

PIONEER NEWS

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

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1988 ANZAC FUNCTIONS

The Anzac ceremonies are upon us, and the Social Secretary and Committee have organised all details for the 24th and 25th April as below.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY, 24th APRIL — REDFERN RSL

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Redfern RSL Club, on corner of Redfern and Gibbons Street, Redfern, just east of Redfern Railway Station.

The meeting will commence at 3.30 p.m. and finish at 5.00 p.m. and members are invited by the President to partake of a few drinks at the meeting conclusion.

Then a snack at the club and proceed to Martin Plaza for the Wreath Laying.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY SUNDAY 24th APRIL — MARTIN PLAZA

Assembly will be on the corner of Martin Plaza and Pitt Street on GPO corner being the same as last year.

Form up at 7.25 p.m., march off at 7.27 p.m. and lay wreath at 7.30 p.m.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

MONDAY 25th APRIL — PHILLIP STREET

Forming up points for both units are the same as last

year — 2/1st in Phillip Street head on to King Street and rear of 6th Division. 2/2nds in Phillip Street near Martin Plaza and rear of 7th Division. Both unit banners will be displayed at their respective assembly points. Please check notices in city newspapers for any changes in assembly points.

ANZAC DAY REUNION

MONDAY 25th APRIL — REDFERN HALL

Upon the completion of the March and Service at Hyde Park, members of both units will make their way to Museum Station to catch the train to Redfern for the Anzac Day lunch and reunion.

It is held at Redfern Town Hall, corner Pitt and Wells Streets, Redfern and only five minutes walk from Redfern Station.

Even if you cannot march, you are most welcome at the Reunion and your mates of yesteryear will be most pleased to see you.

Doors will be open at 11.30 a.m. and draught beer will be on tap which each year is subsidised by the Association, as well as the lunch.

John Winters, our caterer, has been engaged again and dinner will be served at 12.30 p.m.

— JIM FIELD, Publicity Officer

BRISBANE REUNION

The Brisbane Reunion held on 7th November, 1987, at the home of John and Mollie Hunt truly showed the purple and white, with statice from the Spreadborough's garden.

It was another successful day, with an attendance of 22, and John and Mollie were delighted to be invaded from N.S.W., indeed almost out-numbered by them, including a last minute call from Dave and Joyce Denny from Lismore.

Apologies were received from the McKibbins, the Anselms, Bill Hoffman, Betty Creasy, Mavis Blanch and Joyce Reilly.

It was decided to hold the 1988 Brisbane Reunion on 29th October.

BRISBANE REUNION TRIP TO THE EDITORS

On 11th November Roy Jardine, Jack Store, Laurie Kelly and Pat Noonan arrived back home from a ten day trip to the Brisbane Reunion.

On the first day we met Arthur Staines at the Forster RSL and stayed the night at Roy's brother's place at Blueys Beach. Next day was a catastrophe as we thought the Melbourne Cup was run at 3.20 p.m. but on arrival at Macksville we found the race was well and truly over.

Earlier that day Wal Parsons hosted us with Hunter Dark stubbies in his mobile home at North Haven. That night we stayed at Grafton.

The next two nights were spent in Kyogle, most of the time under Jim Hall's wing, and at one stage with Jack Shearman at the Bowling Club. Then on to Jim's farm for lunch after which he directed us around the local territory.

Then on to Beaudesert to see Mavis Blanch but she was out, so we then travelled on to see Nell Davenport at Scarborough and thoroughly enjoyed pikelets and coffee.

At Brisbane Phil Cramsie quartered me during our three night stay while Ray Jardine, Laurie Kelly, Jack Stone, Larry Robson and Jack Bertram stayed at the motel.

Upon departure from Brisbane it was on to 2/1st Pioneer territory such as Neurum Kilcoy, Esk and Toowoomba and the last night at Tamworth.

Many thanks to John and Mollie Hunt for a most enjoyable Reunion.

— PAT NOONAN

LAST POST

• **JACK MARSHALL** 2/1 former batman to Leo Ferris, passed away on 22nd September, 1987 at Glen Innes after a short illness. Jack succumbed to pneumonia, after having treatment for sugar content and breathing problems.

The sympathy of the Association was conveyed to Jack's widow, Edna, and her family.

• **THOMAS EDWARD FOLEY** C. Coy, 2/2, passed away on 22nd September, 1987 and the funeral at Palmdale Cemetery, Ourimbah, was attended by Len Hope, Tom Reynolds, Ken Harrison and Tom Morgan. A short address was given by Tom Morgan, who also recited the "Ode".

Tom Reynolds extended the Association's sympathy to Mrs Gladys Foley and her family, and in return received a "thank you" card in appreciation of the attendance of representatives of the battalion.

• **REG WELLS** 2/1 passed away on 23rd October, 1987 and the funeral was held at St Luke's Church, Woy Woy. Jack and Gwen Collis attended, with Jack carrying out the RSL part of the service.

Reg was a despatch rider with the Sig. Platoon and told many a tale of his horse breaking days in the country.

Before moving to the Central Coast, Reg lived at Concord, close to Concord Hospital, and often helped the Welfare Chairman with hospital visitations.

Jack Collis extended sympathy to Mrs Peg Wells and her four sons on behalf of our members.

• **RADLEY JAMES MILLER** son of Jim "Bluey" Miller 2/1, Umina passed away recently after a very long illness.

Jack Collis and Jack Coates attended the church service and passed on the sympathies of the Association members to Radley's wife Rhonda and her family, also to Jim and Edna Miller.

• **LEN MCGOWAN** 2/1 Pioneer of Beralla passed away at St Joseph's Hospital, Auburn on 1st December 1987. The service was conducted at Beralla Catholic Church on December 4th and buried at Mudgee where he spent his youth. A member of 18 Platoon D Coy, he was a popular and well respected figure by all his mates. Sympathy has been extended to his widow Joan and son Bernard from the Association.

— MAX LAW, Welfare

2/1 PIONEER HISTORY LAST OPPORTUNITY

"The Pioneers", a book on the history of the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion will be published in May and will be in the form of a hard covered book with the dust jacket printed in purple, grey and black.

The size of the book is 9" x 6" and contains 224 pages made up of twelve chapters, twenty four pages of photos, Honours Awards, Casualty List and nominal roll of the two thousand five hundred regimental numbers and names of the members who passed through the unit.

Due to increased costs in printing since early 1986 when the first quotation was received, the History Committee have found it necessary to raise the price from \$20 to \$22 per copy, plus postage.

The manuscript is now at the printer so this is your last opportunity to fill out the order on page 4. It is a limited edition and will never be printed again.

The Treasurer is in the process of sending a form to persons who have already placed book orders, outlining the balance of payment required.

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

LEST WE FORGET

Albert Rayner 2/1 enlisted in the Army at the age of 36 on the 7th June, 1940 and trained at Greta, Dubbo and Randwick. He sailed for the Middle East on the Aquatania via Bombay and the Suez Canal to join the 2/1st Pioneers already there.

After eighteen months service with the Pioneers he returned to Australia on the American ship the S.S. Westpoint, landing in Fremantle, continuing on to Adelaide where they remained about a month then coming overland by train to Sydney. It was here that he and the other Kyogle contingent caught the train for the last leg of the journey home to a wonderful welcome from the local townspeople and families.

After leave was finished Albert was reassigned to the Royal Australian Engineers and was sent to islands to the north of Australia. Eventually he was declared medically B2 and was reassigned to an army camp at Wallangarra. He would have liked to remain in the army at the conclusion of hostilities, however his medical classification plus the fact that he was by this time over 40, meant that he was discharged, returning home to Kyogle to wife Margaret (McQuilty) and two small children, Glen born in 1937 and Kay born in 1939.

Albert's early life was spent as a jockey and horse trainer and once he became too heavy for riding he was a stable foreman for Cecil Russell at Randwick and it was here that he became friendly with Tommy Woodcock and was associated with Phar Lap. Later he became a drover and then in the early thirties he came to Long Creek as a timber cutter for Munro and Lever. Later he moved to Kyogle where he was employed as a foreman Bridge Carpenter with the Kyogle Shire for 26 years until his retirement. He enjoyed good health for many years until he contracted cancer and passed away on May 25, 1986. During his long illness he had the pleasure of the company and support of many of the 2/1st Pioneers who visited him at Greenslopes.

WAGGA REUNION

SATURDAY, 17th SEPTEMBER, 1988
Wreath Laying — Reunion Dinner

SUNDAY 18th SEPTEMBER, 1988
Kapooka Army Camp Tour —
Picnic Lunch — Smorgasbord Dinner

BOOK NOW — See insert this issue for details

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

First issue for 1988 and quite a lot of letters to hand. On behalf of the committee, I would like to pass on to all the best wishes for the coming year and the continued success of our Association. It will be 48 years this year, when lots of us struggled into those camps as raw recruits, knowing nobody, where friendships were formed and here we are 48 years down the track, where those friendships are still alive today, possibly stronger than ever, due to our Association.

• **CYRIL AMIES** and wife Doris 2/1 sends a letter quoting that retirement is a long way from lazing around for them a couple of months convalescing after his operation in February and now back to full capacity. Touring has been getting to know N.S.W. better, two trips to Brisbane visiting relatives, then visits to Bunya Mts, Tambourine, Siding Springs, Parkes, Canberra, Batemans Bay, Wagga, Griffith and Kangaroo Valley where Cyril lived in the 1930s. Their offspring, Wendy and John, continue to travel around, this year saw them in the Solomon Islands retracing some of the war areas. Cyril also encloses a deposit for the history and a sub for the treasurer and says it's a distinct possibility that they will attend at Wagga.

• **MRS M. ASHTON** Murwillumbah, widow of Wal 2/1 and another from son Peter, Coolangatta, both requesting history books and also the Pioneer News. Peter sent Max some old photos belonging to his dad. Max has dealt with these and informed Peter by letter. He has retained one photo for inclusion in the history. Many thanks for the letters and your name has been added to the mailing list.

• **MICK BAILEY** 2/8 Field Regiment with a letter to Max which he has answered personally with a request for information. Max has put Mick's name on the mailing list and he will receive the Pioneer News.

• **BOB BALDIE** 2/1 Albert Park with a deposit for a history book and a thank you for back issues of Pioneer News. Bob is a new member and the back issues were very good to see and the mention of names not heard for over 40 years.

• **J. BARROTT** 2/1 Bathurst, another new member with a request for a copy of history. He has also been sent back issues of the News and a request for more information regarding himself.

• **CEC BLANCH** 2/1 Kyogle, with a deposit for History Book and a sub for the treasurer. He attended "Jacko's" funeral and quite a lot of the Pioneers were present, also the news that George Scholes wife had died some months ago.

• **KEITH BOYLE** 2/1 Moama with a word to say that he had been in hospital again with a heart attack, the aftermath is very boring, only allowed to walk around the garden for a few weeks, but as he said, he has done it all before so what's new. At time of writing, the weather was pretty cold at Moama, lots of rain and the old Murray was running a banker. Hopes it drops a bit before the snow melts as they might be in trouble. Marj, his wife, still has a bit of trouble getting around. Has home help a couple of days a week which makes things a bit easier for her so they manage to battle on. Keith has enclosed a deposit for a book and a sub for the treasurer and says that health permitting, they will attend at Wagga this year.

• **MICK PUNTON** 2/1 per pen of wife Margaret reporting that Mick had recently been in hospital with a heart problem but is now feeling fit and sends good health and prosperity to all Pioneers.

• **ADRIAN BUCKLEY** 2/1 of Tamworth and CO of the battalion from Wondecla to Balikpapan sends kind regards to all. The letter from the Indian POW's will be used in the History of the Pioneers and has been returned by Max. Sorry to hear that you and Barbara will not be able to join us at Wagga.

• **SAM BUCKMAN** 2/1 Laurieton with a deposit for a book and a sub for the treasurer. I called on Sam some time ago while at Laurieton. Welcome to the fold Sam and Pioneer News will be forwarded regularly.

• **BERT CHEETHAM** 2/1 Coledale with a deposit for a book and sub for treasurer, at long last it was posted, carried the money order around for a fortnight, but he claims that since retirement, each week seems about three days short. He read with deep sorrow of the passing of Gordon Osborn, Sid

Jopson and Scotty Burns, and so many of the old boys. Closes with best wishes to all Pioneers in 1988.

• **RON COYTE** 2/1 Wentworthville with a substantial cheque to the treasurer, deposit for a book and the rest for subs as he says, he must be further behind than the lamb's tail. Noticed a familiar name in the last issue, Albert Dean, Victoria, he with Ron and Ross Dagger were reinforcements to the battalion at Cairns, in time to get on board ship for Balikpapan. Dean spent most of the time tied down on a stretcher on the deck, seasick (there were a few more like him). Ron had an horrific experience a couple of years ago, their daughter killed by a truck on her way to work and this has left its mark on both he and his wife, one reason why he has not attended an Anzac Day for quite some time. Reports that Ron Irwin has been in Westmead Hospital with a heart problem, but assures that all is well. Closes with best wishes to all.

• **ALLAN CRUTE** 2/1 Woolgoolga per pen of wife Beulah with a deposit for a book and sub for Vic, and a lot of news that is personal to Peg and Max, however, they mention the sorrow over the long list of Last Post. They are looking forward to going back to Wagga and offer their assistance if required.

• **NORMA DARRAGH** widow of Jim 2/2 with a full purchase price for a history and the fact that although Jim was 2/2 she thinks that it will be very nice to have one. Good for you Norma.

• **DAVE DENNY** 2/1 Lismore with a cheque for the treasurer and thank you to John and Mollie Hunt for the wonderful welcome offered them at Brisbane, and quotes that now he is able to get around a bit more, there will be many more of them. Dave has enclosed a photo of the quarry at Moresby but whether Max can use it is another matter, but as you say, the camera was made out of a cardboard box and survey paper, its quite good.

• **TREVOR DUFFIN**, Swan Hill, with a deposit for a book, you do not say whether you are a member of the Unit, Trevor, you will get a book but we would appreciate more information.

• **RON EDWARDS** 2/1 Frankston with a letter requesting a book and requirements for joining the Association. Max provided the information and a further letter from Ron provided an article for the history. Ron remembers names such as Stumpy Curtain, Lt Craig and Jim McDonald. Welcome aboard, Ron.

• **NITA FERRIS** widow of Leo 2/1 with a card and note wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and New Year and that she is spending New Year with Delma, Terry and the boys at Alice Springs. Nita quotes that she has 19 grandchildren, 9 girls and 10 boys, and says "not a bad effort". Can't have any television where they all come from.

• **TOM GAISFORD** 2/2 Balwyn with a cheque for the treasurer and best wishes to all especially the Tank Attackers of the 2/2.

• **SAM GARDINER** 2/1 Oak Flats with a first letter to the Association with a deposit for a history and a sub. Sam has been tossing up whether to join the Association for a long time and has finally decided in our favour. Another letter and not only has he decided to join, but has sent photos, a Japanese flag and a couple of maps, plus a photo of Roy Smithers grave and the dedication in the cemetery. Sam married in 1952, wife's name Doreen, and have three children, 2 girls and a boy plus 7 grandchildren so they have not been idle. Sam goes on at great length about his likes and dislikes, no names no pack drills. The maps were of great value to the history, with map references in the War Diary and Max has written you personal thanks for this. Good letter Sam, perhaps you could make an effort to get to Redfern some time, even though your eyes are not the best, can assure you of a good welcome both from C Coy and the Sigs.

• **JACK GLOVER** 2/1 Brighton Le Sands, with a hefty cheque for the Association and a deposit for history. Jack enjoys the News and would like to read more of D Coy, blokes like Arthur Hale, Norm Egan, Bill Hodges are names that come readily to mind, maybe a nudge for them to get in touch. Jack remarks that he doesn't meet many Pioneers these days, you could easily remedy this, just turn up sometime at Redfern Town Hall on Anzac Day, you don't have to march you know.

• **TOBY HALE** 2/1 Kyogle with a sub for the treasurer and a deposit on a book and the news that things are pretty good up that way at time of writing. Plenty of rain and the country looks good, he went to a Rats meeting at Evans Head where he met up with Ted Felton, Jack Martin, Paddy Gray and Jack Clark. Spent a few convivial hours together before heading back to the bush.

• **MRS MAY HILL** widow of the late George 2/1 with a request for a history book, May lives at Londonderry and the book should be ready about May 1988.

• **SIDNEY (BLUEY) HOLMES** Sussex Inlet 2/1 with a letter thanking Max for previous copies of the News, over which he spent some hours putting faces to names in what has been a lifetime gone past. Apparently Bluey's wife saw the ad in Reveille about the history and wrote in herself for him, for which he is very thankful. Your enquiry regarding Blue Stacey and Tony Withers, Blue Stacey is deceased, and Tony Withers is not on our roll so cannot help you in that regard. Bluey married in 1945, has one son, four daughters and 10 grandchildren so has no complaints in that way.

• **RICHARD HOOK** 2/1 Lambton new member with a request for a book, not much news regarding Richard but anyway, welcome aboard the Association mailing list.

• **IDA HORDER** widow of the late Vic, with her usual donation for the Association, comments that it is 20 years in January that Vic died.

• **NEVILLE JAKINS** son of Alf Jakins 2/1 deceased with a letter describing he and wife Judy's trip around the Atherton Tablelands and while there, they looked for the camp site of the Pioneers. Were advised to go to the Atherton RSL who have got a huge ATF map on the wall with which he used to point out the different positions. He also received a map of the area. There is also a big marker with all units named. The 2nd AIF Memorial Association and Councillors are responsible for the erection of these markers should be highly commended for the effort in carrying out this work. Neville has a couple of memory joggers belonging to his father Alf, his dixie stamped with all the places in the Middle East the Battalion served, also a little boomerang he carried in the tunic pocket which in turn had been carried by a relative through Gallipoli and France in World War I. Very good letter Neville of interest to all who reads this and he closes with an invitation to visit, any members that may be travelling through Lakes Entrance in Victoria.

• **HAZEL JOHNS** widow of George with a request for two Pioneer History Books. Hazel looks forward to receiving the news, always informative, and of great interest.

• **DAVE JONES** brother of Keith who was killed in action in Borneo, writes that he would like a history. Dave was not on our mailing list, but is a neighbour of Bob McGregor who passes him the Pioneer News.

• **MARGARET JONES** widow of L. Jones, with a request for two books. Llew was a good mate of Bill Tasker and before his demise had offered photos to the Battalion for the history. Bill has since returned the photos and the book should be published by May this year.

• **TERRY JONES** 2/1 with a very short note to the treasurer, a sub for the News and a deposit for a book. That's definitely to the point, Terry, no waste of words.

• **HENRY LISTON** 2/2 Glen Innes with much the same. He sends a cheque for subs and wishes all the best to the Association.

• **JACK LOWCOCK** 2/1 Fairfield, new member with a request to be placed on the mailing list of Pioneer News and a deposit for a book.

• **DENIS MANSKI** now at Broome, W.A. still enjoys getting the Pioneer News. Has changed his address from Nhulumbly to Broome and being ex Army himself, claims it is really wonderful to see the mateship that still prevails after such a long time with the Pioneers.

• **A.S. MARSTON** 2/1 Hanwood, a new member with a request for a history. On checking the roll we find an NX125875 A.S. Marston.

• **JOE MOORE** 2/1 Warwick Farm with a letter for the book, Max has sent you previous copies of Pioneer News and you will appreciate the news that it contains. Sorry that your health has not been the best, but sometimes a little nostalgia can be a big help.

• **HARRY MOWBRAY** 2/1 Ormiston with a sub for the treasurer and a deposit for a book. Can't you do better than that, Harry?

• **OSSIE MCCURTAYNE** 2/1 Yeppoon sends a sub and a deposit and the most startling news that he is thinking of selling up there on the Sunshine Coast and moving back this way. Says he may even see us on Anzac Day. You will be more than welcome Ossie, it's been a fair while although you were in attendance once before at Redfern, can't say how long ago.

• **TOM MUTTON** 2/1 Harrington per pen of wife Pat, with the word that Tom is not the best. He suffers with Alzheimers disease now in the advanced stage and has no recognition of anyone except Pat and the dog. He can do very little for himself but he is in no pain for which one should be thankful. Pat is keeping well, and sends best wishes to all for the coming years.

• **NEIL MCGILL** 2/1 Birrong, another old bloke returning to the fold sends a deposit for a book and Max has enrolled you on the mailing list.

• **WAL NEW** 2/1 Ingleburn, thanking all for the publication of Pioneer News and enclosing a sub for the treasurer and a deposit.

• **JACK NORTON** 2/1 Bondi with a newsy letter, a hefty sub to the treasurer and a deposit for the book. Jack has not been able to write for some time, he has had three operations on his right hand but is now able to use it a little bit. He has been housebound for quite some time and has lost contact with the likes of Frank Gillian and Mick Dwyer, also used to see Austie Ronan at the Bondi Junction RSL but for some reason he has dropped out of sight. Jack appreciates the News, good to read about the doings of the country and city dwellers, but saddens him a little on the reading of the Last Post, but as he says we all face that hurdle. Closes with best wishes to all and claims that maybe he will make it once again to the Anzac March and Reunion.

• **JIM PARKINSON** son of Vic Parkinson 2/1, now at Eastlakes with a request for two books when they are published, Max posted him two issues of Pioneer News.

• **LES PATTERSON** 2/1 Port Macquarie with a letter saying it was about time he joined the Association. It matters not where you joined the Battalion Les, and your mates Don Cotton and Merv Andrews are also on the mailing list. Les also sent along a sub and a deposit for the History.

• **TOM PENFOLD** 2/1 Tarro with a cheery letter from a bloke 74 years young. Tom is still able to enjoy a Toothy Old, although on occasion it has been known to trip him up, result a few bruises, railway crossings always were a bit hard to tangle with. Tom is well, and manages to keep smiling, says that he really grins to himself sometimes especially when he looks in a mirror. Sends a substantial sub to the treasurer and a deposit on a book.

• **ALFRED PIKE** son of Clarrie Pike, deceased, with a request for a book. Should be ready about May Alf, and are you still smoking those bloody cigars?

• **PADRE ALBERT PITT-OWEN** 2/1 with a letter expressing his sorrow at the death of Gordon Osborn. He forwarded one particular item, to wit, an early recollection of Gordon was the Padre conducting a service in a tank trap site in Tobruk. The hymns were not played to music of course and the Padre had to lead the singing, well he had the wrong tune to the wrong words, naturally they did not coincide, after the first verse ended in a fiasco the Padre looked at Gordon who responded with "Sorry I can't help you Padre". This relieved the situation and the Padre managed the right tune second time around. Also had a letter from Dr Stan Goulston reflecting on earlier days with the battalion, memorable days for us all.

• **LEN PREEDY** 2/2 W.A. with his usual newsy letter. Len decided to rebuild the old home so they have lived at the local pub for 6 months. It was a bit rough keeping things altogether but it's all over and they are back in the mansion. Had the little Pioneer get-together that day in Perth. 15 attended and quite a few are interested in the History. An ex 2/2 bloke Ken Kidd is moving over to the east, coming back, actually and his address from February will be Elizabeth Bay. Jack Monger 2/1 told Len that he could have written a history of the unit, but it would be quite a bit different to the official. Many thanks Len to both you and Joy for keeping those Sandgropers together and in order.

• **PETER PRIEST** 2/1 per pen of wife Dot, with a note to say they are well and truly established at Tin Can Bay now, gardens and lawns growing well and Peter having lots of fun fishing. Taking the caravan to Evans Head and Ballina for a few weeks where they hope to look up the mob. Dot has had a letter from Val Black saying that Allen (Dora) had been in hospital in Casino but was on the mend again. Closes with best wishes to all and enclosed a sub for Vic.

• **MICK ROBERTS** 2/1 Leeton via Max Law with a short note, a substantial cheque for the Association and deposit on book.

• **ERIC REYNOLDS** 2/1 Macksville with a sub for

the treasurer and the following news. They have been at Macksville 11 years last September. Well established now, they have plenty of visitors, including family and plenty of work to keep the mansion up to shape. Also keen in the garden and Eric has beans, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers all in the ground, plus a butcher birds nest that is pretty close and he dive bombs Bombo every time he goes near it.

• **JACK ROBERTSON** 2/2 of Mooroopna with a short note to the secretary, Jack does not want the book, he thought it was 2/2 but has offered the deposit as a donation to Association funds.

• **JACK SUMMERVILLE** 2/1 Castle Hill per pen of his wife notifies of a change of address, a sub for the treasurer and a deposit for a book. Jack is suffering from Parkinsons Disease so wife has to do all the correspondence.

• **TED SKOYLES** 2/1 per pen of wife Nell with the news that both she and Ted are having real problems with health. Ted is already in a Nursing Home and now Nell has had a heart attack and is also in the Nursing Home. Ted has had three bad turns this year and to kill the pain he has three valium a day plus morphine. Never complains but he spends 16 hours a day in a wheelchair. Ted also enclosed his usual sub plus a deposit.

• **WAL SMITH** 2/1 Sans Souci with a short note to Vic, a deposit for a History and a sub for the Association.

• **JOHN SMITH** 2/1 Smithtown with a request for a book and a sub for the treasurer. John thought that with the demise of Ted Eather he would be the only Pioneer in the district, but another has bobbed up, R.M. Tarr, he has not met him as yet. Smithtown is a village about 16 kms from Kempsey, off the highway. Nestles have a large factory there and that is the only industry. John and wife have 6 children, 5 sons and a daughter. The daughter lives next door so they are well catered for and three of the boys are in the district. Has had to give up driving, eye problems and hearing loss but they lead a happy and social life. John has never attended an Anzac Day or Reunion and has not seen very many of the old gang since the war ended and in some respects this is quite good as he remembers them as they were young and in the prime of life. He still has the 11 Platoon B Coy roll book somewhere around the place. He closes with best wishes to all the members, to the committee and the workers who have spent their time and efforts in producing the History.

• **HARRY SPREADBROUGH** 2/1 Queensland with a letter and the shock of the death of Gordon Osborn, as he said he will be missed by all that knew him. Also sends his sympathies to Bob Dixon and said to keep the chin up. Harry himself has a few problems, felt some chest pains so off to the doctor, with the result that he now has angina and leukemia. Nothing to worry about as they say "you are getting old and must learn to live with it". However as Harry says he will never be lonely of a morning anymore as he will have Arthur-itis Angina and Luke-emia to keep him company. Harry has been out to Longreach again visiting his daughter and husband, went for a week and stayed a month. The town was celebrating its 100 years so they stayed for the festivities. The big news up there of course is Expo and he says that anything that is planned nationally or state you get the knockers and they are having a ball at present. Quotes "that with the coming of daylight the weather is clouding in so he won't get sunburnt when he goes outside", take your miners light, and you might frighten an earthworm if they are awake. Closes with best wishes from he and Jean for a happy New Year to all and may all your chickens lay golden eggs.

• **JACK ROBINSON** 2/1 Woy Woy with a deposit for a book and the news that he has been up there about 10 years. Prior to that lived at Alexandria, still doing a bit of punting on gees gees and playing bowls and welcomes any bowler to the Woy Woy Bowling Club.

• **MRS E. SALOWAY** with \$10 being a deposit for two of the Battalion History Books.

• **NOEL SCHOMBERG** 2/1 Parramatta with a request for two books and expresses sorrow of those who have passed on. Lahey was very pleased with the outcome of the football thank you very much and about time you attended Redfern again Noel.

• **JACK SHEARMAN** per pen of wife Flo, with the results of Jack's operation in May last year. Did a full hip replacement again as the first one had broken and was causing the pain. Then another setback, kept on getting clots on the lung which made him

very sick. However it is all cleared away now he has to take things very easy and do as he is told. Flo is still keeping well and playing Bowls and tells us that they have plenty of rain to keep things moving.

• **DOUG SHEARSTON** 2/1 Forster with a request for another three books of History. Doug has been down to Max's place and got a sneak preview so he can thoroughly recommend same. Compliments both Peg and Max on their efforts as publishers and remarks that his son Trev could have used them when he published his book several years ago. Closes with best wishes to all.

• **JEAN STAFFORD** widow of George 2/1 with a deposit for another History (4th copy) plus a substantial donation to club funds to help keep the Pioneer News going.

• **ROY SWANSON** 2/2 Belmont with a sub for the treasurer, thank you for the News and a change of address from Dutchmans Bay to Lake Macquarie Village and expressing sympathy on the death of Monty.

• **BERT WOODHOUSE** 2/1 Karridale, W.A. with a request for a History book and a sub for the treasurer. Bert joined the battalion in February 1942 with 19 others from Western Australia and left us at Wondecia in 1944. Transferred to the 11th Battalion where he finished up at Wewak. Sends best regards to all A Coy.

• **TED WILCOX** 2/1 Albion Park with a short note of a change of address, not moving very far Ted, Dapto to Albion Park. Should have no trouble finding your way home from the club.

• **TOM WOOD** 2/2 Orient Point with a short note and a prospective new member, playing Bowls at Dalmeny and after the game were having a drink and his Skip was talking about the Middle East. Tom asked what unit he was with and he said 2/2 Pioneers. Tom passed on the information about our Association and he was very interested. Well done Tom, how are you and the wife keeping? Well, I hope.

• **DELLA WOODHOUSE** widow of Bill 2/1 with a change of address for postage of Pioneer News. Not much other news so we must assume that you are okay and in good health.

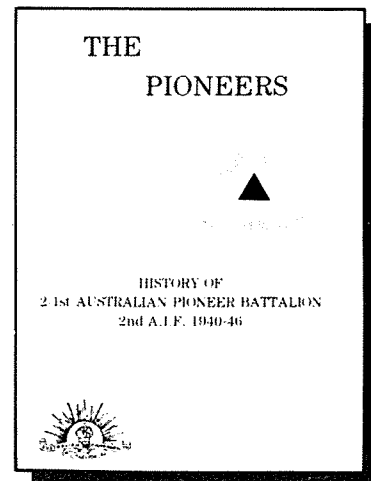
• **BOB WILSON** 2/1 Kiama Downs with an apology for not having notified us of his change of address, however he has corrected that and enclosed a sub and a deposit for a book. Bob fully retired from work only last year and now spends his time on bowls, golf, surfing and a little gardening. Both he and wife Nan are enjoying good health and she plays tennis. Closes with best wishes and shocked to hear about Gordon Osborn.

• **VIC TUNBRIDGE** 2/1 per pen of Mrs Barbara Williams with a deposit for the History, now confined to a wheelchair. Major Tunbridge had more than a share of forming the works of the Battalion in the Middle East and more so in Moresby where he was director of operations in the Hateful Quarry.

• **JACK COLLIS** 2/1 Umina with two lengthy letters of Central Coast "doings" since last News. Says Jack Coates spent a few days in Concord but is looking well.

Bluey Miller had also been in hospital for a check-up and his ulcers are going along okay.

Jack has been in hospital himself for an operation on a tumour and reports all well, according to the doctor. Has to have a check-up in a few months to make sure everything going well.



Above is a facsimile of the front cover of the 2/1 Pioneer Unit History book.

He and Gwen have had a 10 day holiday at Nelson Bay recently, and despite some rain had a good time. Called in to see Maisie and Jack Kempnich for a few hours and they look well, although Maisie is still waiting for her hip operation. Also called in to Stockton to see Jack Russell, and found him as bright as ever.

Jack met up with several Pioneers and their ladies at the ROTA meeting and reports that Ena Garnon is looking a lot better, although Ivor has not been the best. Jack and Lex Coates were at the meeting, also Harry Hamer and wife Glad. She is waiting to have a knee replacement in the next few weeks — hope everything works out. Glad, and best wishes.

Gwen Collis recovering well since her broken ankle and has been looking after Jack since his operation — and spoiling him. Their navy son, William, has been home on leave and helping Gwen look after Dad.

Jack asks if any of our West Australian mates could advise if Bill Anderson, Preston Wright and Bill Aldrich are still around, all former stretcher bearers. Secretary Max advises only Preston Wright on mailing list — his address being 1 Austen Street, Eaton, W.A. 6230.

Thanks for your newsy letter, Jack, and we wish you a speedy recovery after your op and a healthy and prosperous 1988. All the best to Gwen.

• **TOM MANUEL** 2/1 Glen Innes in Sydney recently and phoned Max Law with news of passing of Jack Marshall. Tom gave a few details of other Pioneers in the district, namely Bob Donald who is a Director of Glen Innes Services Club and on the committee of the RSL, and brother Vic who still lives in the area.

Tom is Pensions Officer at the RSL. He has problems with thyroid and stiffness and numbness in joints, but scounded bright during his phone conversation. Thanks for the call, Tom.

• **HEATHER WIGGINS** niece of later Hugh Wiggins, 2/1, with an enquiry as to publishing date of Unit History and some news on her doings since last letter.

Now in the final year of her degree in Applied Science in Victoria, Heather has obtained a studentship and will go on to do her Diploma of Education next year. She is also getting married in December.

Best of luck with your studies, Heather, and many thanks for your donations.

• **JUNE JONES** (daughter of the late George Edman, 2/1) sent in an order for three copies of the Pioneer History and is looking forward to reading of the exploits her Dad would never talk about — "that was men's business".

June reports that her mother, Edna Edman, who was an original member of the wartime Comforts Fund, still receives the Pioneer News. Unfortunately Edna does not enjoy the best of health these days.

Max and Peg Herron thank you for your good wishes, June, and hope you enjoy the history when printed.

• **BOB DIXON** 2/2 writes in to thank all those friends who rang and wrote letters with regard to his health and the fact that he had retired as President. Bob appreciated their good wishes.

We are pleased to report that Bob is undergoing treatment at Concord Hospital at moment of writing and according to wife Jean is progressing favourably.

• **BERN REINERS** 2/1 of Corryong wrote recently wishing all Pioneers the season's greetings, especially the Sig. Platoon. His comments were that the older one gets, the quicker Christmas comes around. Thanks and nice to hear from you, Bern.

• **ERIC CAUSER** 2/1 Macarthur (Vic.) was in Sydney during January with wife, Dorothy, to attend the Bi-centennial Wool Collection Parade and was in touch with the secretary. Trust you both enjoyed your visit. Eric, and hope we may see you at the Wagga reunion.

• **JOHN SPENCE** 2/1 of Wingham, per pen of wife Muriel, to say the years are creeping on, the health is only mediocre and the eyesight not so good, but still gets around so has a lot to be thankful for. Thanks, Muriel, for the sub and order for the history.

That concludes the mail bag for this issue. In November the Lakes and Finlays did a tour of Tasmania fly drive, and we had a wonderful time. The weather let us down at times but we managed to stuff ourselves with lobster and Tasmanian scallops on the odd occasion. Tried my best to get Gordon sloshed on a few occasions but he wouldn't be in it. The scenery is magnificent and I don't think they could wood chip Tassie out in a thousand years so what these Greenies are on about, I just don't know. We travelled down the East Coast from Launceston to Hobart across the island up the west coast and back to Launceston. Travelled 2166 kms in a Camry station sedan, and enjoyed every moment of it. Coming up is Anzac Day, get your minds working, obtain a leave pass and get with it. Remember, it cannot go on forever so enjoy it while you can. So long for now. — **LAKEY**

CALLING MEMBERS

8 PLATOON, A Coy, 2/1

How about making a big effort and turning up in strength for Anzac Day 1988. Old hands like Alec Cameron, Henry Burke, Bruce Smith, Bert Holmes (last sergeant of 8 Pln), young Danny Sprouter and regulars Eric Guthrie, Henry Allan and big Frank Gillian.

If you can't make the March, do as Don Slater does and turn up at Redfern Town Hall about 12 noon. This particularly applies to Peter Peile — bring him along Erica and we will look after him for the rest of the day.

I will organise a table and might buy a jug of beer.

— **GORDON FINLAY**

LAST POST

— **MAX LAW, Welfare**

• **BERNIE DALY** 2/2 passed away in Taree Hospital on 24th November, 1987, and was buried on the 26th after a service at the local Catholic Church.

We are grateful to Don Murray and Bernie's daughter, Mrs Margaret Franklin, for contacting Tom Morgan of the Central Coast with the news of Bernie's death.

A number of 2/2nds were contacted to pass on the news — Ray Harris, Allan McInnes and Bill Robertson.

An Association sympathy card was forwarded to Mrs Stella Daly and family.

• **BRIAN JAMES JACKSON** 2/1 passed away on 30th November, 1987, at the Ballina Ex-Servicemen's Home.

Brian was born in Ballina and, pre-war, lived and worked with Nev O'Connor's family at Empire Vale. He enlisted at Kyogle and became an original member of 2/1 Pioneers.

The funeral service was held at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Kyogle, and interment took place at Kyogle Cemetery.

The following 2/1-2/2 Pioneers attended: Jack Martin, Ted Felton, Nev O'Connor, Cecil Blanch, George Scholes, Jim Hall, Toby Hale, Paddy Gray and Bill Hoffman.

The Northern Rivers Sub-Branch of the Rats of Tobruk Association was represented by the President, Norm Cooper, and the Secretary Barney Muldoon.

Members of the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Battalions' Association carried the casket at the cemetery and the RSL graveside service was conducted by the President of the Woodburn-Evans Head RSL, Pat Kempnich (brother of Jack Kempnich 2/1).

The sympathies of Association members have been extended to Brian's family.

LAST POST

(Continued)

• **CLINT (TINY) THIRLBY** 2/1 passed away on 12th December, 1987, at a Port Kembla hospital.

The funeral service was held in the chapel of the Wollongong City Memorial Gardens Crematorium, Unanderra, and we thank Ted Wilcox of Dapto for passing on the information to the Association.

Our sincere sympathies have been extended to Tiny's widow, Leila.

• **ALWYNE (DORA) BLACK** 2/1 passed away, aged 76, at St Vincent's Hospital, Lismore on 19th January, 1988 and the funeral service was held in the chapel at Lismore Crematorium on 21st January.

The RSL service was conducted by Pat Kempnich of Woodburn-Evans Head RSL and Norm Cooper and Barney Muldoon represented the Northern Rivers Sub-Branch of the Rats of Tobruk Association.

Members of the 2/1 Pioneers in attendance were Bruce McNaughton, Jack Martin, Cecil Blanch, Jack Shearman, Paddy Gray, George Scholes, Alex George, Ted Felton, Fred Wheaton, Ron Cross and Bill Hoffman. An apology was received from Nev O'Connor, 2/2.

Alwyne was born in Kyogle and lived there for most of his life. After the death of his wife, Dora, he later married Val Gaston and moved to Evans Head.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Val and the family in their sad loss.

• **LESLIE ERIC (MEGGSIE) SKEIN** 2/1 passed away at Narrandera on 30th December 1987, and the funeral was at Batlow on 4th January 1988.

Snow and Gert Vickery attended the funeral and passed on sympathy to the family on behalf of the Association.

Meggsie was an original member of B Coy, and was well known to Snow and Gert Vickery prior to the war.

Our thanks to Snow for passing on the sad news.

• **ABRAHAM SYDNEY VANDERVORD** ex-POW 2/2, passed away at Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital, Brisbane, on 31st January 1988 and the funeral was on 2nd February 1988, at Albany Creek Crematorium.

Phil Cramsie represented the Association at the service and passed on our sympathies to his nephew Harold Turner, Patricia and their families.

Abraham was a member of the original 2/2 Pioneers and was taken POW in Java.

JOHN EDWARD SMITH

Members are asked to assist with photographs, letters, cards or biographical information about NX50950, Pte John Edward Smith, who was killed in action by shellfire in Tobruk on 14th September 1941.

The information is being sought by W.H. (Bill) Connell, a schoolteacher, who for a number of years has been committed to the preservation and display of Australia's Military History. His particular interest is concerned with those servicemen and women who lost their lives. Those whose "names liveth forevermore".

Towards this end Bill Connell has mounted a number of displays and given many talks about our military heritage to schools, RSL Clubs, historical societies, scouts, Lions and Rotary. The displays feature photographs, letters, diaries, badges and other relics and memorabilia.

Bill is an officer in the Army Reserve, and his father served in the Western Desert, Syria and New Guinea during WW II. If you can assist in any way please write to W.H. (Bill) Connell, 9 Moore Street, Glenbrook, N.S.W. 2773.

COMBINED PIONEER REUNION

On Saturday, 31st October, 1987, the Combined Pioneer Reunion was held at Wagga, in conjunction with the 9th Div. Reunion.

A march and wreath laying was held in the afternoon and a reunion dinner at Wagga RSL in the evening.

A barbecue lunch was held on the Sunday at the home of Bob and Mono Baker, 2/2, and they are to be congratulated on the very fine meal provided.

In attendance at the functions were: 2/1sts — Thelma Kelly, Roy and Meg Thomas, John and Kathleen Tooker, Max and Peg Herron. 2/2nds — Bob and Mono Baker, Dudley Staniforth and Lorna Manton, Jack Morgan and Evelyn Booth, Ken Milne, Des Evans, Jim O'Neil, Dick Ryan, Gordon and Gwen Bell.

ORDER FORM — 2/1st PIONEER BTN. UNIT HISTORY (Fill in particulars)

Please reserve copy(ies) of "The Pioneers" and I enclose my \$5 cheque as a holding deposit for each copy, and I agree to pay the balance when notified.

Surname: _____ Known Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Regimental Number: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Post order with deposit to: VIC WHITELEY, 20 Cairns Street, Riverwood, N.S.W. 2210.

PIONEER NEWS

Phone: 759 5491

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

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2/1-2/2 ANZAC ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Anzac Eve, 24th April at the Redfern RSL.

Thirty two members met in the Boardroom at 3.30 p.m. and were welcomed by Senior Vice-President, Bill Jollie, who opened the meeting.

A special welcome was extended to three interstate visitors, namely Geoff Lloyd from South Australia and John Hunt and Phil Cramsie from Queensland.

One of the first items of business was the reading of a letter from the City Council advising of the free use of the Redfern Town Hall on Anzac Day for our reunion. This was greatly appreciated and was greeted with acclamation.

The meeting then proceeded with reports from the various officers and Allan McInnes was later called upon to act as Returning Officer for the election of officers for 1988/89.

The senior appointments resulted in Bill Jollie being elected as President with John Gilchrist (2/1) and John Williams (2/2) being nominated as joint Patrons.

In his reply, President Bill made special reference to our past president, Bob Dixon, who was forced to resign due to ill health, and to the work carried out by the late Lieut-Colonel Gordon Osborn during his long term as Patron. Gordon was also author of our book "The Pioneers", at the time of his passing.

At the closure of a most interesting meeting, the President advised that Association member Wal Smith, who is also Vice-President of the Redfern RSL, had extended an invitation to all present to partake of drinks in the Boardroom bar courtesy of the Club President. This invitation was accepted with pleasure, both by our members and the ladies of our Auxiliary, who were admitted at the conclusion of the meeting.

WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

After a light meal at Redfern RSL the Pioneer group reformed in Martin Plaza in readiness for a short march to the Cenotaph, with Max Law acting as marshal.

The banners were proudly carried by Tom Walsh (son of Pat) for the 2/1sts and Geoff Lloyd of South Australia for 2/2nds.

The wreaths were placed on the Cenotaph by Gordon Finlay on behalf of the Association and Mrs Kathleen Tooker for the Ladies' Auxiliary. Gordon Finlay also recited the Ode to the Fallen and Aub Brazier, our capable bugler, played the Last Post and Reveille. Once again, many thanks Aub.

2/1 ANZAC DAY MARCH

Anzac Day dawned fine and clear and it was evident from the crowded trains and buses that there would be a larger than usual march attendance.

At the 2/1st forming up place in Phillip Street, there were quite a few new faces, particularly from country areas.

Despite earlier fears that bands who regularly marched in front of particular units might be given new positions this year, the 2/1sts were very pleased to find their usual band, Bankstown Police Citizens Youth Club, forming up in front as usual.

At "form up" time, Bill Jollie began his regular duty of getting marchers into line, with scouts being sent into the Leagues Club to round up the stragglers. It was one of the best attended marches for many years, with more than 120 Pioneers on parade.

The banner was carried by Tim Lloyd (son of the late John Lloyd) and the march leaders were our new Patron, John Gilchrist and President, Bill Jollie.

The band opened up with a fine rendition of "Waltzing Matilda" and the good crowds along the route responded immediately. It was an early reaction and set the pattern for the remainder of the march.

For the first time for years the 2/1st received wide coverage on ABC Television and it was felt that the band contributed greatly to the occasion.

— MAX LAW, Reporter

2/2 ANZAC DAY MARCH

Once again the marchers were blessed with a fine, sunny day in this Bicentennial year and our numbers increased to 45.

Many old faithfuls were in attendance and we were pleased to welcome some new ones — young Michael Bye from Dubbo (son of Mick) and Geoff Lloyd from South Australia.

As has become the practice over the last few years, creating a most inspiring addition, the Ashfield Regional Cadet Unit supplied the three unit banner escorts — Cadet Sergeant Greg Moore, Cadets Alice Granger and Melissa Sinclair. Our sincere thanks again to Captain Shean Greer at the ARCU for your continued support.

Our march leaders were veteran leader Major Bill Robertson (83 next birthday) ably supported by Allan McInnes and Ray Harris.

Padre Jock Steele made his TV debut when we stopped momentarily and the ABC camera focused straight on him.

It was good to see such a good roll up and it makes the march and the day a most encouraging one for the Committee. Hope to see you all on parade next year.

RAY HARRIS, Reporter

ANZAC REUNION DINNER

Immediately following the March, the trek out to Redfern Town Hall began.

The regulars who had opened the hall picked up kegs, placed chairs and tables in position and carried out all the other jobs which had to be done, were soon joined by the first group of marchers.

They were met at the door by Ray Harris and Bob Lake, who made out name tags and Bill Robertson and Max Law (with assistance from Lance Gayden) collected the lunch fees.

Vic Whiteley and Doug Shearston were upstairs collecting subscriptions, while Jack McDonagh and Peter Gilchrist (son of John) sold the beer tickets. The serving of the beer was capably handled by Terry Bird and Geoff Finlay.

Once again the Committee is grateful to our caterer, John Winters, for his loyal support of our Association, as John has not increased the price of his services over the past eight years. Thank you, John, and your merry band of helpers, for a job well done.

Jack Collis was on "kitchen duty", as usual, ably assisted by Bill Hodges keeping an account of the number of meals served with the aid of his "clicking gazinta". Jack said the "clicker" showed 156 meals were served but, with a few second helpings, the figure could have been more like 170.

The raffle, organised by George Walker, was won by Roy Levy, who very kindly donated it back to the Pioneer News wrapping committee. Many thanks, Roy.

After members had been served with their lunch, secretary Max Herron addressed the gathering. He outlined the programme and then introduced the new President of the Association. Bill Jollie

NEW OFFICE BEARERS

It is most gratifying to be able to fill the vacant positions left by the late Gordon Osborn and the retirement of Bob Dixon.

The Executive sincerely thank John Gilchrist for accepting the position of 2/1st Pioneer Patron and Bill Jollie for accepting the position of Association President.

Also a welcome is extended to new Committee members Russ Harrison and John Tooker

The President gave a brief report on the activities

of the Committee over the past year and spoke of the work carried out by the 2/1 History Committee. He also said it was sad to have lost good members of both units, with special mention of Harry Montague and Gordon Osborn.

Bill then introduced John Gilchrist (co-Patron) who said he was saddened by the loss of a close friend in Gordon Osborn — a great soldier and a perfect gentleman. John wished all Pioneers a happy reunion and sincerely hoped they would enjoy the day, as he intended to do.

Although an attendance book was kept of those at the reunion, unfortunately space does not permit mentioning them all in this article.

George Walker reported that D. Coy had a great day at their usual table near the door. George Brooks was down from Ipswich and was seen in earnest conversation with Jim Gray and Peter Craig. Ken Oliver was showing excellent modern day photos of Milne Bay, while Bill Hodges was relating some funny incidents of our stay in Milne Bay. George Tolmie turned up after an absence of six years — nice to see you again, George. Max Herron joined the table at one stage and reported that Jack Lamerton had been in touch and wished to be remembered to all D Coy.

Doug Shearston was down from Forster and was pleased to see fellow 2/1 Sigs, Wally Parsons, Max Herron and Bill Hutchinson in attendance. Bill was accompanied by his son and it was great to see him after an absence of so many years.

There was a good attendance of 2/2nds, some regulars and some for the first time — Horrie Sedger and Bert Beasley from Queensland, Geoff Lloyd from S.A., Frank Cheal from Victoria (complete with his new plastic hips), Gordon and Pat Collins (sons of Pat), "Bluey" Curran, Matt Elliott (Wollongong), first time ever, Reg Armstrong, Ken Harrison, Major Ken Kidd (first time since 1945) back from the West and living at Elizabeth Bay, and Mick Bye's son, Michael.

Other tables of 2/2nds included Wally Coe (a newcomer), Les Graham, George Smith, George Phuell, Gil Short, Bill Fallon, Don Crawford, Andy Beebar, Bill Loughlin, "Butch" Ballard and Jim Field.

The gathering broke up at 4 p.m. when "the beer is finished" cry saw movement of many of the groups. The usual volunteers began the task of cleaning up and soon had the hall in ship-shape order.

Once again a very successful reunion and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Many thanks to all those who helped to make it a great day.

MAX LAW, Reporter

W.A. GET TOGETHER

The regular gathering of 2/1st and 2/2nd Pioneers of W.A. was held in Perth in March this year.

In attendance were: Jack and Joan Monger, Jack Stewart, Sid Abercrombie, Ron and Pat Henley, Albert Machen and friend Fran Jolley, Owen Heron, John Anderson, Norm Le Cornu, Frank Murray, Harry and Gwen Fitzgerald, Len and Joy Preedy.

All members enjoyed their get-together and said they would eagerly look forward to the next one. There was a lot of interest in the expected issue of the 2/1st Pioneer Unit History and were quite surprised when Len Preedy produced his 2/2nd Pioneer Unit History as most people did not know it existed.

After the gathering Len and Joy Preedy had two weeks holiday at Busselton and while there contacted Ted and Dorothy Lyon and George Mc Ness. Ted had just taken delivery of a new car and was quite thrilled with it.

— LEN PREEDY, Reporter

"THE PIONEERS"

The 2/1st History Book is now at the printers and copies should be available by end of August. Those members who have arranged to pick up their books will be notified by phone when ready.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT, 1988

Our retiring President, Bob Dixon, due to his continuing ill health, has requested me to present the Annual Report on this occasion. Bob, who has not been at all well for some months now, took over as President in April 1985 following the death of Mick Dodson. Bob has carried out his duties in an exemplified manner and with the Association at heart. The Association extends to you, Bob, its appreciation for a job well done and the hope that your health improves.

During the past twelve months three Committee meetings have been conducted with an average attendance of eighteen members. The meetings have been held at the Redfern RSL Club and the Association is most grateful to the President and Board members of the Club for the use of the Club's facilities free of charge. Financially the Association is quite solvent whilst the income and expenditures has been ably handled by our Hon. Treasurer, Vic Whiteley.

The voice of the Association — Pioneer News — is being currently posted to 1010 members and we must congratulate co-editors Bob Lake and Max Herron for a magnificent contribution and not forgetting a great job in the preparing of the paper for posting by the members of the Wrapping Committee.

Apart from the Brisbane Reunion conducted on 7th November 1987 which was so generously organised by John and Mollie Hunt and our many thanks go to them, a country reunion was not held during the past twelve months. Organisation of the reunion to be held during next September at Wagga Wagga is well in hand due to the untiring efforts of our Social Secretaries Gordon Finlay and George Walker and the amazing ability of Peg Herron.

During the past twelve months many of our members have passed on with a sad loss to their families and the Association. Our biggest losses during the year were our Welfare Officer, Harry

NOTES ON 8 PLN, 2/1

Perhaps the excellence of the beer and the convivial atmosphere had something to do with my agreeing to write up the 8 Pln get together at the Anzac Reunion, or Gordon Finlay's victim.

Gordon has lost none of the glibness of tongue and native cunning he displayed as sergeant of 8 Pln where I and many others, suffered and winged and — with the greatest reluctance — performed the menial tasks that only the army could conceive.

Anyway, not only was the reunion a great success but 8 Pln boasted 14 ex-members (who could be identified before the March and during the reunion). They included Bert Holmes being his usual bluff self, Geoff Robinson being trying, Harry Allen claiming to be 82, born in 1906, and making him a very old veteran compared to we youngsters, of course. Bruce Smith coped very well with the March, but had to forego the reunion — his brother probably bullied him into forsaking us. Eric Guthrie, being his usual impertinent self, took up duties as a steward. To our surprise, he was not seen to spill anything.

Peter Peile looked extremely youthful and Henry Bourke (a golfer with an 18 handicap) joined their old comrades. I hadn't seen either of them since about August, 1941.

Stan Sellwood (Dardy to most of us) I thought might have drowned in orange juice, and I believe that would not be a fitting end to an old warrior. If we survive until next year, Dard, special arrangements will have to be made.

Don Slater espoused (a flash word for married) to a nursing sister and resident at the War Veterans Home at Collaroy, seemed to have no problems, at least no problems with drinking toasts. He toasted practically everyone.

Dick Blakeney also there and what a character. None of us were sure, but we think he was in training for something. Frank Gillian, noisy as ever, with a grin and a lot of dubious explanations, assured us that his corporation, nothing to do with business, was honestly come by.

Dan Sprouster and Stan Jones also made up the gathering. Stan, from what I recall, went to 7 Pln as platoon sergeant, for better or for worse, and Dan was last seen in 1943 so I'm told. I hope he doesn't leave it another 45 years before we meet again.

And now to Gordon Finlay. Who but he could have flogged the beer tickets, been pretty decent to all and sundry, conned his old mate into writing this article, watched his loving son pull beer, ate his lunch, told questionable stories, then went home and slept soundly.

— GEOFF ROBINSON

Montague, who died on 5th May 1987, and our 2/1 Patron, Gordon Osborn who passed away on 25th August 1987. The funerals of both well known office bearers were well attended by members of the Association. The funerals of other deceased members were attended by our Welfare Officers Max Law and Jack Collis where possible. Both Max Law and Jack Collis have regularly visited our members in hospital when the Association has been advised of admissions and the Committee is forever grateful to them for a job well done.

The History Committee has been very active during the past twelve months with eight meetings held. It has been a long and arduous task for those involved. Members of the Unit will be pleased to know that the publication is at present with the printers and should be produced in the near future, provided there are no unforeseen holdups. The History Committee conveys its appreciation to Peg Herron for the use of her Workshop and victuals provided.

On behalf of the Association, I would like to convey its appreciation to all the ladies who have assisted during the year, as without them we could barely survive.

It would be very remiss of me if I did not mention the outstanding work carried out by our Hon. Secretary Max Herron. Credit must be given where credit is due and I'm sure you will all join me in extending our grateful thanks for a magnificent effort.

Finally, I trust that you all can attend our March and Reunion on Anzac Day and don't forget to "kick the tin".

— BILL JOLLIE, President

LAST POST

• **REG PUTLAND** D. Coy 2/1 passed away on 6th May 1988, and was buried at Woronora Cemetery on 10th. The funeral was attended by Bill Tasker and Max Law, who passed on our condolences to Mrs Josie Putland and members of her family.

Only a few weeks before his death, Reg had been visited twice in Sutherland Hospital by the Welfare Chairman. Reg was hoping to be discharged by Anzac Day and was keen to attend the Wagga reunion. Unfortunately, it was not to be.

• **HENRY (Snowy) LLOYD** A. Coy 2/1 passed away on 28th May 1988 at Concord Hospital.

"Snowy" served in Tobruk (where he was wounded in May 1941), the Owen Stanleys, Moresby area and Balikpapan. He was 71.

The cremation service was at Rookwood on 31st May and conducted by Rev. David Hayes, Senior Chaplain from Concord Hospital. The RSL service was carried out by Bill Tasker.

Max Law passed on our condolences to Mrs Emily Lloyd and members of her family.

• **LAURIE FITZHENRY** 2/1 passed away suddenly on 30th May 1988.

Laurie was a well-known member of the 2/1, joining the battalion in Palestine in 1941, following the unit's transfer from Tobruk to Hill 69. He served in various capacities in New Guinea and the Balikpapan campaign, where he was CSM of B. Coy until the end of the war. He finally took over as RSM until he was discharged early in 1946.

As a result of a serious operation last year, which restricted his movements, arrangements were made to ferry Laurie to the reunion on Anzac Day where he had a great day.

On 1st June, following a service at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Paddington, Laurie was buried in the Botany Cemetery. The graveside service was attended by Stan Jones, Bill Tasker and Max Law, who conveyed the sympathies of the Association to Laurie's elderly mother "Mum Fitz" as she was known (a gracious lady) and to his son, Dennis, and other members of his family.

BRISBANE REUNION

**Saturday, 29th October, 1988 at 10.30 a.m.
at residence of JOHN and MOLLIE HUNT
4/25 Mountford Road, New Farm, Brisbane
Telephone: (07) 358 4349 by 22nd October**

LAST POST

— MAX LAW, Welfare

• **THOMAS (Darcy) VAUGHAN** H.Q. Coy 2/1, passed away at Tweed Heads Hospital on 10th September, 1987.

• **PATRICK WALSH** B. Coy 2/1 formerly of Grong Grong, passed away in a nursing home at Narrandera on 3rd March 1988, after a long illness. He was buried at the Catholic Cemetery, Grong Grong, on 5th March.

"Paddy", as he was known in the Pioneers, was aged 66.

We are grateful to Jack Painter for passing on the news and for extending our condolences to Mrs Walsh.

• **CARL BALL** 2/2 passed away in Sydney on 10th March, 1988 and cremated at Rookwood on 15th. Carl was a member of D. Coy and spent some time in their Orderly Room.

In his early days he played cricket for Waverley and later became a well-known golfer, playing in RSL tournaments.

The Association was represented at the service by Bill Tasker, Russ Harrison, Gavin Todd, Alf and Mrs Ballard, Bill Lewis and Bill Robertson, who conveyed condolences to Carl's daughter.

• **WILLIAM HORTON** 2/1 passed away on 18th March 1988 at Young and was formerly at Coonabarabran, Whitton and Bermagui.

A message of sympathy was forwarded to Mrs Marjorie Horton and family.

• **WILLIAM EDWARD GROVES** 2/2 passed away on 21st March, 1988 at Denistone and was buried at Northern Suburbs Cemetery on 24th. He was 83.

Our condolences were forwarded to Mrs Groves and family.

• **KEN KNIGHT** 2/1 and 2/2 of Wagga Wagga passed away on 21st March, 1988, aged 64 years. Ken had been in ill-health for some time after undergoing a serious operation.

The funeral was attended by a group of Pioneers including Jack Morgan, Dudley Stanforth and Dick Ryan.

The Association's sympathies were extended to Mrs Joyce Knight and family.

• **LEN HOPE** D. Coy, 2/2 passed away at Gosford Hospital on 23rd March, 1988 after suffering a severe heart condition for many years. He was cremated at Palmdale Crematorium on 30th March.

Len was well respected in both business and private circles. His funeral was attended by a large congregation which included representatives of the Newcastle Master Builders Association (of which Len had been a member for 30 years), Toukley RSL (President), Legacy, Toukley District Bowling Club (President), and Rotary (President). Len was also Patron of a number of sporting clubs and local surf clubs and an alderman for 9 years on Wyong Shire Council.

The RSL service was conducted by Jack Cohen of the TPI Association, of which Len was also a member.

A number of Pioneers, some accompanied by their wives, were in attendance — Tom Reynolds, Alex Mitchell, Roy and Jack McGregor, Ken Harrison, Jack Cohen and Tom Morgan (to whom we are grateful for his excellent report).

The condolences of the Association members were passed on to Mrs Gwen Hope and her family and Gwen has asked that her thanks be extended to all Pioneers who attended the funeral at such short notice.

• **WAL NEW** 2/1 of Ingleburn passed away on 25th March and the Association was represented at the funeral by Gordon Finlay and Viv Le-Mesurier. The service was attended by a large number of mourners, including members of several bowling clubs and Ingleburn RSL.

Gordon passed on the sympathies of the President and Association members to Mrs May New and her family.

• **JOHN FRANCIS WHITE** former sergeant with 2/2 and 2/3 Pioneer Battalions, passed away on 26th April, 1988.

• **CLAUDE VORBACH** 2/1 passed away on 1st May, 1988 and was cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium on 4th May.

Max Law attended the service on behalf of the Association and handed out poppies to several servicemen. He also arranged a Guard of Honour as the casket was carried into the chapel.

The sympathies of our members were conveyed to Claude's daughter, Ruth.

MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE

Another issue of Mail Bag and a hell of a lot of letters to answer, quite a few with requests for History and quite a few with subs for treasurer. Still, the fact that people are still writing shows that they still have an interest in the Association.

• **MAX WILSON** 2/1 Stockton writes that he is looking forward to receiving and reading the book and the old photos will probably refresh the memory when names sometimes escape. Closes with best wishes to all Pioneers.

• **TED WILCOX** 2/1 Dapto with a short note telling us of a change of address, not moving very far, Dapto to Albion Park. Ted will be present at Redfern on Anzac Day.

• **CHARLIE WILBY** 2/1 Moree, the old Pally Kid, with a letter that he has not long returned from North Queensland where his two sons are in residence, one at Claremont and one at Roma. Charlie apologises for his absence on Anzac Day, reckons the arthritis would beat him on the March. You don't have to march, Charlie, just attend the reunion sometime. It would be good to see you again. Also enclosed his payment for a history book and closes with best wishes, got a shock to read of Dora Black's passing.

• **DOUG WATERS** 2/1 S.A. with a letter that he retired in 1987 and has a bit to do around the home, but he will be at Wagga. Claims he will be glad to get away as the "Minister of Works" is wielding the old whip and a big stick. Enclosed a sub for the treasurer and a deposit for Wagga.

• **IRENE WALSH** widow of Pat 2/1 with a thank you for the get well card sent to Pat at the Nursing Home. He was very pleased to receive same, but it was not to be. He had been a sick man for quite some time and lived for his two grandchildren, his football and his beer. He lived for you too, Irene and not in that order. Your request to stay on the mailing list is no problem and you will receive the paper each edition as it comes out.

• **TOM WALLACE** 2/1 Rankin Park with the final balance of payment for the History, a sub for the treasurer and quotes that he often sees Jack Griffiths at the races. He is a regular and claims the meeting doesn't start till Glido turns up. Tom also said that he is as good a judge as he, plenty of luck but all bad.

• **TREVOR THOMSON** 2/1 Kingswood with a request for a history book. Enclosed both a deposit and a sub for the treasurer.

• **ROD TARR** 2/1 Kempsey with a thank you for badges. Rod spent a lot of time in W.A. after the war and did not see any Pioneers for a long time but is back in Kempsey and maybe he will catch up now.

• **ROY SWANSON** 2/2 Belmont with a deposit for Wagga and a request to stay at the Astor Hotel Motel if it is possible. Roy apparently goes to Wagga a fair bit and stays there on each occasion.

• **DANNY SPROUSTER** 2/1 Dundas with a request and a cheque for a copy of the history book. Offers many thanks for all the work that has been put into this production by all concerned.

• **JACK SPOTTISWOODE** 2/1 Allambie Heights with a sub for the treasurer and congratulations on the age of the Association. Both Jack and Hazel have not been enjoying the best of health of late and hope for an improvement in the coming months. Closes with best wishes to all and hopes that we had a good day on the 25th.

• **HARRY SPREADBOROUGH** 2/1 Queensland with the news that they have been on a bus tour around Easter and came home to throw out the anchors to stop from floating away. Both Harry and Jean will not be at Wagga this time, apart from the distance, they have a few irons in the fire about that time. Kerslake has had his hip replacement, still on crutches and doing a lot of physio at present but he said, just being without the pain all the time is well worth it. Their bus tour took them through Maryborough, Hervey Bay and Frazer Island, beautiful fine weather then home to the slosh. Well, old mate, we had a share down here too, so perhaps your signing off with Yours in Sogginess together was quite appropriate.

• **STAN SELWOOD** 2/1 Ashfield with a thank you for the back issues of Pioneer News. It was

interesting to read some of the old names of 1940 and Greta Camp. Stan sees Don Slater, Peter Peile and their wives now and again for lunch at the Services Club in the city. Enclosed a cheque for the treasurer to keep us afloat.

• **AUSTIE RONAN** 2/1 with a short note to say he has been having a quiet time lately with a crook left foot but is still doing everything within reason. Does not think he will be at the March but will be thinking of all the boys and sends his best regards, also a little something for the treasurer.

• **FRED SCANES** 2/1 Cooma with a letter apologising for the time between but as he says, no news is good news. Having a bit of trouble with his back but at best he can still get around, so considers himself one of the lucky ones. Have not seen Frosty McLean for some years now, nor Bill Sutherland, but will pass on your good wishes through the paper. Fred has been and still is a good gardener and has had a good year. Claims the old Murrumbidgee may have dropped a couple of inches but his result has been top grade. Winter is no good as it gets too bloody cold.

• **JACK KEMPNIICH** 2/1 Fingal Bay per pen of Maisie with a deposit for books and the news that she is getting her hip replacement at long last. 14 months she has been waiting, suggests that Mr Anderson should visit Newcastle and see what NSW 2nd largest city has to offer. Has had a visit from Snow and Gert Vickery and also the Collis family from the Central Coast, in fact reckons that the Collis's are just about due again. Jack is keeping in good health, plenty of walking, plenty of fishing and plenty of home brew. Jack has had a torrid time for the last few weeks. Maisie back from hospital and all the chores to be performed by Jack. We sincerely hope that the leg is getting okay now Maisie, she went into hospital full of confidence but doesn't ever want to go through it again. They both intend being at Wagga but have not decided which way to travel yet, take the van or go by train. Don't know that I can place Roachy at time of writing, but all and everyone could offer some tall stories if they were so inclined. My football team is starting to give me a headache. They can't seem to make up their mind whether they should play football or take up knitting, however let's hope they can improve, can't get worse, that's for sure.

Another letter also from Maisie Kempnich with her application for Wagga, duly filled in, and I'm sure by now Peg will have attended to it.

Maisie and Jack are looking forward to another "bonanza" show in Wagga and said to tell Lakey the maroons will want to stir up the honey pot soon, they're not consistent enough.

• **MERV HOWARTH** 2/2 with a change of address to Narooma. Merv and wife Daphne were interested in the trip to Wagga in September and were in touch for further information. This has been duly attended to and we would be pleased to have you join us for a great weekend.

Merv mentions meeting Charlie and Bill Henry and Gordon Bell, also had a few lines from Bill Condon from Victoria.

• **CHARLES RICHARDSON** 2/1 and 2/2 Qld. encloses a cheque for a book and a sub for the treasurer and said he intended coming to Sydney this year but a total hip replacement put paid to the idea. The photos will be placed in the battalion album for all who wish to see them. Charles was in New Guinea a couple of years ago and was more than pleasantly surprised at how the place had changed over the forty years since we were all there in 1942 and 1943. He sends his apologies for not being present and regards to both units.

• **MONTE REID** 2/1 and 2/2 Cessnock writes that when he first heard about the history, he felt a sense of regret that it had taken so long for the idea to surface. Regret that so many of the battalion are no longer alive, regret for all the stories that will not be available and so he was very half-hearted toward the project. However, with the information in the News of what the book will include, he sends his deposit for same. Good for you Monty.

• **FRED PRATT** 2/1 W.A. Another new member of the association, joined the Battalion in early 1942. Was in A. Coy. 8 platoon and has real memories of Bert Holmes, George Bates plus others. Prior to this letter, he picked up Battalion doings from Len Preedy. Fred was one of the seventy odd West Aussies that joined us in 1942.

• **JACK PAINTER** 2/1 Narrandera with a sub for the treasurer and the details of the passing of Pat Walsh, as quoted earlier. Pat was a very good mate

of Max Law but the news was too late, although Max was able to send a card to the nursing home just prior to his death.

• **TOM O'SCOTT** Brisbane with his payment for a copy of the history book. Tom is an Army Historian and requests that one of the authors autograph a copy for him. Information of same to Max Law.

• **JACK NORTON** 2/1 Warners Bay with a letter informing us of a change of address to the above, allowing him to be only 20 minutes or so from his eldest son. Hopes to be able to keep in touch with the various RSL clubs from Newcastle to Swansea and will probably meet a Pioneer or two in his travels. Jack is a TPI, has been for quite a time, but is still able to get about a bit and still looks forward to receiving the News.

• **WALLY PAGE** (Desso), Cudgen. Doesn't believe in wasting paper, sends a sub to Vic, written on a piece of paper measuring 5"x2 1/2" in size. Still okay except for the usual complaints, old age and arthritis, which holds him back a little, but he still manages his bowls. Good on you "Desso".

• **TOM McNAUGHTON** 2/1 Reservoir with a sub for the treasurer, and the news that he ran into Joe Kyffin a while back. He had bit of a fall, had half a dozen stitches in his head but is okay. Should know that you couldn't hurt Kyffin's head with a battle-axe Tom. Your enquiry regards Aust Rules team photos has got me stumped but should anyone who has them and gets this message, they can get in touch with you.

• **JACK MCGREGOR** 2/2 Shortland writes that the last issue of Pioneer News was September issue and was wondering if December had gone astray. I'll be honest with you Jack, we were so tied up with the history book that we never published the Dec. issue. Still you would have received the April copy by now.

• **JOAN MCGOWAN** widow of Len 2/1 with a short note and the balance of the purchase of two history books which Len had ordered.

• **BOB MCGREGOR** 2/1 Kingsgrove per pen of Joy with a balance of payment and the news that Bob is well at the moment. Doctors pleased with his progress but still having a pint of blood taken each month to thin same. Has got a blockage in the artery in left lower leg, were going to remove leg at one stage but trying every alternative first. Hope you enjoy the holiday at Shoalhaven Heads with the family Joy. Just keep the elbow in to the side and bent.

• **NEIL MCGILL** 2/1 Birrong with a short note enclosing a sub for the treasurer and the balance of payment for history.

• **JACK McDONAGH** 2/2 Condell Park with a cheque for the balance of the book, his best wishes and would see us at the General Meeting.

• **JACK MURRAY** 2/2 W.A. with a cheque for the treasurer and the comment that he enjoys receiving and reading the news. Claims that he would not know a lot of the names. Jack still looks forward to the Pioneer meetings in Perth which are always well conducted by Len Preedy.

• **TOM MORROW** 2/1 Woolgoolga with an apology for not being able to supply the sketch that Max Herron required, however he did supply a photo of the Japanese surrender at the camp and he does not want it back. Closed with best wishes and a cheque for the treasurer.

• **BILL MOORE** 2/1 Croydon. Enclosed a cheque for the history and says he is well enough but cannot get around much, very restricted in his breathing. I presume that is an asthmatic condition Bill.

• **NEVILLE MOANE** 2/1 Curl Curl with a sub for the treasurer, only about 40 years behind, his words not mine. However, he promises to do better in the future. Sends his regards to Ken Stuart and ex members of the Mortars, he has also posted a request for the history and is looking forward to reading same. Have not seen you around for a hell of a long time Binky, where are you hiding yourself these days? I still drink at the Leagues Club Friday and Saturday afternoon.

• **DICK MARSHALL** 2/2 with a deposit for Wagga and looking forward to meeting up with the Caravaners again. He and Heather are booking for a week arriving there at Wagga on the Wednesday. Looking forward to seeing you both again. Are you still up on promises Dick?

• **HARRY MOWBRAY** 2/1 Ormiston, finally puts pen to paper, very lazy letter writer and keeps putting it off till later. On March 23, Harry and Dot are off to Ingham to a wedding of their granddaughter. That is not a bad effort, I don't imagine too many Pioneers with married grandchildren although the

age is creeping up. Our eldest is 20 years old and getting toward the bracket. Attended the funeral of Bert Rayner at Kyogle with Nev Woodham and Spready and will definitely go back down to Kyogle for a good look around the old place. Harry has some very fond memories of Kyogle. Closes with best wishes to all from Dot and himself.

• **DOREEN LONG** widow of Bob 2/1 with a hurried note to the treasurer for the payment of three history books. Apparently Doreen has not too much time on her hands these days. Good for you!

• **JIM MACDONALD** 2/1 Tuncurry writes another of those annual letters to the treasurer. Had a game of bowls with Doug Shearston last week and is playing at Taree with Alec Boyd who is just as good as ever and in better health than last year. Wife Cynthia is also into the bowls and was playing her pairs at time of writing. Fishing has been very patchy to date and the weather hot. Have had a wonderful year with all the family in good health. Jim has had only one visit to the doctor in the last 12 months while it is two years since Cynthia has had to attend but now he has to go to the optometrist and may have to have an implant in one eye. Will know more about it later. Wishes to be remembered to all.

• **SISTER SUE MALCOLM** Coffs Harbour with a donation to the treasurer and the information that she will not be at Wagga for the reunion but explains that she will be on a three week bus trip to Perth at the time. That will certainly test the staying powers Sue. Had not been in touch with Vera at time of writing so she doesn't know if she will attend or not. Wishes us all the best for Wagga, she will be in Albany on that particular day.

• **FRANK 'BLUE' LOCANE** 2/2 Wandandian, writes that he has just returned from a trip to Dubbo, Narromine and Coonamble where he met up with Harry Sullivan 2/2 at Narromine. Physically as fit as a Mallee Bull but his eyes not real good, glaucoma, but he can still find a schooner and lift it to the right place. At Coonamble he met Vince Diggs, who told him he was still receiving Pioneer News posted to Belrose. That will be corrected. Vince as quoted good in health and they imbibed a few at the water hole. Both Vince and Harry wished to be remembered to all and anyone travelling to Bourke, Harry at Bourke, Vince at Coonamble, would be made more than welcome. Blue also sends his best regards to all.

• **DON LINTON** 2/2 Tuncurry wishing to be remembered to all his mates of the 2/2. Nance and Don are enjoying life there and have no regrets of leaving the rat race of Sydney. Always something going on up there, in fact Don says that they are living an eight day week but they don't care, they are doing what they enjoy. Pleased to see a good roll up at the March, he couldn't make it but he was there in spirit. Expresses his thanks for the Paper. Great stuff and would be more than pleased to welcome anyone passing through that way.

• **MIN LEIS** widow of Joe 2/1 with the deposit for her books and the request to post one to the son. All okay, it shall be done Min, no trouble at all. Thank you for your good wishes.

• **PAT LAUGHREN** 2/1 Nambour with a letter per pen of his seeing eye dog with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that Pat's eyes are not the best, has had a cataract operation plus lens implant and eyes are slowly improving. Both enjoy the reunion at John and Mollie Hunt's, the blokes like to remember the old times and the daylight suits them both as they go down and back in the one day.

• **JACK LAMERTON** 2/1 Liverpool with his payment for the book and a phone call to Max Herron saying he was not well enough to attend on Anzac Day but sends best wishes to all, especially D. Coy.

• **JOE KYFFIN** 2/1 Reservoir with a letter to say he would not be attending Anzac Day due to other commitments but enclosed his and Tom McNaughton's deposit for a booking at Wagga. Wife Maida's eyes are no better but they are enjoying good health otherwise. Joe can no longer play golf, bad wrists and back but he enjoys a game of bowls as often as possible. They have had good weather down in Melbourne but could badly use some rain now.

• **JACK KERSLAKE** 2/1 Collaroy per pen of Marj, with a cheque for deposit at Wagga. Jack has had his hip replacement but can't do anything much for another five or six weeks. Manages to get to the club and beat me at snooker on Friday afternoons. Marj wishes Peg and Max good health and hopes Peg is getting plenty of golf.

• **MARGARET JONES** widow of Llew 2/1 with a thank you to Vic for his help in her request and encloses cheque for an extra copy of book. Margaret has a sister living in Riverwood so they will be able to pick them up when books are ready.

• **JUNE JONES** daughter of George Edman, with a request for an additional two copies of History. Costs paid for and the balance to a donation to the funds. Thank you June for your kind thought.

• **TED JENSON** 2/1 Doonside with a cheque for deposit at Wagga and a request that they be booked into the Astor Hotel Motel if available. I'm sure that Peg Herron will do her very best for you, Ted. With Peg, anything is possible, miracles take a little longer.

• **ALLAN JAKINS** son of Alf Jakins, deceased, sends a letter with a cheque for 5 copies of the book. Also enclosed a cheque for subscription to Pioneer News, received back issues and was impressed by the paper and as he quoted, Dad was in the battalion for a long time and many names ring a bell. There was no paper published in December but you should have the March issue.

• **JOHN HAYDEN** 2/1 Orange with a letter of apology for his lack of communication over the past few years but better late than never so apology accepted. Both he and Wyn were saddened at the death of Gordon Osborn who in life lived not far from their son John and met him on numerous occasions. Still keeps busy with meals-on-wheels and occasional stints with the RSPCA. Has also met up with Perc Dutton and Tom Chrystall and Max has sent them back copies of Pioneer News. Will not be down for Anzac Day, has commitments in Orange but wishes us all the best for the big day.

• **RUSS HARRISON** 2/2 with a short note enclosing a cheque for a history and while we are on the subject of Russ, welcome to the committee of the association. He was co-opted to same at the Annual Meeting.

• **HARRY HAMER** 2/1 Central Coast with a note to say he was sorry to hear of the death of Alwyn Black (was a good mate to many), however Harry and Glad are looking forward to the reunion in Wagga and if it's as good as Dubbo, it will be a good show. Snow Jardine often calls on Harry and keeps him in touch with the latest news. What happened to you on Anzac Day old timer, age too great a burden at 77?

• **JACK HUMPHREY** 2/1 Vincentia with a note that he had received back issues of Pioneer News and enclosed a cheque to cover his subscriptions. Ern Hayden was his corporal in B. Coy. Jack has been at Vincentia for 15 years and before that at Sans Souci, has been retired 5 years and both he and wife are enjoying good health. Keeps a good garden and does a fair amount of walking to keep fit. Went for a walk the last trip 30 kms in eight hours so he is pretty good, but claims not as good as Cliff Young. Has also done a few trips since retirement, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and New Zealand and visited the Burma Railway and War Cemetery. Not letting the grass grow under your feet, Jack, good for you, you are only young once.

• **FRANK HEPBURN** 2/2 Bankstown per pen of wife Irene, with a sub for the treasurer and the news that Frank is getting better every day and was pleased to see both units in the Anzac Day march. Irene was surprised to hear them singing the Rose of No Mans Land as it was a World War I song, but I would say to you Irene, there would not be very many of our age generation that would not know that song, all my sisters know it, and so do my daughters.

• **CLIVE HARRIS** 2/1 Aberdeen writes a short note for a booking in Wagga and the news that they are heading for Expo next week and a short bus tour as well. Max and Peg Herron would have been there at the same time as you Clive, and Joan and I (Lakey) are leaving Sydney today, 24th May, for the same trip.

• **FRANK HALLAM** 2/1 Griffith with a sub for the treasurer, a deposit for a book and a booking for Wagga. Frank has a brother in Wagga so does not require bedding down but will be at the doings with belts on.

• **TOBY HALE** 2/1 Kyogle with cheques for the treasurer and the news that he is still able to do a bit in the garden and mow the lawns, written in February, he says they are getting some rain which they badly need. By the time you read this Toby, I'll bet you have had more than enough of that filthy stuff.

• **JACK GRIFFITHS** 2/1 Mayfield with a letter enclosing his acknowledgement for the trip to

Wagga. They will be travelling by train and if he can be of any assistance to us in any way, just let him know. Jack says that Dick Seddon will not be there, he has been transferred to Allandale Geriatric Hospital and both Jack and Bertram have visited him. His going down has been evident for some time and unfortunately he is in a locked ward, but he can be visited and taken out by friends. He communicates to direct questions but his conversations wander off. Jock Russell is still at Westcott Home and apart from his immobility is quite well and chirpy. He has a motorised 'chariot' which takes his complete wheelchair and can do up to 70 kms. He can get around town okay, but Jack thinks that Wagga would be stretching it a bit far. Be something to see Jack hooting down the Hume Highway in his chariot with a bottle of Red Mill Rum under his wing and not a worry in the world. Best regards and looking forward to seeing both you and Esme in Wagga.

• **JEFF BRAYE** 2/1 Randwick per pen of wife Betty with an order for the history book. Jeff is at present away working at Katherine hence the reason for lateness. Also passes his best regards to all. Must be a bit of a trauma for you Betty, I reckon Jeff must be about the only Pioneer in the workforce these days. Oh to be so young.

• **JACK GRIFFITH** (Glido), 2/1 Mayfield, with a letter to Whiteley requesting a book for a regular soldier, Cpl Trevor Lynch who has made a point of collecting Army histories. That will be okay, Jack, no trouble. Also writes that he and Jack Bertram visited Dick Seddon at Allandale Hospital Cessnock and took him for a run out to the Vineyards. He has Alzheimers disease and while his general health is okay, his memory is slowly getting worse and it is difficult to hold a conversation with him. Will be seeing him again on Wednesday when his best man at his wedding sixty years ago arrives up from Melbourne, and Griffo will be driving him up. Jack has also had a letter from Pat Mutton, wife of Tom, from Harrington who informed him that Tom has been slowly deteriorating with the same complaint and that unfortunately she can no longer look after him and he is now in Bushland Place Nursing Home at Taree and would appreciate any Rat or Pioneer that could visit him. In her own words, "Even though he has no recognition of anyone, he still senses their presence". This letter came to me from Whiteley after I had received all the Mail Bag from Max, so we just fitted it in just for you. Keep sober, Glido.

• **REG ARMSTRONG** 2/2 Coonabarabran with a deposit for a van at Wagga. No rain up that way so Reg suggests we share some of ours with them. Thanks for the news but doesn't like the shocks that are contained in Welfare Report. Unfortunately Reg they are part of the whole business, bad that they may be.

• **CLIFF ANDERSON** 2/1 Queensland with a change of address from Shoal Bay (you should never have left there), but what is this about Andy, you were always Bluey to me, but the error will no doubt be fixed by the time you receive this paper.

• **NEVILLE WOODHAM** 2/1 Queensland with a cheque for the treasurer and an apology for its lateness, a request for a book and the news that he and Betty are keeping well apart from a broken left leg and torn ligaments, cold sober too. The ligaments took the time to heal a couple of months attending Greenslopes for physio. Have had their share of baby sitting over the last three years but now the lad has started school they are back to normal. They have both been wrapped up in the bowls scene at Cleveland over the last five years but intend to sit back at the next election of officers and will concentrate on the Pennants. Lakey will buy you a beer anytime but not because the Broncos beat Manly, however we may see you at Wagga.

• **MRS DELLA WOODHOUSE** widow of the late Bill with a request for a history book and sends her congratulations and thanks for keeping her in touch.

• **PHIL BARNETT** 2/2 Lismore with a thank you for the news and a cheque for the treasurer, sub for 1987 and 1988. Must have been a mix up with that first cheque Phil, but Whiteley will fix it.

• **MAVIS ASHTON** widow of Wal 2/1 Murwillumbah with a request for another book for her son. Re your question on the News, we have always said that wives would receive the news until they no longer wanted same. However your kind thought is appreciated.

• **VAL BLACK** widow of Alwyn "Dora" 2/1 Evans Head, with a letter dealing with her finances re the Pioneer Book. Well, Val, Whiteley has written on the

bottom of your letter that you owe \$5 for the balance of the book and postage. Pleased that there was a good attendance at the funeral, it would have helped you to know how much he was liked and respected. Glad that the Martins were of such a comfort to you, it's a fair step from Evans Head to Casino where Al was in hospital.

• **PHYL ANDREWS** widow of Neville 2/1 Kingscliff with a cheque for a copy of the book and a sub for the association and hopes that the Wagga reunion is another great success. Phyl has had daughter Dianne with her for two weeks and intends having Easter with Phillip and family. Phyl would have attended her first War Widows meeting in Murwillumbah by now. Transport is a bit of a problem for Phyl but another lady from Kingscliff is taking her, and she has been to a few outings with the Laurel Club at Kingscliff. Good for you Phyl and just keep up the good work.

• **TOM BLAINEY** 2/1 Victoria with a short note with a request and order for a second History.

• **MAVIS BLANCH** widow of Joe 2/1 with a cheque for the history and a donation to the Association. Mavis expresses her apologies to the families who called on her on their way to the Brisbane reunion and has since written a letter to Pat Noonan. Still keeping busy with the charity work and playing bowls.

• **KEITH BOYLE** 2/1 Moama with a deposit for Wagga and a ground floor apartment if possible and looking forward to meeting us all again and hoping that some of the chaps he was with on the Tablelands and Balikpapan manage to turn up. Keith has been waiting to go into hospital for a hernia operation but they seem to think with his heart history that it could be a problem so they have to wait on a reply from Repat before doing anything.

• **GEORGE BROOKS** 2/1 Ipswich with a request for history books and George is going to be in Nowra for a while, March and April and hopes to see us on Anzac Day.

• **LAWRIE BUCKMAN** 2/1 Bribie Island with a request for a history book and Max has sent him back numbers of Pioneer News, he in turn has replied with a cheque for the book and balance of subs to the Association.

• **FRANK CHEAL** 2/2 Vic. with a short note expressing good wishes to all, hoping to see some of the lads on Anzac Day as he will be in Sydney at that time and with a cheque for the treasurer to help the goings along.

• **TOM CHRYSTALL** 2/1 Molong, a new addition to the Association through John Hayden. Tom joined the unit in 1944 and was a member of 4 Platoon. He remembers quite a lot of the boys too numerous to rewrite here and goes on to say that on discharge he bought a motor truck and went general carrying which he is still doing. Married happily with wife and six children, 4 daughters and twin sons, the boys being the youngest at 16. More than general carrying in that team. Tom has enclosed a cheque for the history and a sub for his subs to the Association.

• **JACK CLARKE** 2/1 Rockdale (Dog Tired), with a cheque for the book and the news that Joe Kyffin will not be at the Anzac March but will be going to Sydney via Canberra en route to Brisbane sometime in May and may be able to look up a few of the boys that trip.

• **JACK COATES** 2/1 Umina with two letters within two days of one another, passing on the Central Coast news, attended the Rats meeting at Ourimbah and was met by Jack Collis, Harry Hamer and wife Glad who is waiting for a knee operation. Ivor and Ena Garnon were also present. The Rats in association with Toukley RSL have arranged the Hawkesbury River Postmans trip and as he says, the Collis's and the Coates's will be on deck. Also on the agenda with the same group is a trip by coach down to Batemans Bay with day trips from there. At the Annual Meeting of the RSL up there it was reported they had buried 19 members over the past three years and there are quite a few very ill men at time of writing. Jack was aware of the deaths of Jacko and Blackie but did not know of Meggsie and was pleased to read that Snow Vickery and Gert were there at the funeral. Meggsie and the Calvert Brothers were all in 12 Plat B Coy all about 18 years and all trial and error for the likes of Tal, John Gilchrist and Greg Norris. Jack claims he is travelling fairly well, a bit of arthritis plus small cancers of the skin cut out but his doctor at St Vincents who has done the previous two bypasses in '75 and '85 has told him to make the most of it as there will be no third time round. There's no room

left so Jack goes very quietly. Also claims that as he is now 71 years of age, he will sign off as John Coates, sounds more distinguished.

• **JACK COLLIS** 2/1 Umina with a letter written after Anzac Day saying he thought that the March this year was better than ever. Still a couple of new faces continue to turn up and this year was no exception. Was greatly surprised to see Danny Sprouster and he told Jack that he often goes up that way. Jack's two travelling mates Bluey Miller and Jack Coates were okay, he saw them home although Bluey was a bit the worse for wear. Jack also called on Jock Russell at Stockton and gave him one of the photos he took of him in his motorised carriage. Will try to go and see Bill Wright before he takes a trip to hospital shortly. Jock also gave Jack the address of Charlie Rock (Speedy) and on calling on him reckons he has hardly changed at all. Another Pioneer who lives a few doors down the street was Bill Chisholm but he was not at home. Son William has a couple of weeks leave so will be having a couple of days with him at Nelson Bay before he goes back to sea on the HMAS Canberra to the Hawaiian Islands to meet with the American fleet. The trip takes about 4 months, includes a few weeks leave on the Islands. As Jack says "all that and getting paid about \$400 a week", what a good idea. You should join up Jack and go as a medical officers offsider.

• **PHIL CRAMSEIE** 2/1 Qld, with a cheque to the treasurer for both a book and subs and in case he does not make it, best wishes for Anzac Day. Well, Phil made it okay and I hope you enjoyed yourself as much as we did, it was really a good day all round.

• **BILL DONEY** 2/1 Lane Cove, with the necessary for a book and his subscription and saying that he would see us on Anzac Day, which he did and completed a pretty good corner with the rest of C. Coy.

• **ALBERT DEAN** 2/1 Shepparton with a thank you for the News and sub to the treasurer and the news that he is now enjoying retirement and hopes to be able to attend the reunion with wife Kathleen, look forward to seeing you at Wagga Albert (Doc).

• **JOHN DOWD** 2/2 Wagga with a thank you for the news and sub for the treasurer and a report of the Anzac March at Wagga. Approximately 800 troops marched down Bayliss Street with one of the biggest crowds watching for many years. After the ceremony and speeches in the Memorial Gardens they retired to the RSL where food and drinks were available. Jack Morgan and Dud Staniforth were both in attendance but Ken Knight had passed away on the 21 March, only 64 years of age. Closes with best wishes and will see us all at Wagga in September.

• **PERC DUTTON** 2/1 Orange, another new face to the fold, thanks to John Hayden, with a request for a book and a sub to the Association and thanking Max Herron for the back issues of the Pioneer News.

• **JEAN EATHER** widow of George Bateman 2/1 Bingarra with a request for a copy of the history, she still receives copies of the Pioneer News and notes that some names do remain familiar and the book is for son Graham.

• **RON EDWARDS** 2/1 Frankston writes with a request for a book for the son of Jack Curkpatrick who was a member of both the 19 M.G. Btn and the 2/1 Pioneer Btn as was Ron. The son and daughter in law of Jack have undertaken the preparation of a history of the 19 M.G. Btn and happened to be at the reunion of same to get information. Jack Curkpatrick has sadly passed away many years ago but the son has in his possession some photos of a grave, possibly someone by the name of Aitken. Scotch Aitken was killed in the landing at Balikpapan in July 1945, actually he was killed by a direct shell which hit the LST before we had disembarked, however, I will write a letter direct to the son and explain what I know of the event.

• **DOREEN ELLISTON** widow of Phil 2/1 now residing at Narooma with a letter to the treasurer requesting books. This will be arranged as you suggest. Doreen quotes that it is over 20 years since Phil died and her sons were then 20 and 22 years of age and as far as she knows, there are no Pioneers living in the area. However she does say that if Vic and his wife are ever down that way, the offer to call in is there if they so desire.

• **DES EVANS** 2/2 Vic. with an apology for a belated effort with regard to his subs and thanks for the delivery of Pioneer News. Jim O'Neill, Ken Milne, Des and his wife attended the 9th Div Association

function held at Wagga last Melbourne Cup Day weekend and that city brings many happy memories to Des as he had his 21st birthday at Kapooka during the reforming of the 2/2 in 1942. Des is looking forward to future functions this year and intends attending as many as possible. Sends a cheerio to Peg Herron whom he met at Wagga last time and Bonny Snudden who they called in on, on their retirement trip around Australia.

• **NOEL GRANT** 2/1 Altona with a hurried note for a history and sub for the treasurer, claims since his retirement he seems to spend most time tripping to South Australia where he has a nephew on a farm who seems to be always in need of assistance from Uncle. Wishes all best of luck for Annual Meeting and Anzac Day and apologies for non attendance.

• **NITA GEORGE** widow of Bill 2/1 with a cheque for a deposit on a history book and thanking us for the opportunity of acquiring same.

• **LES GAVEL** Leeton, with a request for a history book and the news that he has retired from Telecom 12 months ago after 34 years service and he has never felt better. Saw Mick Roberts the other day and he is well.

• **STAN GAVAN** 2/2 Greystanes with a thank you for the Pioneer News which he finds very interesting, but in a discussion with others as to what units other than the 2/2 Pioneers did both the Tarakan and Balikpapan shows I'm afraid I cannot help you there, so will have to get onto a historian or records.

• **IVOR GARNON** 2/1 Charmhaven with a cheque for Victor and the news that he will pick up his books from Whiteley when available.

• **REX FRANCIS** Shepparton new member to the Association per word of mouth from Arthur (Doc) Dean. Arthur had been talking of reunions and so forth, however Max has written to you personally and put you in the picture and earlier issues of Pioneer News will fill you right up to date.

• **KAY FLAVELL** granddaughter of Tom Senter 2/1 with a letter to Max with some photos taken at the March on Anzac Day. Max thought they were the best photos of the Battalion on the March that he has ever seen and has sent one of John Gilchrist leading the March to him. Max has also written to you personally Kay, thanking you for same.

• **NITA FERRIS** widow of Leo 2/1 with her cheque for the history book. Nita must be starting a library in Kyogle, in all she has ordered 7 copies. Many thanks Nita and we trust you are doing okay as also those big sons of yours.

• **DOUG SHEARSTON** 2/1 Forster with a quick note to Vic telling him he would see him in Sydney for the March travelling via Armidale. Sure is a funny way to travel to Sydney Doug, just shows what us men will do for the ladies of our life, doesn't it?

• **BOB BARRACLOUGH** 2/1 Matraville with a letter of thanks to Max for the return of his flag. He originally loaned a Jap Flag to Max to photo for the history book but it had faded to the extent that it could not be used. Bob and Mona will not be available for Wagga but will be looking forward to any future reunions.

• **FRANK CAULFIELD** 2/2 Cairns, with a letter telling of doings in the far north. About 500 bodies attended the March on Anzac Day but the only Pioneer that was sighted, himself in all his glory. Had a good day and the RSL did the right thing by all. Went to Victoria for Christmas and while there had a Mini Reunion at Preston RSL where he met up with George Murphy, Tom McNaughton, Bill Condon and George Pertland. Had such a good time there that instead of returning back to his son's place where they were staying, he finished up at Reservoir at his other son's house, but a quick phone call to Betty and all was forgiven. Also met Jack Coates and Jack Collis at Umina, Frank and Betty have a sister in law there and had a bit of a yarn. Frank's wife Betty has a brother who has just taken up a hobby farm at Wondecla no more than a mile from where we were in Camp and prior to that had a property at Palm Cove, a stone's throw away from where we were camped at Trinity Beach. Frank told him that if he keeps following the Pioneers, his next stop should be Morata. Frank also tells of Joe Kyffin, his wife calls him Arthur, the locals call him Jerry and in the Army he was Joe, so take your pick — a name is just a name.

• **GORDON FINLAY** 2/1. We don't get many letters from Gordon with a bit of a dig at me, recently he was in Port Macquarie staying with daughter Jan and he called on Myrtle Jopson. She is doing quite well, and he was told to thank me for getting those miniatures for her. Fair enough Myrtle, I will attend to it toot sweet. To be truthful, I did not forget them.

I just didn't know who it was that asked me to get them. Myrtle also had a quick visit from Jim Hall, all of seven minutes. Gordon and Olive also had a quick trip up to Macksville, ran into Joyce and Bombo Reynolds doing the meals-on-wheels bit at Bowraville, didn't have long to speak with them but Bombo did say that the bloody chooks were not laying.

• **JACK COLLIS** 2/1 Umina writes in to say he had visited Jack Coates while he was convalescing with a sore arm. Also with the news that Theo Reed, a stretcher bearer with 2/1st had passed away.

• **JACK COATES** 2/1 Umina sends in a local newspaper cutting on the late Harry Nicholls who had won the Military Cross at Tobruk while serving with the 2/1st Pioneers. With the cutting came a story about the incident by Jack, which I know the editor of Pioneer News will use when he has space available.

Jack reports that he and Jack Collis together with wives, had recently attended Bluey Miller's 80th birthday. At 71, Jack says he is only a strip of a lad compared to some of the older mates. He concludes by saying "Tigers — great in eighty eight".

• **TOM CHEETHAM** 2/1 Adamstown writes in and states he is looking forward to the receipt of the 2/1st Pioneer History book. Tom is going overseas in July/August and sends regards to all Pioneers.

• **JOHN WILLIAMS** 2/2 of Sefton with a welcome donation and apologies for not being able to attend the Wagga reunion. His wife is still in a nursing home, which makes trips away impossible.

John mentions that he recently heard from Melbourne that Major Ray Meagher 2/2 had passed away and been given a State Funeral, but no further details. Our kind regards to you, Colonel, and we thank you for your good wishes.

• **ANNE SMITH** on behalf of her mother, Mrs Mabel Hannon (widow of "Lofty" 2/1) sends a donation to the News and thoughts for Anzac Day. Anne sends best wishes to all and a special hello to Stan Nicholson, their old milkman.

• **MAVIS HALL** Emu Plains, daughter of the late Mrs L. O'Malley Wood, with a letter of thanks for still sending her the Pioneer News. Mavis also passed on the news that Jack Armour (our former bandmaster) had been a resident of the units where Mavis also lives and informed us that he had recently passed away.

Thank you for your letter, Mavis, and we are sure you and your family will be pleased with the history of the 2/1 when finally published.

• **NEVILLE O'CONNOR** 2/2 of Tintenbar (formerly Empire Vale), with his booking for the Wagga reunion. Apologised for not writing earlier, but had been flood bound after a trip to Glen Innes to see Betty's new grandson. Congratulations, Bet.

Nev said in the "big wet" they had thirty two inches of rain in a week in their area. Places around Woodburn were devastated and could not be believed unless seen in person. However, Nev's property "Athenry" had little damage, only to their soya bean crops.

Nice to hear from you, Nev, and look forward to seeing you both in Wagga in September.

• **TOM O'LOUGHLIN** 2/2 from Essendon Vic. with booking for reunion in Wagga and looking forward to another great weekend. All the best to both you and Nancy, Tom, and keep well.

• **BOB GINNANE** 2/2 of Leumeah is also a "starter", with Nell, for the Wagga reunion, and wrote to say they would be staying with John and Daph Dowd 2/2, who reside in Wagga.

• **JOHN HUNT** 2/1 of New Farm Qld per pen or good wife Mollie Jean, with news that they had arrived home safely after Anzac Day. Had called to see Jack and Jean Bertram on way through Newcastle and also to visit Jock Russell at the nursing home.

Max and Peg Herron would like to thank you both for meeting them at Roma Street Station on their recent visit to Expo, also for the lovely drive up to Mt Glorious. A great view and a wonderful lunch.

• **ALLAN CRUTE** 2/1 of Woolgoolga (per pen of wife Beulah) are also on the list for Wagga and wrote to offer help to the organising committee, if needed. Many thanks, Beulah, and we'll keep your kind offer in mind.

Both have been busy house painting and entertaining their family from Parkes. These grandchildren sure are great time-wasters, aren't they and certainly keep you on your toes.

• **LARRY ROBSON** 2/1 of Waratah with his application for Wagga, also one for Jack Bertram. All the best to you both and looking forward to seeing you in September.

• **JOE ROBERTSON** 2/2 of Findon, S.A. with his subs for 1988 and news that their combined Pioneer Anzac March although not numerically strong (16 members) was enthusiastic. A reunion luncheon was held at the City Hotel and a good day was had by all. During the year Joe had the good fortune to catch up with Clemm McDonald and later on, at the home of Geoff Lloyd, with Russ Harrison. It was good to see Russ again and to have a chat to Clemm over a few glasses of West End.

• **SAM GARDINER** Sig. Pln 2/1 of Oak Flats, sent along a Moresby News Sheet and a photo of the Sigs taken in Borneo. Many thanks, Sam, and there's no doubt we were a group of "good looking young fellas" in those days. Have made a note of your appointment at Prince of Wales in July and passed information on to our Welfare Chairman.

• **CLIFF (Andy) ANDERSON** 2/1, formerly of Shoal Bay and temporarily staying at Rochedale in Queensland with his daughter until a move later on to Cleveland. The aches and pains have caught up with Cliff lately, and he thinks the warmer climate in Brisbane might be beneficial.

The news will be forwarded to your new address as requested and make sure you notify us after your move to Cleveland.

Cliff sends his good wishes to 13 Pln C. Coy, especially his faithful corporal, Bill Wright, and your subs will be passed on to our treasurer. Hope the Queensland weather lives up to expectations and does the trick.

Well, that concludes the Mail Bag for this issue. Anzac Day was a real success, many old faces plus a few new ones all go to making the day one to remember. Nephew Terry Bird was our barman again with great help from Geoff Finlay, Gordon's son, and believe me they worked, especially for the first couple of hours. The catering was first class and plenty of it and I don't think there was any complaint. My football team has my hair going quite grey, one minute they're worldbeaters, next minute they wouldn't beat Balgowlah Boys. Your team's going pretty well, Coatsey, but I still think that my lottery ticket is safe from Collis.

Joan and I spent a week at Expo and can recommend same to any of you that are giving it thought. It is definitely the greatest exhibition of foreign countries that I have ever seen but it makes you tired. See you all at Wagga in September, I hope.

So long for now,

— LAKEY

SUCCESSFUL ROSE EXHIBITION

Well-known and popular Pioneer, Jack ("Bluey") Moxey, ex-sergeant B Coy, achieved wonderful success with his roses during the month of April at two shows.

Firstly he was an outstanding exhibitor at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and the results in the Rose Section of the horticultural display, as recorded in the Sydney Morning Herald of the 4th April, disclose that he received six champion ribbons in a variety of classes.

Secondly, he was most successful at the 8th World Rose Convention held in the Holmes Building, University of Sydney, 9-14th April, under the auspices of the World Federation of Rose Societies. The prizes won by Jack at this marvellous spectacular and international rose show were highlighted by the award of Reserve Grade Champion of the Show. Particularly was comment made by the viewing rose lovers of his beautiful specimen called "Red Queen".

Such a high standard of performance could not have been achieved without a sincere dedication of purpose and a keen eye for beauty.

Congratulations "Bluey" and good wishes for future successes.

— STEVE CLARKE

LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed my fees for the renewal subscription to your Newsletter.

You may be interested to know that late last year I made my second crossing of the Kokoda Trail. During this trip, I spent two days at the dry lake beds at Myola, where we investigated the wreckage of an American P40 Kittyhawk that had crashed on the mountain behind the airstrip in late 1942. Apparently the pilot survived with a "smashed up face" and after treatment at the CCS at Myola — "walked" back to Moresby. Due to the inaccessibility of the wreck site, it has remained virtually untouched with the paintwork on the wings etc. almost "brand new"; 50 calibre ammunition was scattered all around and all six machine guns are still in the wings. It was a fascinating experience. I spent a few days touring around Port Moresby after completing the Kokoda Trail and then spent another week touring around Madang on the north coast.

I have tentative plans to do another trip later on this year, depending on work commitments and finance, either Milne Bay, the Kokoda Trail or across Shaggy Ridge. I'm not sure which one yet.

Yours sincerely, GREG KNIGHT

SICK PARADE

Cec Hart 2/1 was driven up to Concord Hospital from Shoalhaven Heads early in April for a check up. However, all seemed to be well and he was soon home again.

Since then, Gordon Finlay has been in the area and called to see Cec, who expects to shortly return to Concord for further tests.

Jack Coates 2/1 was in Concord during May and wrote to thank Gordon Finlay and Vic Whiteley for their visit to see him.

Jack said treatment, as usual, was wonderful but the old story, too many "bods" for beds available. He will be in plaster for nearly 3 months — a new process in hip bone graft in ancient fractures, and fuse the lot — but not recommended.

Bill Wright 2/1 was also in Concord recently, and from reports to hand, was due to be discharged about the middle of June.

WAGGA REUNION

17th-18th SEPTEMBER, 1988

Details of the reunion were published in the March issue of "Pioneer News" and the only change to the programme is the cancellation of the march. Members will now form up at the Soldiers Memorial in Bayliss Street at 5.00 p.m. on Saturday, 17th September. Medals to be worn.

Motel and caravan park bookings are still available. There will be no further notification and applications close on 31st August, 1988.

Post application form, with deposit of \$30 for booking to Mrs P. Herron, 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills 2209. Phone: (02) 759 5491.

CUT OUT — FILL IN PARTICULARS — WAGGA REUNION

Surname Known Name
Ladies name Phone Unit
Address:

ACCOMMODATION — if required to be booked by Association, insert number of people for each night alongside place of accommodation.

OWN ACCOMMODATION — if booking own fill in number of people and nights in panel alongside and state place of staying.

ATTENDANCE: Insert number of people attending: Car Train

Reunion Dinner Camp Picnic Lunch Smorgasbord

	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Hotel				
Motel				
On-Site				
Van Site				

PIONEER NEWS

Phone: 759 5491

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Editors: R. LAKE & M. HERRON

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Welfare: MAX LAW. Ph: 528 6887

BLACK CROW REUNION — WAGGA 1988

From South Australia to Queensland members began arriving from Thursday on, to once again join in celebrating friendships made some 40 years ago. Friday dawned fine, but unfortunately as the day progressed, it started to chill up and then rained very heavily.

There were fewer members this visit than last time owing to the passing of our older mates, Expo and sickness. Harry and Glad Hamer were all packed and ready when Glad had a fall that made them housebound. Snow Vickery landed in hospital, as did Max Law, and our old 2/2 mate Reg Armstrong cancelled at the last minute with flu. Brian and Betty Kybert had to also pull out at the last minute with sickness. John Gibson was in hospital and Ena Garnon not well enough to travel. Apologies were also received from Betty Creasy (a regular attendee) and John Vodicka, through illness. To those on the sick list, we hope you have all improved and are out of hospital.

MINI-REUNION, FRIDAY 7 p.m.

Members began assembling at the RSL, Wagga, where our ladies Renee Wood, Marea Mackay, Ruth Rhodes and Mary Lloyd issued name tags and membership cards and Vic and Peg Whiteley collected fees for the dinner on Saturday night. Of course, everyone was trying to get in the first word before going off to the Bistro for tea. One fellow talked so much he missed out on his meal altogether and had to purchase a meal from a takeaway later that night. Bill Hoffman said he didn't realise it was so late. Heard Mary Lloyd say some people had nine courses. (I know someone who had three sweets.) However, about 10.30 p.m. the groups began to disperse back to their billets for a good night's rest. Although one person had been to the RSL four times that day, he still got lost on the fifth occasion. There was no sig. wire running from the motel to the club. You can't win 'em all, Max.

As Saturday morning was overcast, most stayed indoors out of the wind. Charlie Kerr from Qld, with Bill Wright, Bill Hoffman and Jack Bertram as driver visited the Fisheries to view the Murray Cod. After lunch, the Southern N.S.W. and Victorian mob were glued to the television (Melbourne Aussie Rules Grand Final) until it was time to get ready for the wreath laying. One Newcastle member headed for the "noddies". Don't know who he had with him, but he said they came out square. Is that right, Glido?

WREATH LAYING

As the hour of 5 p.m. approached members, wives and friends began gathering in the vicinity of the Memorial where members of the 1st Recruit Training Battalion were ready for the ceremony. Overhead an ominous dark cloud appeared ready to explode, and with one minute to go it did just that — emptying itself upon us. However, it only delayed things for about ten minutes, and Ray Harris then called the troops to form up. The banner party — Jack Tooker 2/1 and Russ Harrison 2/2 — assumed their positions, one either side of the Memorial.

At this point the R.S.M. of the Training Battalion, W.O. Garry Sutherland, to the accompaniment of the muffled drums, posted the Catafalque party. This done, Ray Harris called the parade to attention and the Royal Anthem was played. He then called on our Association President to explain proceedings and introduce the two Chaplains — Greg Flynn, R.C., and Angus McDonald, O.D., who were to carry on with the service. Following the hymn, prayer and address, wreaths were then laid by the President of the RSL Sub-Branch, Max Morris, the CO of the 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Col. Ian Ahearn (assisted by his Adjutant Capt. Ron Bossink) and for the the Association, President Bill Jollie. During the laying of the wreaths and the reciting of the Ode by Bill Jollie, a lone piper played the Lament. Following the usual moment's silence,

the bugler played the Last Post and then Reveille.

The parade stood at ease while President Bill Jollie expressed appreciation to the members of the Training Battalion, and then were called to attention while the National Anthem was played and the Catafalque party stood down.

This part of the weekend was under the direction of Gordon Finlay, and on behalf of all present I think it was the best we have had, and the only time we have had both Chaplains present. Thank you Gordon. It was then off to the RSL for dinner.

REUNION DINNER

A few pre-dinner drinks soon loosened the tonsils, Jack Collis had a puncture, left his good wife's walking stick behind and locked the keys in the boot — then tried to blame Gwen. Bill Hoffman left his ticket on the counter of the booking office and wondered why he couldn't get on the train — got to Wagga and thought he'd lost his luggage. (I thought you were a non-drinker, Bill.) Jack Kerslake's hips okay, but now it's his knees. (Marj, he only wants you to do all the driving.) Nobby Felton arrived looking fit and relaxed, probably made Jean do the driving too. Both Jack and Nobby probably thought they had done enough during the war years. Vic Whiteley told me he had to lose a few kilos. Reg Ward — our nine-mile sniper — making sure everyone had a membership card. Thanks Reg, and I know you are a great help to our Hon. Sec. It's all these little jobs at these functions which help to make them a success, and to each and every person we say many thanks.

At last it was time for Max Herron to call the troops to mess and Jack Collis was the usher. Once everyone had worked out their groups, Max extended a welcome to all and handed over to our MC for the evening, the inimitable Jack (Glido) Griffiths. Jack then proceeded to introduce the people at the head table — President of Wagga RSL Sub-Branch Max Morris, Bill and Phyl Jollie and his wife, Esme Griffiths. Jim Field was called on to say Grace and Jack Bertram to propose the toast to the Queen. The entree was then served.

Later Bill Jollie proposed the toast to the guests which was responded to by Max Morris who, apart from being President of the Sub-Branch, was an ex-veteran of Korea and the Malay conflict. Max gave us a bit of a shock when he advised that the Federal Government was hoping to save many millions of dollars from veterans this year. (I heard a few say, we'll see about that.) However, thanks for your address, Max. After the main course was served, Bill Jollie recited the Ode to the Fallen.

"Griff the Elder" then displayed a badge made during the siege of Tobruk by the Pioneer Platoon of the 2/1, and given to him by the late Norm Neal for safe keeping. (I now find that there is a copy of this in the Pioneer Book.) He also made announcements re the Sunday outing. Sweets were served and then it was down to talk — and can they talk.

Then it happened — the very first copy of "The Pioneers", hot off the press, was presented by Bill Jollie to Peg Herron (Mrs Pioneer) for the time and effort she had put into the history, and the presentation was acknowledged by a standing ovation. We all say — thank you Peg.

A special tribute was made to the eight original 2/2 Pioneers in attendance — Don Hose, Stan Fraser, Tom O'Loughlin, Tom Gore, Harry Youens, "Bluey" Kelly, Ken Robertson and Lionel Anderson, who had all been prisoners-of-war. This tribute was

carried with acclamation.

One table enjoying themselves were Ron and Jan Callaghan (Ron was awake this time Gillian), Bill Tasker and Win (don't know whether it was Jan or Win who did all the driving for the weekend), Rita and Noel Trefoni — still asking whereabouts of Pepper and Crooks — and Marie and Ted Jenson. Talking of Ivan Pepper, Max Herron met him in the park at Goulburn on Max's trip home from the reunion — Ivan and his wife were on their way to Canberra on a bus tour.

Close handy to the head table Peg and Vic Whiteley, Bob and Joan Lake, Marj and Jack Kerslake. Gordon and Olive Finlay — great to see Olive looking so well, but heard a whisper that she may have overdone things a little, as she retired early on Sunday night, and Geoff and Enid Robinson made up the group.

Over in the corner John and Mollie Jean Hunt from Queensland, they are off to Canada about this time next year, Dick and Heather Marshall, Tom and Renee Wood, Chris and Marea Mackay and Brian Neiberding.

Relaxing after a big job Max and Peg Herron, George and Joyce Walker, John and Kathleen Tooker, Mary Lloyd, Ruth Rhodes and Reg Ward. It's nice to see these ladies in attendance and enjoying themselves. Gordon and Gwen Bell were seated with Jim and Kath Field, Dudley Stanforth, John McKnight, Beryl Byrne, Bill Wright and Bill Hoffman, at least Bill got his meal this time. Our old friend Jack (Split the Wind) Pearce and Val were keeping an eye on Charlie Kerr. Jack and Norma Price, Merv and Daph Howarth and the Woolgoolga wanderers, Beulah and Allan Crute (apparently they had been visiting the family at Parkes). Fred and Jean Wheaton, Toss and Bill Robertson, Ted (Nobby) Felton and Jean and Ray Harris, whom I understand started out in 1939-40 training the day boys at Liverpool. Ray tried to join the Pioneers, but the CO of the Training Btn wouldn't release him as he was an instructor. Ray joined the AIF and finished up in the 2/2 Pioneers.

The next table were quietly enjoying themselves — Alec and Jean George, Clive and Betty Harris (Betty looks well, must be that Aberdeen air), Alby and Eileen Brown, Irene and Clancy Scholes with daughter Wendy trying to keep the old bloke in control, a bit hard at times Wendy.

Catching up on news were Tom and Nancy O'Loughlin, Harry Youens, Dick Ryan, George and Nell Kelly, Don Hose, Stan Fraser, Evelyn Booth and Jack Morgan. One group of 2/2nd lads and lassies were Bob and Nell Ginnane, Russ and Rona Harrison, John and Daph Dowd, Clemm McDonald, Norma Lowe, Nev and Betty O'Connor. He's a hard man to keep under control, Bet, but he certainly keeps the boys on their toes. Well done, Nifty.

This group were more subdued. Tom McNaughton, Roy and Phyll Swanson, Bluey and Phil Hucker. Bluey reckons the pokies don't pay — where do you think Keating gets his taxes from — but they both said they'd be at the next reunion. Also in this group were Keith and Marj Boyle — Marj said they enjoyed Dubbo and meeting people and weren't going to let a wheel chair keep them from coming — great to see you both, Joe Kyffin and Ivor Garnon.

And now to the final group — Jack and Lex Coates (Lakey's Balmain mate), Jack and Gwen Collis, Jack and Maisie Kempnich, Doug and Maureen Waters, all the way from South Aussie. During the evening found out that Maureen was the telephonist at the Millaa Millaa exchange during the war. It's a long way from SA to that place, but it was great that you could finally get to meet the young

(Continued on next page)

BLACK CROW REUNION

(Continued from page one)

tella's mates. Don't make it the last, as you'll enjoy them better each time around — and finally Jack Bertram and self. As it was getting on towards 11.30 p.m., the gathering began to break up and return to their billets to get ready for the Sundays' outing.

SUNDAY — KAPOOKA CAMP

Most people were ready early, although the day dawned wet and cold. Unfortunately Bill Hoffman had to pay a visit to the hospital to have drops in an eye infection, which resulted in Charlie Kerr arriving late out at Kapooka Camp.

As the weather put paid to an outside barbecue, arrangements were made by the Army for us to venture out to the Uranquinty Hotel and use their beer garden — and what a set-up. As mentioned earlier the weather was cold and it was great to be welcomed by a roaring log fire on entering the beer garden, surrounded by tables and chairs. The owners of the pub, Salvino and his wife, Sandra, made us very welcome.

As I said before, Charlie Kerr was one of the last to leave the Camp, and Joe Kyffin told Charlie to follow him as he knew the way. Charlie reckoned Joe must have thought he had a Zero chasing him — they missed the turn-off, so Joe does a U-turn across the medium strip and off back the other way. By the time our Charles had time to do anything, the Victorian car was seen disappearing in the opposite direction. All that mob drive that way, Charlie.

The people staying at the hotel were catered for by our ladies, with Reg Ward doing the cooking. Again thanks to those who did the work. A grand time was had by all and by 3 p.m. the gathering started to break up and head back to their billets to prepare for our final do at night.

SUNDAY NIGHT — FAREWELL DINNER

From about 5 p.m. onwards they began arriving at the RSL. At approximately 6.15 members were called to the Pacific Lounge for a smorgasbord tea and anyone who went hungry can only blame themselves, or couldn't stop talking long enough to eat. George Walker did a good job in organising this part of the show.

To all who were in any way associated with the organisation of the reunion, we who attended must say a very big thank you.

After dinner it was up to the main lounge where oldtime dancing was held and our Association was invited to join in. As a matter of fact, one Pioneer lady won a bottle of champagne. I wonder if Maureen Waters still had it unopened when she got home to South Australia.

Like all good things, as the time approached 11 p.m. goodbyes became the order of the day, with the old saying "see you somewhere sometime". Some suggestions have been made for the next Country reunion, which will probably be in two years time — the 50th anniversary of the formation of the two units.

To all Pioneers everywhere, we wish you good health for the remainder of '88, and Seasons Greetings for 1989. Till then, keep smiling.

— LARRY ROBSON, Reporter

MAX LAW HOSPITALISED

On Monday, 5th September, Max was admitted to Sutherland Hospital for a relatively simple operation on his hand. Whilst recuperating it was found he had a heart complaint, and it was necessary to transfer him to St George Hospital for major surgery.

At the time of writing (20th October) Max is still in hospital recovering from the operation but is expected to be discharged very soon. He has been constantly visited by many Pioneers, and we wish him a speedy recovery.

"THE PIONEERS"

The History Committee apologise for the delay in producing the book, which was posted out on the 20th September. The Committee have received many letters and phone calls in praise of the book and thank those who have been in touch.

For those who missed out, there are still some copies available. Contact the Secretary and he will arrange postage. You will not be disappointed.

VALE — BOB DIXON

The Association was saddened by the passing of Bob Dixon on 21st August 1988 whilst in hospital. Bob had been plagued with a lung problem for the past two years and had suffered greatly in the last few months.

The funeral at Rookwood Crematorium on 24th August was attended by twenty two members and their ladies.

Bob was born of English parents and after living at Goulburn until the age of five, moved to Merrylands. He attended Greystanes Public School and then on to Granville Technical School. He trained as a carpenter and then worked as a millwright. After the war he worked for himself as a builder.

The eulogy at the service was read by Bill Jollie as follows:

Bob joined the 2/2 Pioneers at Kapooka, Wagga in 1942 and in July 1943, sailed for New Guinea where he saw action at Nadzab, Lae and through the Ramu Valley actions to Shaggy Ridge.

Upon returning to Australia, the 2/2 Pioneers spent twelve months on jungle training before once again sailing to serve in the attack on Tarakan. Some months later, they were once again in action at Balikpapan in Borneo. During these actions, Bob served with distinction and carried out his duties as a Sergeant in a splendid manner.

After the war, Bob kept alive his interest in the 2/2 Pioneer Btn by regularly attending their reunions at St Peters and assisted in arranging the yearly church parades held by the late Padre Claughton at Guildford, Campsie and Leichhardt.

In 1972, Bob was elected Vice President of the 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Btn Association, and in 1976 became Social Secretary.

For outstanding service to the Association, Bob was awarded Life Membership in 1985 and was also elected as President of the Association — a position he held until April this year.

Bob's passing was a sad blow to our Association and sincere sympathy was extended to his wife Jean and family.

In a letter to the Secretary, Jean has expressed her sincere thanks to all those members and their ladies who attended the funeral and those who sent flowers cards and letters. She greatly appreciated the kind thoughts of so many people.

VALE — BOB MCGREGOR

The sudden passing of Bob McGregor (2/1) on 31st August was a shock to all Pioneers. At the time he was in hospital at the Lady Davidson Home at Turramurra.

The funeral service was conducted at the Metropolitan Funeral Parlours, Bankstown, and was well attended by Pioneers and their ladies.

President Bill Jollie read the eulogy to the large gathering as follows:

Bob joined the 2/1st Pioneer Btn at Greta in June, 1940, and after training, sailed on the Johan De Witt in October 1940, for the Middle East, where he served in action at places like Derna, Bardia, Benghazi and then nine months in the Siege of Tobruk.

Upon returning to Australia, the unit had a brief stay in Queensland before sailing for New Guinea where Bob served at Ueberi, Ioribaiwa and the Kokoda Trail.

After jungle training back in Australia in 1943-44, the unit sailed for Balikpapan in Borneo where Bob served out the remaining days of the war.

Bob kept alive his interest in the 2/1 Pioneer Btn after the war by joining the Association as a Committeeman in 1958, holding an Executive position as Vice-President from 1960-1965. In 1966 he became Social Secretary and held that position for ten years.

In 1976, Bob was made a Life Member of the Association for his outstanding service over a period of twenty one years.

It was a sad blow to the Association to lose a friend like Bob and to his wife Joyce and family we extend our heartfelt sympathy.

PIONEER NEWS

To ease the work load on the Secretary who is also co-editor of the Pioneer News, the number of issues per year has been reduced from four to three. It will be posted out in March, July and November.

BILL JOLLIE — LIFE MEMBER

On Saturday, 17th September, at the Wagga Reunion Dinner, President Bill Jollie was presented with his Life Membership Certificate by Jack Griffiths, ably assisted by Bill Robertson, who read the citation as follows:

"To Bill Jollie for twenty one years of honorary service of an outstanding nature to the Association, thereby qualifying for Life Membership."

Bill joined the Management Committee in 1967 and in 1968 was elected Vice President, a position he held with distinction for twenty years, until he took over the position of President of the Association in 1988.

In addition to this, Bill has acted as Marshal for many years at the Anzac Day March for the 2/1st Pioneers and has been instrumental in obtaining a band for the unit each year resulting in a very well turned out parade.

The Life Certificate was presented in recognition of his many years of valuable and faithful service, voluntarily given to the Association. Congratulations, Bill, from all Pioneers.

W.A. PIONEERS MEETING

Len Preedy 2/2 is doing a wonderful job keeping together all the Pioneers residing in Western Australia, and has been going through RSL files in an endeavour to obtain the names and addresses of new members.

Their last meeting was held on 15th July and although the weather was not too kind, they still had a good roll-up as follows: Sid Abercrombie, Alby Machin, Jack and Jean Monger, Bob and Norma Sefton, Curly Warne, Jack Murray, John Ure, Lin Wilson, Owen Heron, Bill Scott, Norm Le Cornu, Len and Joy Preedy. Apologies were received from Harry and Gwen Fitzgerald and Jack Crispin.

The next meeting will be held on 18th November, 1988.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Max,

Could you convey via the Pioneer News, our deep appreciation to the members of the Association who attended Bob's memorial service at Bankstown on 5th September. Our family were honoured by their presence and their understanding sympathy.

Special thanks to Tommy Walsh, son of dear friend Pat, who stood guard of honour in full military uniform. To President, Bill Jollie, who spoke so wonderfully of Bob's war service and work on the Committee. To "old mates" Gordon Finlay, Vic Whiteley and their wives, Bill Tasker and others — so many.

Thanks also to the members who helped make Bob's last week so memorable by their visits to Lady Davidson Hospital — the cards, the phone calls, and the wonderful support we received. May I say that I felt so proud to be a small part of the Association.

Thank you all for your kindness — you helped Bob "pass over" in the glory he so richly deserved — I am deeply appreciative.

— JOYCE MCGREGOR and FAMILY

VALE — COL SHEA

Col Shea "C" Coy 2/2nd, passed away at Royal Melbourne Hospital on July 27th, 1988 after suffering a severe heart condition for many years. He was buried at the Memorial Park Cemetery, North Altona, Melbourne, on 29th July.

In his early days and all throughout his life, he was very interested in bike riding and was a member of the Footscray Professional Cycling Club.

He was elected to the Committee in 1972 and served as Secretary of the Victorian Association from 1974 until 1985, in which capacity he was held in the highest of esteem, but due to ill health had to retire from that position, but was still on the Committee prior to his passing.

His funeral was attended by a large congregation and a number of Pioneers — Bill Condon, Joe White, Tom McNaughton, Clint Barnes, Bob Evans, Jack Williams and Tom Gore who conducted the RSL service.

The condolences of the Association members were passed on to Mrs Frances Shea and her family.



from the MAIL BAG

Editor: BOB LAKE



The last issue of Pioneer News for 1988, I hope that you have all received your copies of the history by now and that they have lived up to your expectations. As remarked in early editions of the News a lot of work by the editorial committee was handled and all did a great amount of work, especially time was given to the project. Our special thanks are expressed to Peg Herron and Peg Whiteley for the amount of typing given so willingly.

- **DON ANDERSON** 2/1 Merimbula per pen of wife Dora with a special mention about the book that is answered by itself, remarks that Don enjoys receiving the News and gets a lot of pleasure out of it.
- **PHIL BAWDEN** 2/1 Victoria with a sub to the treasurer, a change of address which has been noted on the cards and an apology for not attending Wagga, wishing all the best to all those who were able to make the trip.
- **BERT BEATON** 2/2 Victoria with a change to their address per pen of wife Olive also, an apology for non attendance at Wagga. Bert still works the farm with no thought of retirement as yet and as they run up to shearing time from September makes rush trips out of the question. Wishes one and all a happy reunion and prays for fine weather for us.
- **VAL BLACK** widow of "Dora" with a letter for the News, hopes to continue to receive same as she enjoys reading of the doings. Had Peter and Dot Priest with her for Anzac Day and enjoyed the company. Also at a "Rats" lunch had the company of Toby and Vera Hale, Dave Burt also present. Still, getting used to living alone but is very fortunate that she has some very good neighbours which helps a lot. Had Al's ashes placed in the Lions Club Wall at Kyogle so he is still at home.
- **TOM CHEETHAM** 2/1 Adamstown with a short note with a Tom Morrow sketch as promised and requesting that we hold his history until he returns from overseas, should have received same by now Tom.
- **RON CLARK** 2/1 Kingsford with a sub for the treasurer and expressing regrets of Gordon Osborn. Closes with best wishes to all.
- **JACK COLLIS** 2/1 Umina with two letters, first one remarking about Queensland and the fact that both Bill Wright and Bluey Miller were up in Queensland for a couple of weeks. Quotes that it could not have been the weather as the weather at Umina has been fantastic. Collis has already purchased the lottery ticket that he lost, might add that his buying of tickets is about as good as his football picking which is no bloody good, as the ticket won exactly nothing. Reports that Jack Coates has had his arm out of plaster and said it felt good. Ivor Garnon still looks all right but his health has made him give up the Vice President's job at the Sub Branch. Jack was also looking forward to seeing son William after war games with the Yanks and Canadians around Pearl Harbour and was on his way to the Cook Islands, expecting a letter or two to report how things went. Jack's second letter was after our reunion at Wagga and he couldn't pinpoint any one part that he liked better than the other. Jack and Gwen made a call at Cowra on the way home, visited the War Cemetery and the Gardens, visited the site of the breakout and was very impressed with everything. Also called on Cliff Secombe who has had several eye operations over the last few weeks and has to see the specialist again in about a month's time. While on his trip he had a camera and took some very good photos for which I say thank you Jack. I received five photos but there were also photos for Max and Peg Herron also a couple for Mary Lloyd and Ruth Rhodes. Many thanks on behalf of all of us Jack. Don't think I fancy blood and pumpkin Jack, what's your next best on offer?

- **GEORGE DOBSON** 2/2 Victoria with a brief note informing the Secretary of a new address, noted and entered George.
- **JIM GRAY** 2/1 Primbee with a letter that on a recent trip to Sydney by the train he returned to Port Kembla instead of Wollongong where he imbibed a couple of beers at the Club before bussing it out to Primbee. Not like you Jim. However on entering the foyer of same he glanced at the Honour Roll and the first name he saw was Cliff Thirlby passed on on the 12.12.87. Well, Jim for your knowledge Tiny Thirlby was in the Anti Tank Platoon and above all a member of the battalion football team, played inside centre to Fred Wheaton and did the goal kicking for the team. Now a special message to all from Jim Gray, he would like to see as many at the forthcoming Anzac Day as have ever attended, realise that the sands of time are creeping in but you don't have to march if you are not up to it, just turn up at Redfern at about 11.00 a.m. That is a very good plug Jim as you say the ball is at their feet, all they have to do is kick the bloody thing.
- **MABEL HANNON** 2/1 widow of Lofty with a short note enclosing a sub for the treasurer and the News that she watched the Victorian march on television and thought of us all in Sydney. The letter was written by Anne Smith, Lofty and Mabel's daughter and she tells of a nice couple of weeks at Merimbula. Anne also sends her regards to Stan Nicholson, her old milkman. I'll see he gets the message, Anne.
- **JACK HEMI** 2/1 Caloundra with a request for information from the Secretary. Max has written to Jack giving all the information and advice on what to do regarding his request, also has his name on the mailing list and enclosed back copies of Pioneer News.
- **CLIFF HILL** 2/1 Murwillumbah with a letter to the Secretary requesting enrolment on the Mailing List and also a history book. Max has posted you previous copies of the News, and by this time you will have received the book and this paper.
- **RICHARD HOOK** 2/1 Lambton with a newsy letter at my request for a little more information of himself. Richard was an original of the unit under Gordon Osborn. Was judged medically unfit for tropics after New Guinea and spent the last bit of service on escort duty. His family is grown up and his health is reasonable with a little arthritis and failing eyesight and is looking forward to the history that it might jog his memory with regards to many names. Thanks Richard, it is a pleasure to welcome you aboard.
- **IDA HORDER** widow of Vic, with an apology for lack of writing. Ida has not been very well these last few months and she hopes we will overlook her neglect, have no worries Ida, just hurry up and get well.
- **JOHN HUNT** 2/1 New Farm with a little information on John Hicks. He was an original of the battalion and after Tobruk went to the old and bold. He was 88 in August and his wife has been dead some time. John's request to place him on the Mailing List is never in doubt. Both John and Phil Cramsie visited him at the Nursing Home and hope to get out again sometime. Also had a letter from Mollie Hunt, she left off writing until the book arrived. It was a great weekend in Wagga with Sunday one of the happiest days yet. It was quite a trick just watching people's faces as they walked in and saw the big log fire. They arrived home via a tow truck, had trouble ten minutes from home but all fixed now. Mollie and John are off to Expo and she writes, "I hope some of these Victorians are on their way back. Three out of four cars are Victorians — all terrible drivers, Mollie's words, not mine. Look out for shrapnel next issue Mollie."
- **TED JENSON** 2/1 Doonside with a letter

congratulating the Association on the result of the Wagga Reunion, both enjoyed themselves, everything went off well, as he quotes "as always". Also received his copy of the book and offers congratulations to "All who gave time and effort to produce a wonderful effort", his verdict a winner on all counts.

- **FRED KILLEN** 2/1 Warners Bay with a short note enclosing his subs to the treasurer and the information that his mate Dave Strahley of Inverell had passed away after a long illness and that his wife Betty also passed away a couple of weeks later. Both Fred and his wife are keeping fairly well and still able to get a couple of games of bowls in each week.
- **CHARLES KERR** 2/1 Maryborough with a sub for the treasurer and the news that he still enjoys a game of bowls with a bit of gardening and fishing when the weather permits. Mixed success as a bowler but doesn't stop him from enjoying same. In March of this year he undertook a fortnight's bowling tour when he visited Brunswick Heads, Newcastle, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Guyra and Inverell with a mixed group. The tour was arranged that they play a day then sight see the next, however, the tour was interrupted a bit by rain. 15" of rain fell in the period so a lot of bowls were played on soggy greens until they reached Inverell where the weather brightened up a bit. Still the pokies kept them entertained a bit. Anzac Day was spent at Maryborough, glorious weather and at the March met Toby Palin so there was 100% attendance of Pioneers present on parade. In June and July he spent 6 weeks on the Northern Rivers with stays at Lismore, Grafton and Coffs where he called on the Crutes and tried his luck at fishing, disaster, as the river was blood red with mud. Came back to Brisbane where he caught up with son Fraser and wife Lelani, two grandchildren and spent a week at Expo with them. He enjoyed it so much that he hopes to go again before it closes in October. Glad to hear of Sam Gardiner after all this time and sends a special hello to all the members of the Sig Platoon.
- **BILL KNIGHT** son of Ken 2/2 with a note to say that he would like the book his father ordered before he died and he would like to thank all members for their kind thoughts at his father's passing. He also requests a copy of Pioneer News with his father's Last Post notice. Max Herron has already obliged with this and has also enrolled Bill on the Mailing List for future editions of same.
- **MRS DORRIE LONG** widow of the late Bob 2/1 Sutherland with a cheque for the treasurer and a little news plus a newspaper cutting of an ex Pioneer who now resides at Grenfell. Not much we can do with the photo Dorrie but we can write up a little on it. Pictured was Frank Gravenmaker who had celebrated his 84th Birthday with three of the members who are classified as the Senior Members of Grenfell RSL. Dorrie is still leading a pretty busy life, went on a legacy trip to Expo where she was kept going but three days were not long enough for her. Did go on a helicopter flight over Brisbane which she had always wanted to try and enjoyed every bit of it. Watched the March on Anzac Day on television, was interested to know that the commentators mentioned the Pioneers who assisted with the engines on the Johan De Witt on the ship going over to the Middle East as she proudly admits her husband Bob was one of those men who worked Down Below. Closes with best wishes to all Pioneers.
- **STAN MARSTON** of Hanwood with a cheque for the treasurer and thanking Max for the back issues of Pioneer News. Looking forward to receiving future copies and the history book.
- **JOE MOORE** 2/1 Warwick Farm with a cheque for the treasurer, looking forward to reading the

history and hopes to get along to Redfern Town Hall next Anzac Day.

• **OSSIE MCCURTAYNE** Lake Cathie with a change of address from Yeppoon to above, claims that he is still feeling the difference in the climate but thinks it will only take ten years or so to get used to it. Ossie is looking forward to receiving the book and thanks all who help to keep the News Sheet going. I may be dumb Ossie but what the hell does Lang May Yer Lum Reek which you finished your letter with mean?

• **PAT MCFARLANE** widow of Ron 2/1 with a sub for the treasurer and wishing all the very best.

• **JACK MCGREGOR** 2/2 Shortland with a sub for the treasurer and noticed in the July issue of Pioneer News that a new Cub reporter had joined the team namely Ray Harris and with a front page item too. Quotes: "It is interesting to note that after all these years names are resurfacing. Conveys best wishes to all and says Dot and he are holding together mainly due to their local mechanics (doctors).

• **ROY MCGREGOR** 2/2 Maitland with a cheque for the treasurer and an apology for not making it to Redfern in April. Will not be able to attend Wagga either with a bit of luck may make it to the big smoke next year. Appreciates receiving the News with the chit chat and reports and congratulates all who put it together.

• **TOM MCGUINNESS** 2/1 Laurieton with a change of address and adds congratulations for a fine roll up on Anzac Day also Bill Jollie on his position as president. Glad to hear that Phil Cramsie and Frank Gillian are as lively as ever. Will look you up when I next go to Laurieton, I have two sisters living there also Wally Parsons of the Sig Platoon also resides at the Caravan Park.

• **LEN PREEDY** 2/1 Western Australia with four letters to the Association mainly in searching for new members of the mob. Len's brother in law was going to Canberra so he said he would volunteer to check records. After 8 hours of search he came back with about 120 names and members from 1942 on. This whole business has gone on for years and only now is Len seeing some light in the tunnel. Len has had another trip to Cairns, looked up Frank Caulfield, had afternoon tea and a few tinnies, he told him about his first trip to Wagga and also some poems written by Rags McFadden, also sent him down to Trinity Beach looking for the old camp site but it didn't ring a bell, it's all changed so much. Sends along a few more names of prospective members but can't get addresses. Len has finally received the history and has started to read same from the nominal roll. He got two names and he sent them a Pioneer News but neither replied, he admits they are a fair way from Perth. Once again thanks for the efforts Len and may we wish you further success.

• **JACK PRICE** 2/1 Harden writes a few lines and enclosed a sub. Jack sees Wal Coggan, Jack Nilon and Albert Brown now and again and hears from John Gibson and Percy Fisk. Jack's letter was too late for the July paper and we know that he had a good time at Wagga and met a lot of old mates.

• **MICK PUNTON** 2/1 Padstow per pen of wife Margaret with the news that he has received the copy of history and is reading it with much interest. Also enclosed a cheque for subs and best wishes to all.

• **BERN REINERS** 2/1 Corryong with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that they were a bit sluggish at time of writing. Only arrived back from Expo last night and it was a long bus trip from Tamworth plus the fact that they had spent three days straight at Expo. The family of Bern have just arrived back from holidays in Italy last week so Bern and his wife will be going down to Melbourne for a few days and on the way home will call on the other side of the family. They apologise for not being at Wagga but this trip had been arranged for quite a while and while Wagga is only about 2½ hours away it would be the straw that broke the camel's back to attend.

• **ERIC "BOMBO" REYNOLDS** 2/1 Macksville with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that both are well at the moment. Anzac Day at Macksville was good, good march and the RSL put on a good lunch with jugs of beer. He could not see the city march as the television was playing up. Some months ago in Macksville they met Gordon and Olive Finlay and Eric says he received the very best of welcomes, when Gordon said Hello Bombo. Has had the family up for a visit and as usual he and

Joyce will be spending Christmas with them in Melbourne. They have not been to Sydney for over 12 months and when they did visit his brother for a few days took him to Bondi Junction where he was completely lost, changed so much since Bombo and Joyce went north. Closes with best wishes to all and the best for Christmas and the New Year.

• **CHARLES RICHARDSON** 2/1 Queensland with a letter to say he had received the history book and was very impressed with same. Congratulations to all concerned. Was also pleased to receive the card thanking him for the photos. Was extremely saddened to think that Gordon Osborn did not see the finished article.

• **RAY ROBBINS** 2/2 Boolarra with a sub for the treasurer and a thank you to Nev O'Connor for the information of the Association. Ray met up with Nev again this year in Ballina and caught up with most of the news. Ray was a driver in the 2/2 after they were reformed after Java. He lives in Boolarra Gippsland for the summer months anyway and usually heads north for the winter where the climate is a little more friendly. Closes with best wishes for the future.

• **BOB SEFTON** 2/2 Western Australia with a thank you for his enrolment in the Association. Bob and his wife Norma live 34 miles from Perth G.P.O. yet they are nine miles from the main road and nearest store and 2 miles from nearest neighbour. Both of them were a little awestruck at the tenacity of Len Preedy in tracking them down after all these years. His enquiry asking verification of service with the 2/2 started him thinking all all sorts of wild and wonderful fantasies. Both enjoyed the July Pioneer Reunion at Perth, their first visit to that city for over 4 years. Bob joined the battalion at Wondecla Mortar Platoon and was 19 years of age at cessation of hostilities. Also enclosed a cheque to the Association to help keep its head above water.

• **JACK SHEARMAN** 2/1 Kyogle per pen of wife Flo, with the news that they were planning a trip to Western Australia leaving Kyogle in August and if possible were going to be back in Wagga for the reunion. This was not to be as they did not make Wagga so what happened. They have a grandson in the Army at Perth and a niece living south of the city. Both are well and glad to report that his hip is a complete success this time.

• **NOEL SMITH** 2/1 Bathurst with a cheque for the treasurer and the following information. Noel joined the Battalion at Hill 69 after the desert and remained with us until discharged in Balikpapan 1946. Says he is sorry for taking so long to answer, but then said with a wife, 2 daughters and 8 grandchildren he is kept pretty much on his toes plus a trip to London for wife and self.

• **HARRY SPREADBOROUGH** 2/1 Alexandra Hills with a letter that he was writing and trying to watch the Olympic Games at the same time. Harry will not be attending any more reunions. At his last tests his leukemia has worsened and though it is still chronic, he can't be treated until it becomes acute with the result that he can drop off to sleep at the drop of a hat. Has given up driving, Jean has to take the wheel and to top it off, getting as deaf as a beetle and misses so much of what people say. Max and Peg had a wonderful time at Expo but were so busy they did not have time to contact you both so you do not need any apologies for not being available. Closes with best wishes to all and keep smiling Harry.

• **DUDLEY STANFORTH** Wagga with a cheque for the treasurer and the news that he hopes to go to Expo before the reunion, providing his back stands up. Has been giving him some trouble this last few weeks, hopes the warmer weather will improve it.

• **JIM STANNARD** 2/1 Macksville, a new member of the Association but an original of the 2/1 Pioneer Batt is now the ripe old age of 87. Looking forward to receiving the book (you must have it by now) and hoping that it will revive his memories, especially regards to names.

• **PHILIP TONKIN** 2/1 Engadine and now touring Australia by caravan and by some chance met up with Bert Woodhouse from Western Australia at Adelaide River and word came up of the history book. Henceforth a deposit for same and another letter Max posted to Phil back copies of Pioneer News for which he was very grateful. Phil joined the unit at Kairi and went with same to Borneo in the HQ 1 section. Was a bit diffident of contacting the

association because of his somewhat late arrival but hopes to catch up with more doings from here on. Says that both he and his wife are having a wonderful trip and they expect to be home at Engadine sometime in November.

• **RUTH VORBACH** daughter of Claude 2/1 deceased with a thank you letter to Max Law for his services at her father's funeral. As she writes she dislikes funerals as such but with the presence of Max Law and others it did not seem so impersonal and both her and mother and family appreciated same. Max Herron has also been in contact with Ruth.

• **MISS HEATHER WIGGINS** niece of Hugh Wiggins deceased, with a letter from Singapore. Heather is enjoying herself immensely in Singapore and been just about everywhere including Malaysia. They visited a border town Johor-Baru Singapore and Malaysia where they visited a Mosque, Sultans Palace, a rubber plantation and the Kranji War Memorial however a guided tour does not stop long enough, only allowed 20 minutes which was disappointing. The upkeep of the Cemetery is first class and the Wall of Names at Maidenhead consisting of some 24000 men who lost their lives. On her return from Singapore we received another letter from Heather with a donation and a thank you for continuing to post the News. She has taken the plunge and has applied for the Navy, hoping to be included in next year's intake. If she is successful, she will enter as a midshipman and progress to Lieutenant. That's a lot better than stoker or grease monkey or just an A.B. but we all wish you well, lots of luck and keep in touch.

• **BILL WRIGHT** 2/1 Wyoming with a note telling that his recent surgery at Concord was a success, but for recuperative reasons thought a couple of weeks in Brisbane would help. While in Brisbane he managed to contact Bill Gamble of C. Coy and as he says, the first contact since Borneo. Spent a pleasant four hours together, plenty of stories, numerous glasses of XXXX and generally enjoyed each other's company. Bill looks well although he has had two heart attacks and cataracts removed from both eyes. Saddened to hear of the passing of Snow Lloyd and Laurie Fitzhenry, both good soldiers and above that, good blokes.

• **NEV WOODHAM** 2/1 Queensland with a short note to convey a change of address and have taken up abode at Lake Sherrin Homes at Thornlands. Decided to go into something smaller, a unit not so much work, and they also intend doing a bit of travelling around. With little else to do might see him at the reunion.

• **NEVILLE JAKINS** son of Alf deceased, with a letter to the mob and an insert of one of his father's letters written from the Track. This letter or excerpts from it was published in the Woman's Weekly years ago. Quite a long letter, much too long to publish here, and to try and pick bits out would be to ruin the letter, however thank you for the effort and no doubt the description brings back memories. Neville and Judy had planned another trip north this time travelling up the centre but the best laid plans go astray so have had to put it off till next year. You would have received your book by now Neville, hope you enjoy it.

• **MARY LLOYD** our merry widow from Coogee wishes to thank Max and Peg for the wonderful weekend at Wagga. They provided the transport for Mary and Ruth Rhodes while Max was like the fiddler on the hot tin roof while the girls were shopping.

• **FRANCIS HEPBURN** per pen of wife Irene with a thank you for the history but for your information we will not be doing a book on the 2/2. They published one themselves some years ago, limited edition but there are none of these available. Sorry.

• **JACK DOLAGHAN** with a letter to Vic, apologising for his lateness with book money, but he had been very sick, looked set to hand in his chips, but he is okay again now. Had a couple of broken ribs plus bruised kidneys and now his fingers are closing up due to some disease, can hardly hold a pen. Long as you can still hold a tinny!

• **JACK RICHARDS** 2/1 Lennox Head with a donation for subs as he said, "It's some time since I struck gold, not a lot to say but closes with best to all from he and Olive.

• **JOYCE MARTIN** 2/1 for husband Jack with a mix up as to her address, its all been fixed up and for once it was our fault. Jack has not been very well

of late, has periods of the shakes and at time of writing, was in bed with flu. Both wish us all well at Wagga.

• **MRS ALICE JOHNS** sister of Tom Wall 2/1 Brickly with a letter to Vic, thanking him for the history and complimenting all on its production as she quotes, "Reading the book she feels that she is following Brickly and his mates and feeling some of the pride that keeps the mates still living so strongly held together".

• **BILL BRENNAN** 2/1 of North Altona was recently enrolled on our mailing list and sent back numbers of the Pioneer News. Bill wrote back to say he had read the lot and it brought back many happy memories. His wife, Teresa, said he brought out all the old army photos and relived those days with A. Coy, 2/1sts.

• **LES BRITT** 2/1 of Kogarah called on the secretary and thanked him for sending the back numbers of the News, which also recalled memories of his stay with 2/1 Pioneers.

• **ROY LEADBEATER** 2/2 of Rockhampton wrote in with a change of address and with the news that he had at last given up work. Nice to hear from you, Roy, and many thanks for the donation.

• **DES (TINY) FIELD** 2/1 of Gundagai sent along a generous donation to the Association with Bill Tasker, who saw Tiny on his way to Wagga for the reunion. Thank you, Tiny, and great to have news of you once again.

• **MRS DOREEN ELLISTON** widow of Phil 2/1 of Narooma, writes expressing her pleasure and those of her two sons on receiving her copies of "The Pioneers". The boys are now asking questions and looking over old photographs, knowing so little of the days before they were born. Happy to hear from you, Doreen, and thank you, for your letter — it was very much appreciated.

• **FRED ALWAY** 2/1 of Beaumaris Vic, with a note of thanks to the secretary for sending back numbers of Pioneer News and for the copy of the 2/1st Pioneer Btn history book which he thought was great and would really treasure it. Thank you Fred for your donation and your kind remarks.

• **HUGH VINCENT** 2/2 of Floreat Park, W.A., writes in to say he is one of those members who had been tracked down by Len Preedy. Hugh states he was one of the eighty Western Australians who joined the 2/2 Pioneers in early 1943 after training at Northam camp for twelve months. After serving with the Pioneers for two and a half years in New Guinea, Tarakan and Moratai he applied for a transfer to the 2/28th Infantry Battalion which was a Western Australian unit. After discharge Hugh joined the 2/28th Btn Association and has been an active member since. Served the office of President ten years ago and became the proud recipient of Life Membership recently. Hugh states he was the NCO marker of the successful Platoon drill squad that won the competition at the 9th Div. gymkhana, Wondecla. He would be interested in getting a photo if anyone has one. They were promised a 5 gallon keg if they won and are still waiting. Hugh recently read a book entitled "Twice Their Prisoner" written by Walter Irvine Summons, an original 2/2 Pioneer, who was taken prisoner in Syria and then again in Java. He concluded by wishing to be remembered to Charlie Richardson, with whom he served in the 2/2nds, and wishes all Pioneers the compliments of the season.

• **RON EDWARDS** 2/1, Frankston, Vic, with a long letter congratulating all those concerned with the history and a donation to Association funds.

Ron was one of the last five fellows to join the unit in Balikpapan before cessation of hostilities and the history would enable him to gain an even greater appreciation of the service rendered by the unit in their various theatres of war before he was posted to the battalion.

Copies of Pioneer News are gratefully acknowledged and, although not having had the pleasure of meeting or knowing most of those mentioned due to his late posting to the unit, Ron enjoys reading them. He hopes that an opportunity will arise one of these years for him to attend one of our reunions.

Thanks for your letter, Ron, and we do hope you will be able to join us in the near future.

• **NORM MITCHELL** 2/1 of Guildford per pen of Hilda writes to thank the History Committee in

producing "The Pioneers" and they are very proud to be in possession of such a fine book. It greatly exceeded their expectations and made a unique Fathers Day gift.

Norm, being an ex-printer, fully understood the problems and delay experienced by the History Committee. He remembers so many of his old pals mentioned in the book and was proud to see his name on the nominal roll.

Thank you Hilda for your letter and your congratulations to those who worked on the book.

That concludes Mail Bag for this issue, quite a good batch of letters with lots of donations to keep the ship afloat. Both Joan and I enjoyed ourselves at Wagga and the renewing of friendships long established with all that attended. The Sunday at Uranquinty in the big barn was one of the highlights of the weekend. As you were aware the Finlays and Lakes went on after Wagga through Victoria and along the Great Ocean Road, wonderful trip and well worth seeing. From Warrnambool we travelled through the Grampians to Bendigo, Echuca, Corryong, Gundagai, Goulburn, home. Did some 3000 kilometres and had my first puncture in about 10 years, at least I discovered how those new jacks work. Well, that's the lot, its going to be a tight squeeze to get all this in the paper but will close off with the very best of good wishes for Christmas and New Year and may the New Year give us no more worries than this last one from the editors and the committee of the Pioneer Batt. Association. See you all,

— LAKEY

P.S. To all bowlers interested Terry McGuire of the Northern Rivers, a 2/1 Pioneer this year won the singles title of NSW. Congratulations Terry.

INFORMATION REQUIRED

Mark Johnston of the University of Melbourne is writing a PhD thesis, which he hopes to turn into a book, on the experiences and outlook of front-line Australian soldiers in the Second World War. Diaries and letters written by servicemen are the basis of his study.

He has written to ask whether any members of our Association might be willing to let him look at any of their wartime writings. All writings would be carefully handled and promptly returned. If any readers can assist, please send to Mark Johnston, Department of History, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Vic. 3052.

HISTORY APPRECIATION

Dear Committee,

Firstly I must apologise for the delay in writing to you. I assure you that this does not reflect any lack of appreciation for your gift, or of the book itself.

Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness. The book is a great credit to you and your Association. My father would have been extremely proud of the final product, including all the work that was done after his death to bring the book to completion. On his behalf, I thank all of you for this work and for the high honour presented in your acknowledgement of his contribution.

It still makes me sad to look at this book with its associated memories, but at the same time, I sincerely appreciate it — in itself as a project that was so important to Dad; and for what it conveys as an opportunity to better understand the experiences that were so central in his life. In due course, I will be very proud to pass this book on to my son.

Congratulations on your achievement and thank you again for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Osborn,
(son of late Gordon Osborn)

PIONEER NEWS

If Pioneer News is no longer required, mark wrapper "Return to sender — no longer required" and return to Secretary.

All correspondence to M. Herron, Hon. Sec., 2/1-2/2 Pioneer Btn Assoc., 3 Enoggera Road, Beverly Hills, N.S.W. 2209.

HISTORY OF CAIRNS

The history and records of all service units, both male and female, who served in Cairns and district during 1939-1946 is being compiled by Vera Bradley of Cairns.

Information required is the unit number, title and location which will be supplied by the Secretary, but as Vera also seeks members to write about their memories of activities associated with the unit, we seek your co-operation. If members can assist, would they write direct to Mrs Vera Bradley, 46 Mansfield Street, Earlville, Cairns, Qld. 4870.

COMBINED PIONEER REUNION

The Combined Pioneers joined in with the 9th Division Reunion at Wagga on 15th October. Then on the Sunday they attended their own barbecue at a private home, which was most successful.

By mutual consent of those present it was decided to make no charge to the barbecue this year and to donate the remaining \$75 in funds to the Wagga Salvation Army.

It was decided that all Pioneers attending the 9th Division Reunion, get-together on the Sunday for a barbecue which is always a happy social gathering.

— JACK MORGAN, Organiser

BRISBANE REUNION

A very enjoyable day was had by all who attended the reunion at the home of John and Mollie Hunt on Saturday, 29th October. Although numbers were down on previous years, those who did attend really enjoyed their visit.

Apologies were received from George Brooks, Harry and Jean Spreadborough, Pat and Neil Loughren and Mavis Blanch. We are grateful to John and Mollie for the excellent job they do in organising this reunion — thank you both for a job well done.

IN HOSPITAL

George Nichols 2/1 of Cronulla was in Sutherland Hospital in October for an operation but is now at home and progressing very well. He was visited by Max and Peg Herron and of course the main topic of conversation was "the book". After coming home George visited Max Law at home who was also recovering from his operation.

LAST POST — by Max Law

• **JOHN HICKS** 2/1 of Brisbane passed away on Tuesday, 22nd October, and the funeral was attended by Phil Cramsie, Bert Beasley, John Hunt and Bill Cousins, President Rats of Tobruk Association, Qld branch. John had not enjoyed the best of health in recent years and had often been visited by John Hunt, Phil Cramsie and Jack Pearce at the Cedar Lodge Nursing Home, Highgate Hill.

• **STELLA DALY** widow of the later Bernie Daly 2/2 passed away on 23rd October and the funeral was attended by Don Murray. She had been cared for at home by her sister over the last few months. We are grateful to Don Murray for passing on the information.

• **GEORGE PATTERSON** 2/1 of St Ives passed away suddenly in July, and we were notified of his death by his son. George was for many years co-Patron of the Association.

• **"SNOW" VICKERY** 2/1 of Goulburn passed away on 8th November after a short illness. Snow was an original member of the 2/1sts and will be sadly missed by his old mates. To Gert and family we extend our very sincere condolences in their sad loss.

• **HARRY HICKERTON** 2/1 of Scarborough, Qld, passed away on 21st August while in hospital. The strain on his heart from Parkinson's Disease and low blood pressure was just too much. His passing was very quick and peaceful — a blessing after all he had suffered in the past eighteen years. We thank his wife Mary for sending in this information and extend our sincere sympathy.

• **DAISY MOSTYN** wife of the late Harry Mostyn 2/1 passed away on 28th September after a long illness. Daisy was President of the Ladies Auxiliary in 1958 and 1959.

— MAX LAW, Welfare Officer

LAST POST — by Max Law

• **THOMAS GORDON BLAMEY** 2/1 passed away at Ulladulla on 9th July and was cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium on 12th July. The service was read by Tom's two daughters and attended by Bill Jollie, Steve Clarke and Max Law. Tom Blamey was the nephew of Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey and served in 2/1st Pioneer Bn as the platoon commander of 11 platoon in the Balikpapan campaign. He had previously served with the 2/3rd Pioneer Bn.

• **THOMAS ROY CARTER** 2/2 passed away at Wagga on 10th July and was privately interred. Tom worked at the Wagga City Council for many years and in his early days was a very good Rugby League footballer. He was aged 73 years and we are grateful to John Dowd for this information.

• **LEN CLARKE** 2/2 passed away on 15th July in his 93rd year. He was with C. Coy, joining early in 1940 and went to the Middle East. He was wounded in Syria and returned to Australia on a hospital ship.

Len had also served in the 1914-1918 war and his 2/2 mates would remember him for his fine singing voice. We thank his daughter for sending in this information.

• **RON SMITH** 2/1 passed away at Nowra in July and the funeral was attended by Tom and Renee Wood. Ron later transferred to the Australian Paratroopers and after that to the 2/5th Field Company.

FRONT LINE SERVICE MEDAL

To fully explain this medal, the following extract is taken from June issue of R.O.T.A.

"At last the men who did the fighting can have their own distinguishing medal," the Minister for the Army has advised. 'The Front Line Medal' is a private medal for which official approval is not required.

The 2/12th Bn Assoc of Brisbane has designed the medal, obtained the ruling and quotes: "It is hoped that it will become an Australia-wide operation, with the help of other unit associations."

The medal features crossed rifles, holding the medal, which is surrounded by laurel leaves and is made in antique bronze. The ribbon is half yellow and half green, with two red stripes the Army colour, which also symbolises the bloody sacrifices of the infantry man. The yellow represents the desert and green the jungle.

Basis for eligibility for this medal is for the applicant to have had front line infantry service."

At the Assoc. Committee meeting on 21st October it was agreed both the 2/1 and 2/2 Pioneer Bns are eligible for the medal and two members were authorised to receive orders.

To obtain the medal, write in as follows:

Print in block letters: Regimental Number, Name, Address and Post Code and send \$8 (eight dollars) which includes postage, made payable to the member listed below, relating to your unit. Orders will take two months to deliver and no orders to be received after 31st March, 1989.

2/1 — **BILL TASKER** — 3 Killara Ave, Kingsgrove, NSW 2208. Ph: 78 6658.

2/2 — **RUSS HARRISON** — 39 Norfolk Road, Epping, NSW 2121. Ph: 86 5880.

THANKS FOR WAGGA

Could it be 46 years since the 2/2 Australian Pioneer Battalion was reformed at Wagga Wagga, after most of the original 2/2 Pioneers had been taken prisoners of war in Java. Our boys stood tall and straight and proud in their ranks as they remembered their fallen comrades at the Soldiers' Memorial, Wagga Wagga, in a moving ceremony on Saturday, 17th September.

Later, at the RSL Club, the words flowed like the Murrumbidgee itself, yarns I have heard numerous times and some others, new to me, but always entertaining.

We had a great reunion and renewed friendships. All those babies who have been born since our last reunion in Wagga in 1982. Surely Nell and Bob Ginnane must be given an award — six great-grand children. How do they do it? Don't tell me, I think I know.

What I wasn't going to mention, but I will, was the weather. It was cold and windy and enough rain to be a nuisance. After a conducted tour of Kapooka Army Camp on the Sunday morning (where are the tents), it was realised that our barbecue could not proceed as planned. Our friendly Camp Adjutant arranged with the innkeeper at Uranquinty for us to retire to their "conference centre". "Where is Uranquinty," I asked, and learned that it was about 10 km south of Kapooka and second home to the residents of Kapooka for many years.

It was obvious from stories overheard that members of the 2/2nd had spent many of their off duty hours at this pub during the war years. Mine Host had prepared an amazingly warm log fire for our comfort, as well as the use of the barbecue where we soon enjoyed the delicious aroma of grilled meat and the deafening sounds of conviviality. Mine Host and his good lady expressed their pleasure for the opportunity to play hosts to the "old soldiers".

The farewell dinner on Sunday night was tinged with the sober thoughts of farewelling old friends for another two years and the hope we will meet as firm friends again in 1990, the 50th anniversary of the formation of the 2/1st and 2/2nds. Let us make a concerted effort to be there.

Before ending, we all owe a great vote of thanks to Max and Peg Herron and their helpers for their unflinching efforts to make these reunions so enjoyable. We should also congratulate them for the part they played in the publication of "The Pioneers", the first copy of which was presented to Peg for her many hours of outstanding work to ensure its fruition.

In closing, may I express the wish of seeing once again as many Pioneer friends as possible at the 50th anniversary reunion in 1990.

— **RONA HARRISON**

NEWS ITEM

Sam Gardiner 2/1 of Oak Flats was in Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick in July to have a cataract operation, which turned out to be most successful.

On being visited by Max and Peg Herron, Sam was brought up to date with "doings" of the Sig. Platoon, of which he and Max were former members.

CENTRAL COAST HERO

The Central Coast has never produced a Victoria Cross winner, but there have been a couple who probably should have won it, but missed by a whisker.

Two of these war heroes were definitely the daredevil type and the other a gutsy crack-shot, all of them sharing a common destiny — they are dead, and almost forgotten.

Old age has achieved what the German and Japanese could not, and they lie in war graves at local cemeteries.

Ailing old Diggers are finding it harder to receive what they term as pensions justice and perhaps it's timely to remind a generation far removed from their wars of what they did for us.

Colonel Henry William Nicholls — Military Cross and Bar — came closest to a VC.

If there was a "Rambo" of his era, then he was undoubtedly it, but he probably would not have appreciated the comparison.

Colonel Nicholls was a patron of the Gosford RSL Club and his nickname — Wingey — was conferred because on Anzac Day his decorations weighed one shoulder askew.

Former Gosford RSL Club president, Athol Frewin, says Nicholls, a dairy farmer at Ourimbah, was big in stature and loved a drink and yarn with his mates at the club.

Colonel Nicholls won his first Military Cross at Tobruk while with the 2/1st Pioneers, and his second in Korea, where he was also mentioned in despatches.

Born at Leichhardt, he joined the 6th Light Horse Regiment at 17 and he won the M.C. at Tobruk in June, 1941 when 20.

He chased and caught a sentry and the patrol charged the enemy post, killing nine.

Nicholls ordered the patrol to withdraw and, with one man with a Thompson sub-machine gun, attacked and silenced a light-machine gun post.

In 1943 he joined Z Special Unit and operated in Australian and Dutch New Guinea, New Britain and Borneo.

His main tasks with Z Force were behind Japanese lines examining beach obstacles, capturing prisoners for interrogation and carrying out reconnaissance operations.

He landed on Vokeo Island, about 40 km north of Wewak and remained there deep in Japanese occupied territory for six weeks carrying out patrols and reporting enemy activities.

He was the first Australian to get back into Wewak after the Japanese were repelled.

Nicholls parachuted into North Borneo in mid-1945 to assist recovery of survivors of the Sandakan death march.

In Korea, he was a company commander with 3rd Battalion, and received the Bar after leading his men in stand-up fights in 1.5 m high grass in a five-day battle.

He was involved in "Krait" memorial activity, the "Krait" being the small Asian vessel used by Z Force Special Operatives.

We are obliged to Paul Callaghan of the "Central Coast Express", 27th April in reprinting this article — EDITOR.

ORDER FORM — FRONT LINE SERVICE MEDAL

Surname: Known Name:

Address:

Regimental No. Unit Phone

Post order, with cheque for \$8.00 which includes packaging and postage, made payable to member listed, representing your unit.

2/1 — Bill Tasker, 3 Killara Ave., Kingsgrove, NSW 2208

2/2 — Russ Harrison, 39 Norfolk Road, Epping, NSW 2121

LAST POST

• **THEO REID** 2/1 passed away on 24th May at St Josephs Hospital, Auburn and was cremated at Rookwood Crematorium on 27th May. Theo was known to all his mates as Baldy.

• **REVEREND GORDON STUART WATTS** 2/1 passed away on 28th June and was cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium. The service at the Crematorium was attended by Steve Clarke, Bill Tasker and Max Law who conveyed to Mrs Watts the condolences of all members. In reply Mrs Watts wrote thanking our members for attending her husband's funeral. She said his experience as Chaplain of the 2/1st Pioneers had made a profound impression on him and he had a great affection for the men with whom he served, and was proud to have been with them.