say tulips for instance, may have at least four different colours which blend perfectly. Then again, the flowers are often mixed, such as red tulips and yellow daffodils, and very often you see hyacinths mixed in, or perhaps forget-me-nots. Every available space is used and there is not a weed to be seen.

The English people are garden and animal lovers, even in the slums one sees either windowboxes or little garden plots of colour. Another thing very noticeable in London and suburbs is every effort is made to preserve trees, with the result there is an abundance of wild life. Even in the heart of London one often finds a little square tucked away between the busiest streets, with a few beautiful trees and several flower beds, and seats where one can rest in comfort.

London has rich people with luxurious apartments and gardens; then again, like all large cities, there are the slums, industrial areas where one finds all nationalities living; then there is also every colour and creed to be found here.

One thing which amazes me is the London transport system. It controls the red double decker buses and the underground railway, and they even cater for the tourist, by issuing what they call a travel-as-you-please ticket; it costs £2, but it is well worth it. It covers all red buses and all underground trains and it is good for seven days and you can take it from me one can see a lot of London and outer suburbs in seven days. With the same ticket you can travel on a lot of green country buses. We have already had a ticket each, and later we intend getting another one and do some of the country runs. These red buses run to every point in and out of London. One day we went to Epping from Victoria

Station, hopping in and out of different buses, and came back in a different way entirely. The run from Epping to Romford was really wonderful. After leaving Epping one travels through country lanes till reaching Romford; the scenery on the way is just like one reads about, or sees now and then in pictures. Of course, after leaving Romford one is getting close to the suburban area again. The saying is very true—the best way to see London is from the top of a London bus.

Another beautiful day out was when we went to St. Albans, but I will write that trip up later as that little town and Abbey is a story in itself.

Other places of interest to us were the National Art Gallery just off Trafalgar Square and the old church, St. Martins-in-the-Fields, the Tate Gallery, the Wallace Collection, the Victoria and Albert Museum, with its 142 rooms (it takes up a complete block), the British Museum, the Science Museum, which, I have been told, is the second most popular museum in Europe—the most popular is the Louvre in Paris.

Then there is the Wellington Museum, the Tower of London, the Guildhall and the old Royal Exchange, which was burnt out in 1666 and again in 1638. In it there are to be found relics of London, or Londinium as it was known when the Romans had it. Then, of course, there are countless numbers of palaces, State apartments, etc. We have been to Kensington Palace, where Queen Mary was born, also Queen Victoria. In fact, Queen Victoria lived at Kensington Palace for many years. Some of the staterooms are in a beautiful state of preservation, filled with old furniture and oil paintings of kings, queens and princes for the last 400 years.

Adjoining the palace is the London Museum. Some of the ceilings in the museum are breathtaking, many have scenes painted on them, and others in the centre are dome-shaped. The workmanship is superb. What I have mentioned above are only a few of the many attractions, and I could write a book entirely on London and its places of interest.

Of course, another thing London is famous for its stores, such as Harrods, Fortnum and Masons, Selfridges, Marks and Spencers, and Derry and Toms, to mention only a few. There are dozens more, equally as famous, but the one which I think is unique is Derry and Toms and its famous roof garden. They say it is the only garden in the world of such large dimensions at so great a height, over 100 feet above ground level, overlooking London, with St. Paul's in the distance. The gardens are an acre and a half in extent and comprise an Old English Garden, Tudor courts and flower beds, and a Spanish garden with Moorish pergolas and a court of fountains. The water for the fountains, the river and the waterfall is drawn from their artesian wells, 400 feet deep. The depth of soil averages 2 feet 6 inches and in the shallow depth there are fruit bearing trees growing. The gardens took three years to build and were opened in May, 1938.