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Message from the President



First of all I would like to thank the following members of the Association for their efforts over the past year. They are:-

- Secretary and Backbone of the Association, Alan Curry. Alan compiles the contents for our newsletter; maintains constant contact with all Association members; keeps the Association Banner, Standard, and Memorabilia (including the Bugle).

Alan gives unselfishly of his time to organize Association functions such as our re-union and represents the Association at many activities throughout the year including Anzac Day, Reserve Forces Day and Launch in Sydney and Reserve Forces Day in Newcastle as well as the Battle for Australia Day.

- Warren Barnes for his direction, donations and time representing the Association at numerous RFD meetings throughout the year.
- Brian Tams for keeping our finances safe.
- Fred Bell for duty above and beyond the call in taking on the task (at short notice) of Association Standard Bearer for the 2008 Reserve Forces Day March including the rehearsals.
- Michael Moroney for his donation of historical Field Medical documentation and old unit t-shirts and recruiting banner.

To members who have attended the NSW RAAMC Association meetings at Victoria Barracks.

- To all members for your support to the Association during the past year.

Our strong Association has had another active year with good support for Anzac Day, well led by a detachment of 5 CSSB Health Company. Also Reserve Forces Day and Battle for Australia Day.

Our secretary will cover our recent reunion and his attendance at the 2/5th Field Ambulance Reunion in Melbourne. However, I would like to acknowledge the attendance of our Patron, Colonel Ray Hyslop, OAM RFD who had just returned from a holiday in Japan. Also, Lt Col John Phillips, OAM RFD ED and his wife Allison and up from Victoria Joe and Judy Gatty.

I wish to bring to your notice changes for next year's Anzac and Reserve Forces activities. It is quite likely our Association will march on Anzac Day with all Medical/Health units and Associations in Order of March behind the NSW RAAMC Banner. Also, The Returned and Services League of Australia (NSW Branch) are currently debating the inclusion of descendants in future Anzac Day marches and where they should be positioned. I will be attending a meeting on the subject on Thursday, January 22nd, 2009. These important changes have still to be finalised and advice will be circulated by the Secretary later.

In respect of the Reserve Forces Day this will now be a parade with units forming up in Division/Brigade Formation in the Domain and that only Unit/Association Standards are to be displayed. No Banners.

Please give us feedback, positive or negative on the new format for our three monthly newsletter which has been transformed into the Official Quarterly Magazine.

Finally, my wife Edna and I would like to wish all our members and their families and in particular our increasing number of sick members, a peaceful festive season and a prosperous healthier 2009.

See you on Anzac Day,

Lt Col Derek Cannon RFD

Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS are given to our good member John OVERTON on recently receiving a
"COMMENDATION" from the Chief of Army.

I understand John was most surprised and honoured and
because he said ... "It is the pinnacle of my service."
(Good upon you, John, and most deserved.)





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From the Hon. Secretary



Dear Member,

Our committee (Warren Barnes, Fred Bell (ASM), Derek Cannon (President), Bill Clutterbuck, Barry Collins OAM, Alan Curry (Hon Secretary), Mick Rowley and Brian Tams (Hon Treasurer)) hope you will enjoy the first print of our "new" magazine and we thank Statewide Publishing P/L and Galloping Press Printing for their efforts in assisting me to get your articles/photos etc to them.

As always, our first thoughts are for our sick members. Some of them are not in the best of health at present and we hope that they have the loving support of their family and friends. If you know of a member who is not too good, please pick up the phone or grab a sheet of paper and write to them—just to let them know you are "in their corner". If you don't have their contact details—call me.

This being the last newsletter for the year your committee wish each of you and your families a very "HAPPY CHRISTMAS" and a healthy and prosperous NEW YEAR in 2009.

Apart from our usual items—what about this rotten financial crisis we are all caught up in. There is nothing you, nor I, can do about it except know that we are all in the same boat and trust our leaders can make the right decisions to guide us (and the world) through this "storm".

What good is it going to do trying to blame "someone"—the damage is done and happening right now—how long it goes and what the future holds is

anyone's guess?—but we have to think positive and stay positive, irrespective of the gloomy news reports.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

REMEMBRANCE DAY (11th hour of the 11th month)

Who of us will ever forget the death and destruction caused in the conflict that was World War 1. We have seen on newsreels and read in books about the horrific toll this War took between 1914 to 1918.

When the Armistice took effect on the 11th of November at 11am it took some time for this to sink in at the front.

Some 2 weeks prior to the signing of the Armistice, which was obvious, Field Marshall General Haig presciently wrote to his wife and, in part, said..."Our Statesmen should not attempt to so humiliate Germany as to produce a desire for revenge in years to come." How prophetic!

I attended our small Sub Branch Ceremony which was very well attended.

LEST WE FORGET

Alan Curry
Hon. Secretary

Happy Birthday

OCTOBER: John and Margaret GORRELL

NOVEMBER: Roy CROSSLEY
Tony MILLER
Gordon MILLS

DECEMBER: Steve BALDICK
Fred BELL
George DONNELLY
Maureen LIVINGSTON
Heather PERIGO
Mick ROWLEY
Peter SULLIVAN

Our Association wishes you "All the Best"
on your "special" day –
have you given me your month of birth?

THANK YOU

Thank you very much, Members, for your yearly dues, donations and LIFE MEMBERSHIPS. They are so very much appreciated.

To our members who pay by EFT, thank you for identifying yourself. Your contributions, letters and emails are enjoyed by us all and are an encouragement.

(Members on the Internet—don't forget our own site (see in our "Header") and also "surf" the RAAMC website: www.raamc.com <<http://www.raamc.com.au/>>). (Please write a comment in our "Guest Book")

Yours faithfully,

Alan Curry
Hon. Secretary





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Battle for Australia Ceremony

(Held on Wednesday, 3rd September)

Another good crowd gathered on this nice, Spring morning. All the seating was well and truly taken by 10.45am and we had a good "roll-up" considering it was a working week day.

Our host (and member) David Cooper OAM opened the Ceremony after the official guests arrived and, right on "cue" at 11am, a Hawk (jet) Trainer flew above Martin Place at a fast rate of knots.

The "Address" was given by General Peter Cosgrove AC MC. He told of the enormity of the Japanese air attacks on Darwin in February 1942 and the frequency of the attacks as the months wore on.

He spoke about the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway in May 1942, both very decisive and had a huge bearing for the future outcome of the war in the Pacific.

The land battles were very hard fought, especially at Kokoda, but the first land defeat of the all conquering Japanese forces was at Milne Bay.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SMALL HISTORY OF THE MILNE BAY BATTLE

Kind thanks to "Australians at War"—A.K. Macdougall

The Australian forces at Milne Bay consisted of the 7th Brigade and these were reinforced by forces of the 18th Brigade, all commanded by Maj.Gen. Cyril Clowes.

On the morning of the 25th August 1942, Coastwatchers alerted that a Japanese convoy of five warships and four transports were approaching. Although these were attacked by our Kittyhawks and Hudsons, they slipped into Milne Bay harbour and disembarked their troops and equipment in the dark. The Kittyhawks and Hudsons strafed and bombed the beach-head and the enemy ships around the clock.

On the 26th the Japanese Army, with tank support, attacked.

They reached the "KB Mission" and forced a patrol of militiamen from the 61st Bn. to retreat.

The 61st Bn. counter-attacked the Japanese and forced them back from the Mission.

The enemy attacked later in the night and fierce fighting ensued over a number of hours before the 61st fell back to the Gama River line until the 2/10th Bn. passed through and held the enemy.

On the night of the 27th, the Japanese made another push and the 2/10th was forced back to just short of Turnbull airstrip where 25th Bn. held. When daybreak approached the Japanese had "melted" away.

There was a two-day "lull" and in that time the Japanese had landed another 800 troops.

On the morning of the 31st just before dawn, the Japanese attacked the airstrip in waves—shouting and screaming.

They were cut down by steady fire from the Australians. The 2/12th was counter-attacked in the night but held.

By the 3rd September, the 2/12th was joined by the 2/9th and they pushed east along the coast.

Fierce fighting was encountered right up until the 6th September when the Australians reached the main enemy base.

RAAF fighters and bombers were constantly attacking the Japanese vessels and beach head.

On the night of the 7th, three enemy vessels took off the remaining Japanese Invasion Force and left behind 750 dead.

Australian troops found the bodies of natives and captured comrades shot, bayoneted and hideously mutilated by their captors.

From Kokoda and Milne Bay onwards the New Guinea campaign was fought without quarter.

The Australians were to take few prisoners.

Field Marshall Lord Slim wrote... "Some of us may forget that of all the Allies it was the Australian soldiers who first broke the spell of invincibility of the Japanese Army."

General Cosgrove concluded that our Government has now "Officially" proclaimed the first Wednesday in September to be "The Battle for Australia" day.

Chris Perrin, (Secretary of the RSL NSW Branch) wrote... "It is tangible recognition of the contribution to Australia's freedom by those who fought and died in Darwin and the Coral Sea and Papua New Guinea. The day was chosen as it represents the FIRST defeat of the Japanese forces on land in the Battle of Milne Bay."

Sadly, I read or heard of an interview by a veteran, that he would not be attending any Ceremony for the Battle for Australia, in September, because he said it should have been when Darwin was first attacked (in February 1942).

I think the important thing is that it is remembered and never forgotten!

John Phillips does a great job in "looking after" our "Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels" and they are a credit to their country. The young people, some from PNG, are becoming an increasing number—I think it is great to see and hear them be part of the Ceremony. David Cooper and his committee do a wonderful job in keeping this very important date "alive" in the minds of the Australian people.

Our Association thanks the following for attending the Ceremony:-

Steve Baldick, Derek Cannon, Barry Collins OAM, David Cooper OAM, Alan Curry, John de Witt, Eileen Henderson, Kevin Hurrell, Bill Molloy, John Phillips OAM, Gordon Wright (My sincere apologies if I have omitted your name—I forgot to take a pen and paper!)

At the conclusion, those that could make it came back to the Legions Club in Barrack Street for a "soft" drink and a bite to eat.



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SICK PARADE

John A'QUILINA, Neil BARRIE, Edna CANNON, Kevin CARTER, David CAVANAUGH, Brian CHANDLER, Patrick CRAWFORD (*Homeward Care Nursing Home, 64 Iliffe St., Bexley*), Shaun DANAHER, John DAVIES, Victor ("Bluey") DAVIS, John de WITT, Bert FERGUSON, Nelson FIORENTINO, Ray GRANT, Ray HARRINGTON (*Merrylands Aged Care Centre*), Max HEYDON, Kevin HURRELL, Neville JOHNSON, Estelle LINDSAY, Huss MAHOMET, "Roy" McDONALD, Charles O'MEALLY, Alan ROBINSON, Diana ROTHFIELD, Sr. "Sue" THOMPSON (*Big Sister Hostel, Room 216, 2c Karimbla Rd, Miranda*), Arthur WALTON, John WEAVER and John WOODHEAD.

KIND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

(Of monies received since our last newsletter of 3'08.

Please contact me if your name is omitted.)

- John A'QUILINA (Cheque \$100) for Subs \$60 to 2012 Raffle Tickets \$10, RAAMC Lapel Badge \$7 Name Badge \$20 and Donation \$3
- Steve BALDICK (Cash \$35) for Reunion
- "Scotty" BOYD (Cheque \$20) for Subs \$15 and Raffle Tickets \$5
- Derek CANNON (Cheque \$100) for Reunion Luncheon \$70 and Raffle Tickets \$30
- Bill CLUTTERBUCK (Cash \$20) for Subs \$15 and Raffle Tickets \$5
- Terry CRAWLEY (M/Order \$15) for New Member Subs
- Alan CURRY (EFT \$80) for Reunion \$70 and Raffle Tickets \$10
- Nelson FIORENTINO (Cash \$70) for Reunion
- Joe GATTY (M/Order \$70) for Reunion
- Ray HYSLOP (Cash \$35) for Reunion
- Jim ELLIS (Cheque \$150) for Life Membership for son Andrew \$100, Raffle Tickets \$30 and Donation \$20
- Philip McGRATH (Cash \$35)
- Trish McGrath (Cash \$35) for Reunion
- John PHILIPS (Cash \$60) for Reunion
- Tom PRITCHARD (Cash \$20) for Raffle Tickets
- Diana ROTHFIELD (Cash \$30) for Reunion
- Michael ROWLEY (Cheque \$70) for Reunion
- Bill RYLANDS (Cheque \$65) for Reunion
- Noel TAME (Cash \$50) for Subs \$15 and Reunion \$35
- Brian TAMS (Cash \$70) for Reunion.

VALE

Les WALFORD joined us in early 2005. He was a work mate of mine for over 26 years, as a Tally Clerk, on the Sydney waterfront. Although we were never close friends he was a very friendly man.

I did not know that Les was in the National Service at the same time I was but both of us were allocated to 19 NS Bn at Holsworthy.

It was at a work re-union a few years back when Les told me of his service and he said he would like to join our Association.

Les lost his wife about seven years ago and this had a very big effect on his future. Their four boys were all grown up, married and moved away. Mark, (their 3rd boy) lived the closest.

His son went to visit Les on Sunday (14th Sept) and came across his grandpa collapsed beside his bathroom.

They got immediate help whilst performing CPR but the paramedics could not revive Les who must have suffered a massive heart attack.

Les was a very humble and likeable man. He never thought ill of any person and listening to his son, Mark, speak at the funeral, on behalf of the family, you could tell they came from a close and loving family.

Les was the youngest son in his family and his brothers, Jack and Mervin (also my work mates) and sisters Marie and Betty were also there to say farewell. He was 72.

Les is survived by his four sons, Stuart, David, Mark and Grant and their families.

LEST WE FORGET

(I thank member Kevin Hurrell for informing me.)



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"Battle for Australia" Story

(With kind thanks to "Australians at War"—A.K.Macdougall
and Australia's Perilous Year--John Buckley OBE ED . Sep/Oct '88 edition No: 72)

When Japan attacked Pearl Harbour on the 7th December 1941 it was part of their master plan to eventually conquer all the islands in the Pacific Ocean.

John Curtin, our Prime Minister at the time, broadcast to the nation on the 8th December 1941...

"We are at war with Japan. This has happened because in the first instance, Japanese naval and air forces launched an unprovoked attack on British and U.S. territory. As a result, the Australian Government, this afternoon, took the necessary steps which will mean a state of war exists between Australia and Japan. We Australians have imperishable traditions. We shall maintain them. We shall vindicate them. We shall hold this country and keep it as a citadel for the British speaking race, and a place where civilisation shall persist."

Events moved rapidly after this. First the shocking news that both "The Prince of Wales" and HMS "Repulse", the major ships of "Force Z", had been destroyed. Then there was the meeting in the US (in Washington) on the 23 December 1941 between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill (Australia was not consulted or represented) which decided:-

- (1) Beat Hitler first and concentrate on the war in Europe.
- (2) Pool US and UK resources.
- (3) Set up ABDA Command (American, British, Dutch, Australia) under command of General Wavell.
- (4) Set up a Combined Chiefs of Staff with US and UK Officers only.

It was apparent that the situation confronting the Pacific Ocean Islands, which included Australia, was not on their agenda of importance.

With the decimation of "Force Z" and Malaya now occupied by the Japanese, Singapore was looking very vulnerable.

Our Prime Minister and his War Cabinet had very real concerns for Australia's welfare.

An article published in the Melbourne Herald on the 27 December 1941, by our Prime Minister, read:

"We refuse to accept the dictum that the Pacific struggle must be treated as a subordinate segment of the general conflict. Without any inhibition of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom."

This article had been written after a number of concerned cablegrams were despatched to the US and the UK.

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were, understandably, most upset by this article and they quickly realised that the Australian Prime Minister was most resolute and had the unswerving support of his colleagues and War Cabinet.

Churchill and Roosevelt also realised and understood what part Australia had played to date. They were dealing with a man who was prepared to stand up solidly for the security and sovereignty of his country and was willing to co-operate in the Allied strategy.

(They must have overlooked the fact of the major role the 2nd A.I.F. played in the first battles of the Western Desert, in Tobruk, in Greece and Crete and the role of the RAN's and RAAF's effort overseas.)

When our Prime Minister Curtin was informed that Prime Minister Churchill was considering abandoning Singapore, he sent a cablegram (22 January 1942) stating...

After all the assurances we have been given, the evacuation of Singapore would be regarded here and elsewhere as an inexcusable betrayal. Singapore is a central fortress—we understand it was to be made impregnable—even in an emergency, diversion of re-enforcements should be to the Netherlands East Indies and not to Burma. We expect you not to frustrate the whole purpose by evacuation."

It was apparent that Churchill was more worried about Burma and India.

In next to no time, Rabaul, Timor, Ambon and other strategic islands were lost, as was the Java Sea naval battle.

Prime Minister Curtin said..."No country faced a greater danger with fewer defence resources."

Singapore, the impregnable bastion, fell to the Japanese on the 15 February 1942.

Mary (later, Dame) Gilmore, a poet, wrote in the Women's Weekly magazine shortly after...

"They grouped together about the chief, and each one looked at his mate.

Ashamed to think that Australian men should meet such a bitter fate.

Black was the wrath in each hot heart, and savage oaths they swore,

as they thought of how they had all been ditched—by the impregnable Singapore."

Complete mobilisation was ordered.

Can one imagine the anguish and concern of Curtin and his War Cabinet as "Stepsister Force", consisting of 7th Aust. Division, Corps troops and elements of 6th Division, were making their way back from the Middle East.

(The troops were mainly in passenger ships and not tactically loaded for deployment in the Netherlands East Indies and adjacent islands. Some of the slow moving cargo ships were sometimes hundreds, and even thousands, of miles behind units to which the weapons, vehicles and other essential equipment belonged. Some elements of the leading Australian troops had arrived in the N.E.I. and were soon lost to the advancing Japanese.)

Another signal was sent from Curtin to Churchill asking that the A.I.F. "Stepsister Force" be returned direct to Australia. This conflicted with a proposition from Churchill that the "Force" be directed to Burma—Churchill's return cable stated...

"I suppose you realise that your leading Division (7th) is the only force that can reach Rangoon in time to prevent its loss and the severance of communication with China. There is nothing else in the world that can fill the gap."

Pressure was also put on Curtin, by President Roosevelt, to comply with Churchill's proposal.

When the War Cabinet was considering the proposal, the Chief of the General Staff, Lt.Gen. Vernon Sturdee, offered his immediate resignation if his advice was rejected (i.e. reject Churchill's request and demand the return of the A.I.F. because Australia's safety was reaching such a critical stage.)

Later, that evening, Curtin said to a couple of trusted reporters...

"Am I justified in taking the risk of sending men, whose arms and equipment are on ships far behind them, into places where the Japanese may very well reach them before their arms and equipment do?"



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Battle for Australia Story (continued)...

Whilst the debate in Cabinet had been taking place and unbeknown at the time, Prime Minister Churchill had ordered the convoys to be diverted to Burma because, as he was to say later...

"We could not contemplate that you would refuse our request."

Curtin and his Cabinet took Sturdee's advice and informed Churchill that the A.I.F must be returned to Australia.

What a shock it must have been to learn of Churchill's orders to "Stepsister Force".

It was learned later that Prime Minister Curtin agonised almost every hour of the return voyage to Australia of "Stepsister Force"—it must be remembered that Curtin had only been elected in October 1941 and was informed a little over a month later that the HMAS Sydney was missing off the West Australian Coast with her full complement of 645 Officers and men—he worried about his Australian forces.

These were anxious times with reports being received constantly of the ever advancing Japanese. The invasion of Borneo and Ambon, then also Rabaul, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and then New Guinea.

The Japanese were on our doorstep!

They attacked Darwin on the 19th February 1942. At 9.40am, 188 Japanese bombers appeared. Ten American Kittyhawks (P40's) had just landed after an aborted flight to Java. Five Kittyhawks that managed to get air born were either shot down or badly damaged; the other five were destroyed on the ground.

The main targets of the Japanese air attack were the 47 ships lying in the harbour.

Darwin suffered many such raids, two a day on some occasions, over many months in 1942. They suffered 556 casualties of which 238 were killed.

In March 1942, Broome and Wyndham were attacked by Japanese aircraft as was Katherine (300 klms inland).

Japanese subs attacked along the east coast of our mainland, shelling Newcastle and entering Sydney Harbour causing loss of life and shelling some coastal suburbs. The subs wreaked havoc with our coastal shipping, damaging and sinking many, including the hospital ship AHS "Centaur" off Cape Moreton in May 1943.

On March 1942, Prime Minister Curtin broadcast the following by radio...

"Men and women of the United States, I speak to you from Australia. I speak from a united people to a united people, and my speech is aimed to serve all the people of the nations united in the struggle to save mankind.

On the great waters of the Pacific Ocean war now breathes its bloody steam. From the skies of the Pacific pour down a deathly hail on the countless islands of the Pacific. The tide of war flows badly for you in America. For us in Australia it is flowing badly.

Let me then address you as comrades in this war and tell you a little of Australia and Australians.

I am not speaking to your government.

We have long been admirers of Mr. Roosevelt and have the greatest confidence that he understands fully the critical situation in the Pacific, and that America will go right out to meet it.

For all that America has done, both before and after entering the war, we have the greatest admiration and gratitude.

It is to the people of America I am now speaking; to you who are or will be fighting, to you who are sweating in factories and work-shops to turn out the vital munitions of war, to all of you who are making sacrifices in one way or another to provide the enormous resources required for our great task.

I speak to you at a time when the loss of Java and the splendid resistance of the gallant Dutch together give us a feeling of both sadness and pride.

Japan has gone one step farther in her speedy march south, but the fight of the Dutch and Indonesians in Java have shown that a brave and freedom loving people are more than a match for the yellow aggressor given even a shade below equality in striking and fighting weapons.

But facts are stern things. We, the Allied nations, were unready and Japan, behind her wall of secrecy, had prepared for war on a scale which neither we nor you had any knowledge.

It was therefore but natural that within twenty days after Japan's treacherous blow I said, on behalf of the Australian Government, that we looked to America as the paramount factor on the democracies' side in the Pacific.

There is no belittling of the Old Country in this outlook. Britain has fought and won in the tremendous Battle of Britain. Britain has fought and with your strong help has won the equally vital Battle of the Atlantic.

She had a paramount obligation to supply all possible help to Russia. She cannot, at the same time, go all out in the Pacific.

We, with New Zealand, represent Great Britain here in the Pacific—we are her sons—and on us the responsibility falls.

I pledge you my word: We will not fail. We will pull knee to knee with you every ounce of our weight.

We have all made mistakes. We have all been too slow. We have all shown weakness, all the Allied nations. This is not the time to wrangle about who has been most to blame. Now our eyes are open.

The Australian Government has fought for its people. We never regarded the Pacific as a segment of the great struggle. We did not insist that it was the primary theatre of war. But we did say, and events have unhappily proved us right, that the loss of the Pacific can be disastrous.

Who among us, contemplating the future on that day in December last when Japan struck like an assassin at Pearl Harbour, at Manila, at Wake and Guam, would have hazarded a guess that by March the enemy would be astride all the south west Pacific except for General MacArthur's gallant men and Australia and New Zealand?

But that is the case, and realising very swiftly that it would be the case, the Australian government sought a full and proper recognition of the part the Pacific was playing in the general strategic disposition of the world's warring forces.

We looked to America, among other things, for counsel and advice, and therefore it was our wish that the Pacific War Council should be located in Washington.

It is a matter of some regret to us that even now, after 95 days of Japan's staggering advance south—ever south—that we have not obtained first hand contact with America.

Therefore we propose sending to you our Minister for External Affairs, Dr. H.V. Evatt, who is no stranger to your country, so that we may benefit from his discussions with your authorities. Dr. Evatt's wife, who will accompany him, was born in the United States.

Dr. Evatt will not go to you as a mendicant. He will go to you as the representative of a people as firmly determined to hold and hit back at the enemy as courageously as those people from whose loins we sprang, those people who withstood the disaster of Dunkirk, the fury of Goering's blitz, the shattering blows of the Battle of the Atlantic.

He will go to tell you that we are fighting mad, that our people have a Government that is governing with orders and not with weak-kneed suggestions; that we Australians are a people who, whilst somewhat inexperienced and uncertain as to what war on



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Battle for Australia Story (continued)...

their own soil may mean, are nevertheless ready for anything, and will trade punches, giving odds if need be, until we rock the enemy back on his heels.

We are, then, committed heart and soul to total warfare. How far, you may ask me, have we progressed along that road?

I may answer you this way.

Out of every 10 men in Australia 4 are now wholly engaged as members of the fighting forces or making the munitions and equipment to fight.

The other 6, besides feeding and clothing the whole 10 and their families, have to provide the food and wool and metals which Britain needs for her existence.

We are not, of course, stopping at 4 out of 10. We had over 3 when Japan challenged our life and liberty. The proportion is growing every day.

On the one hand, we are ruthlessly cutting out unessential expenditure so as to free men and women for war work, and on the other, mobilizing woman-power to the utmost to supplement the men.

4 out of 10 devoted to war, we shall pass to 5 and 6 out 10. We have no limits.

We have no qualms here. There is no fifth column in this country. We are all one race, the English speaking race.

We will not yield easily a yard of our soil.

We have great space here, and tree by tree, village by village, and town by town, we will fall back if we must. But that will occur only when we lack the means of meeting the enemy with parity in materials and machines.

For remember, we are the ANZAC breed. Our men stormed Gallipoli. They swept through the Libyan desert, they were the "Rats" of Tobruk, they were the men who fought under bitter, sarcastic, pugnacious' Gordon Bennett down through Malaya and were still fighting when the surrender of Singapore came!

These men gave their best in Greece and Crete. They will give more than their best on their own soil, where their hearths and homes lie under enemy threat.

Our Air Force is in the Kingsford Smith tradition. You have no doubt met a lot of them in Canada. The Nazis have come to know them at Hamburg and Berlin, and in paratroop landings in France. Our naval forces silently do their share on the seven seas.

I am not boasting to you, but were I to say less, I would not be paying proper due to a band of men who have been tested in the crucible of world wars and hall-marked as pure metal.

Our fighting forces are born attackers. We will hit the enemy wherever we can, as often as we can and the extent of it will be measured only by the weapons to our hands.

Dr. Evatt will tell you that Australia is a nation stripped for war. Our minds are set on attack rather than defence. We believe, in fact, that attack is the best defence.

Here, in the Pacific, it is the only defence. We know it means risks, but "safety first" is the devil's catchword today.

Business interests in Australia are submitting with a good grace to iron control and drastic elimination of profits.

Our great labour unions are accepting the suspension of rights and privileges which have been sacred for two generations, and are submitting equally to iron control of the activities of their members. It is now work or fight for everyone in Australia.

The Australian Government has so shaped its policy that there will be place for every citizen in the country. There are three means of service—in the fighting forces, in the labour forces and in the essential industries.

For the first time in the history of this country, a complete call-up or draft, as you refer to it in America, has been made.

I say to you, as a comfort to our friends and a stiff warning to our enemies, that only the infirm remain outside our war plans.

Australia is the last bastion between the west coast of America and the Japanese. If Australia goes, the Americas are wide open.

It is said that the Japanese will by-pass Australia and that they can be met and routed in India. I say to you that the saving of Australia is the saving of America's west coast. If you believe anything to the contrary, then you delude yourselves.

Be assured of the calibre of our national character. This war may see the end of much that we have painfully and slowly built up in our 150 years of existence. But even though all of it go, there will still be Australians fighting on Australian soil until the turning point be reached, and we will advance over blackened ruins, through blasted and fire-swept cities, across scorched plains, until we drive the enemy into the sea.

I give you the pledge of my country. There will always be an Australian Government and there will always be an Australian people.

We are too strong in our hearts, our spirit is too high, the justice of our cause throbs too deeply in our being, for that high purpose to be overcome.

I may be looking down a vista of weary months and soul-shaking reverses, of grim struggles, of back-breaking work.

But as surely as I sit here, talking to you across the war-tossed Pacific Ocean, I see our flag. I see Old Glory, I see the proud banner of the heroic Chinese, I see the standard of the valiant Dutch.

And I see them flying high in the wind of liberty over a Pacific from which aggression has been wiped out; over peoples restored to freedom; and flying triumphant, as the glorified symbols of united nations strong in will and power, to achieve decency and dignity, unyielding to evil in any form.

(This address was relayed to the UK, Canada and many other counties and was printed in major American newspapers.)

Conclusion:

The Allied victories on the Kokoda Trail, the successful battles for the Buna, Gona and the Sananda beachhead, the American and Australian naval victories in the Pacific plus the Japanese defeat at Guadalcanal showed that the power of "The Rising Sun" was declining.

The Battle of the Bismarck Sea in March 1943, in the opinion of General MacArthur, General Blamey and Prime Minister Curtin, was a major turning point. It stopped the Japanese from landing forces at Lae. Most of the enemy transports were sunk including 12 enemy ships and 4 destroyers.

It showed that Japan could no longer launch a major invasion on the Australian mainland.

It had taken a hard 12 months from January 1942 to January 1943 to come through a very critical period, yet another 2&1/2 years of constant fighting lay ahead, before Japan finally surrendered.

Women had replaced men in nearly all fields of endeavour. Of Australia's total population of 7 million there were some 840,000 women making their contribution, including 8,800 in the Nursing Services, 1,400 in the WRANS, 18,000 AWAS, 16,000 WAAF, 190,000 in direct war work, 39,000 in munitions, ship building and aircraft industries, 106,000 in other defence works, 55,000 in rural, 27,000 in transport industries and 158,000 in commerce.



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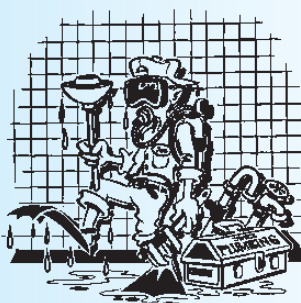
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Mrs. Norma Hutton's Story

(With kind thanks to Norma and the "Rats of Tobruk Assn" N'letter Jul/Sep '08 and John Roche)

I was born in Annandale, Sydney, on the 4th September 1923. I was the second daughter of Neil and Boadicea Pearsall.

We moved to Gladesville when I was three and I attended Boronia Park Public School then Gladesville Public School and finally Riverside Girls Domestic Science High School.

I left school at 14—it was during the "Depression"—and took an apprenticeship as a tailoress. The day before my 16th birthday, war was declared and the Government took over our warehouse to make greatcoats for the British army, as most of their factories were damaged during the "blitz".

It was a very busy time and gradually we were making coats for the Australian army. Two nights a week overtime, plus some Saturdays, were asked of us. We did it without question. We received an extra 2/6d to sew the sleeves on the greatcoats which was good money, at the time.

I met my future husband, Arthur, when I was 16. I was on a visit to Ingleburn Army Camp and Arthur had returned from final leave to his home in Queensland. We knew each other for 6 weeks before he sailed, 5th May 1940, on the Queen Mary, to England, where he was stationed for some months before sailing to the Middle East.

We corresponded for the next 3 years (one letter every week) plus cakes and newspapers.

After Tobruk and El Alamein, the interstate men were sent to their own home States for leave. Arthur spent one week in Brisbane with his family and then the rest in Sydney.

(Arthur was one of seven children, four boys and three girls. Arthur's eldest brother (Alex) became a Prisoner of War and died at Hellfire Pass whilst working on the infamous Burma Railway. The last three days of his life he was treated by "Weary" Dunlop. Arthur's youngest brother (Bill) was in the RAAF with the "Biscuit Bombers".) It was a time to really get to know one another, as I was 19 by this time and I thought I was grown up.

After spending 12 months in New Guinea, Arthur came home on leave and whilst in Sydney he was stricken with malaria and spent 2 months in Concord Hospital.

When Arthur was in hospital he was offered a transfer from his unit, 2/3rd Field Ambulance, to Victoria Barracks in Paddington.



Arthur & Norma Hutton on their wedding day.

We were married on the 25th August 1945 and not long after, Arthur joined the Regular Army and spent the next 30 years serving his country. He was a very proud and dedicated soldier.

We lived in Mosman in our early years of marriage then, and later moved to Randwick for five years.

We eventually we got a loan and built our War Service Home in Hunters Hill in 1953 and after Arthur's retirement we did a lot of travelling overseas.

The "highlight" being a return trip to Tobruk and El Alamein with the "Rats" in 1992. (Arthur drove an ambulance at Tobruk and later in his army career was Adjutant of 5 Field Ambulance in the 50's).

We were not blessed with children but I have a sister, Betty, and we are very close mates. Betty married a very close friend of Arthur and he also was a "Rat of Tobruk".

Nearly eleven years ago, Arthur, developed Alzheimer's disease and it gradually got to the stage where he had to have permanent care. He passed away in 1998 and left me with a lot of very happy memories after over 50 years married to a wonderful man.

Since Arthur's death I have become very involved with the War Widows Guild and also a wonderful group at North Ryde RSL Club.

Now days, I am kept very busy but I am happy and contented.



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A Norwegian Coastal Voyage

*(With kind thanks to member,
"Scotty" Boyd)*

The "Hurtigruten" Line has a variety of ships that ply the coastal region of Norway from Bergen in the south west to Kirkenes in the far north near the Russian border.

There is a departure every day and it takes 12 days for the return trip, Bergen to Bergen. Total distance was 5150 kms or 2780 knot miles. The vessels call at 34 ports each way and loads/unload both passengers and freight at most ports.

The stop can be up to 1 hour but sometimes is only for about 20 mins. The ships are side loading and are extremely efficient with little fuss. Passengers can go ashore at each stop and there is a "notice" on gangways to advise departure times.

It is your responsibility to be on board at least 5 mins before and if late the ship departs without you, so one has to be fairly careful. They do sound the ships siren just before deadline.

Passengers can elect to do short sections of the voyage and stay overnight at any port then catch a later ship to continue the destination or in my particular instance, and I guess that was about 45 % of us, did the return journey, with about another 45 % getting off at Kirkenes (and flying onwards) whilst more people joined for the return part only. There are lots of options and packages available.

I departed 24th August, on the MV "Polarlys" (Northern Light), which was very well appointed and comfortable in the public areas and dining room.

This vessel was about gross tonnage 11,300, is 123 metres long, with both bow and stern thrusters, so it is extremely maneuverable, as I observed on the many occasions we berthed in confined space or entered thru' very small channels into narrow fjords.

There are 225 cabins and 478 berths on board. Cabins vary considerably from inside (no view) to luxury suites. Other ships of the line do have variations to passenger numbers.

Dining is open seating for both breakfast and lunch, which are buffet style with lots of options, but allocated tables for dinner, which is a set 3 course menu.

If it happens to be something that doesn't appeal to you, the "chef" will try to give an alternative and in my case I never had a problem.

I found the staff very efficient and friendly although at times, interpretation of each others language did cause some mirth???

The food can be a little heavy on the pickled/salted fish and cold meats but again there were always options to please most taste and there was never a shortage. The cheese platter was, well let's just say, I don't want a cholesterol test at the moment and from all reports the desserts were fantastic too (I don't eat them).

On day 5 they had a wonderful seafood buffet (including the famous Russian King Crabs with its long legs) which was enjoyed by everyone on board.

There was a mixture of weather encountered from warm blue sky days to quite blustery/ stormy seas in a couple of regions (these were not long in time -say up to 2.5/3 hours, as mostly we had islands or land protecting on both sides of the vessel.)

I guess that goes with the fact that we travelled from below the Arctic Circle which is at 66 degrees 33' N, crossed it on day 5, our most northerly town visited was Honningsvåg, at 70 degree 59' N, whilst the land point was at Nordkyn 71deg 08' N.

During the trip, many excursions are available from say 30 mins city sights walks up to 6 hour duration by coach or smaller boats (which allow entry into places the big ships can't go). These can be pre purchased before your departure or can be booked on board subject to availability.

They vary from traveling thru' some spectacular mountain scenery, visiting glaciers, husky viewing, sea eagle and bird watching to a midnight concert (by a trio) in Tromsø's magnificent Cathedral.

Everyone loved this one in particular.

On the longer trips, what happens is that one joins at a current port and then is "delivered" to catch up the ship at a port further along the coast. It is extremely efficient.

To describe the scenery is difficult because, although it is mainly fantastic fjords with narrow entrances and channels, surrounded by snow capped magnificent mountain ranges, and low lying islands, it keeps changing along the route.

There are lots of quaint colourful fishing villages and the people encountered are very friendly and helpful.

I was never bored at any time (and most passengers I spoke too on board seemed to agree), even when the weather took a turn for the worse and believe me we did strike a couple of very icy days in the far north, so take warm clothes and a good waterproof jacket if you decide to visit this part of the world.

We had some brilliant sunsets back-dropped with the mountains.

There were many highlights including the spectacular Geiranger and Trollsfjord Fjords, towns of Tromsø, Hammersfest, Sandnessjøen, The Lofoten Islands and the border for Russia. There really is quite a variety of options to suit most people's interest.

It was interesting to hear the stories about the harsh conditions under the German Occupancy and I was lucky to visit Harstad and Kirkenes which suffered intense damage during the bombing as the Russians counter attacked.

The Germans also destroyed a vast number of villages and crops, leaving the locals with little to survive on. There is no doubt in my mind that they are still extremely grateful to the Russians for their liberation.

I visited a couple of very good "war museums" en route and the Krigsminne at Svolvær has a wonderful selection of memorabilia with an emphasis on uniformed "combatants" and small arms used in the area.

There is lots of information and data on the large German battleships that "hid" in the fjords during the war, particularly "Tirpitz", "Scharnhorst", "Gneisenau" (not sure of spelling Alan) and "Bismark".

I was on a tour where they showed us an original iron ore mine tunnel (now a monument) that became home (for 2 months in Autumn 1944) for 2,500 of the inhabitants of the destroyed town of Kirkenes until they were liberated by the Russian. Ten children were born during that time.



A Norwegian Coastal Voyage (continued)...

It is only a short distance to the famous Arctic Convoy port of Murmansk.

The border at Storskog, has about 120,000 crossings border annually.

The one important piece of information to anyone who anticipates travelling to Scandinavia is that it is an extremely expensive part of the world. Hotels and food in general are about double what we pay and alcohol is very costly. A beer or glass of wine was about \$14 Aust., a \$15 bottle of wine here

– about \$82 and a Rum \$18 +. A Big Mac deal was about \$20 and an average fish and chips meal at local market was about \$25.

So make sure you're on good terms with your bank manager.

(Our kind thanks to "Scotty" for this story, and if any member would like to view a DVD about this trip or on a previous trip involving the Alaska Marine Highway Passage, please contact me and I will be happy to post it to you.)

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2008 Annual “Mixed” Reunion and “Fund-Raiser” Results

Our attendance was down a bit to what we normally have attending but 23 members and partners attended our annual luncheon at “our” hotel—the Berkeley, on Saturday 15th November.

It was a very pleasant day and not too hot. The management (Michael) has changed the place around a bit.

We were seated in what used to be the “Poker Machine” area and I doubt we would be able to accommodate 30 in the area where we were seated. However, it was sufficient, on the day, for our group.

Our committee member, Michael Rowley, said “Grace” and afterwards our other committee member, Warren Barnes, gave the “Loyal Toast”.

We all had plenty to eat with a good selection of “Hot and Cold” foods placed around the table. There was “soft and hard” drink available on request and I feel sure everyone had a good time.

We try and make the afternoon a pleasing experience for all who come along.

It’s nice to see each other again, some, like Joe and Judy Gatty, came from Victoria after a long absence and also John and Allison Phillips said the last “re-union” they came to was at Petersham RSL.

It was also Noel Tame’s first re-union luncheon.

It was a nice gesture for our Patron, Ray Hyslop, to not only be present but donate a nice “bottle of red” for our raffle.

Our President, Derek Cannon, thanked everyone for their attendance and brought them “up to scratch” about our “Bugle”(which was passed around for all to admire) and the RAAMC Association Inc. meetings and the latest on the RF Day march and the ANZAC day March, (both in 2009) meetings held recently at ANZAC House.

(These items are, hopefully, in this new magazine, I say hopefully because I am not sure if they will have to hold some material back for our ANZAC Newsletter!)

Warren Barnes presented Derek with a “Certificate” awarded to our ASM, Fred Bell. Warren collected it at a RF

Day meeting some weeks ago as Fred was not able to be present on the night. (This has now been posted to Fred).

Warren is also sincerely thanked for all the effort he goes to in making sure our raffle is a success. Warren supplied the first two prizes (The book—“Cosgrove”—a signed book on the life of General Peter Cosgrove and another book—“Walking with the ANZACS”)

After Derek had finished speaking, we asked Judy Gatty to “draw” the winning tickets.

John Phillips had the winning ticket and chose “Cosgrove”, Noel Tame was second and chose Ray Hyslop’s “red” and third ticket drawn was won by Jim Ellis (This has since been posted to him).

Throughout the year we pre-sold \$250 to our members and also sold a further \$80 of tickets at our luncheon. We sincerely thank all the members and friends who bought a raffle ticket to assist with our finances, it is very much appreciated.

The following people are thanked for making our Annual Re-Union another memorable day.

Steve BALDICK, Warren BARNES, Derek and Edna CANNON, Alan and Ruth CURRY, Nelson and Margaret FIORENTINO, Joe and Judy GATTY, Ray HYSLOP, Philip and Trish McGRATH, John and Allison PHILLIPS, Diana ROTHFIELD, Michael and Annette ROWLEY, Bill and Kerry RYLANDS, Noel TAME and Brian and Gail TAMS.

APOLOGIES were received from:- John A’Quilina, Suresh Badami, Fred Bell, Don Booth, “Scotty” Boyd, David Cavanaugh, Bill Clutterbuck, Barry Collins, Terry Crawley, John Davies, John de Witt, Jim Ellis, Laurie Farrugia, Garry Flood, John and Margaret Gorrell, Ray Grant, Max Heydon, Terry Langworthy, Edwin Lowery, Huss Mahomet, Michael Moroney, Charles O’Meally John Overton, Barry and Heather Perigo, Bob Reid, Jim and John Roche, Sr. Elizabeth Sheard, George Sip, John Troy, Matthew and Kate Vercoe, John Weaver, Bruce Whittet, Don Wikner, Warwick Wilkinson and John Woodhead.



(Our President, Derek Cannon, imparting some pertinent info.)



(Taken from the other end of the table thanks to “Murphy’s Law” the “flash” didn’t work!)



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ITEMS of INTEREST

ANZAC Day 2009

The State Secretary of the RSL (NSW Branch), Mr Chris Perrin, is seeking volunteers to act as a "Marshal" on the day. His request was sent through the Reserve Forces Day Council and they, in turn, wrote to us.

You can still march with our Association. Volunteers would be given pre-march briefings.

If you feel you could do this job, please contact me in the first instance and I will send you a copy of his letter.

Whilst on ANZAC Day matters—RSL HQ (NSW) sent another letter, inviting our Association for "input", regarding next year's march.

Our President, Derek Cannon, represented us and also, by request, the RAAMC Association Inc (NSW Branch).

Derek said there was about 2 hours of general discussion (with about 40 or so attendees) until 3 proposals were put forward;

- (i) Favoured by the RSL March Committee:- Orbat to be Army WW 2 Veterans/Navy all conflicts/Army post WW 2/Air Force all conflicts/Commonwealth/Allies/Descendants etc.
- (ii) Navy all conflicts/Army all conflicts/Air Force all conflicts/Commonwealth plus descendants/Allies plus descendants/Descendants etc. AND
- (iii) Navy all conflicts plus descendants/Army all conflicts plus descendants/Air Force all conflicts plus descendants/Commonwealth plus descendants/Allies plus descendants.

Derek said although (1) was favoured by the March Committee and (3) was least favoured by the March Committee—The majority present voted for (3).

Derek added that this proposal may not be "carried" by the FULL March Committee, which will give its recommendation to the State Council.

Derek brought up the issue of whether the RAAMC Association would be able to have a vehicle/s in front of the Banner for any of our infirmed members. It was stated that this would not be allowed BUT if the RAAMC had any infirmed member/s that required to be placed in a vehicle, they may be allocated a position in a vehicle at the head of the march—if any of our Association members, who can't march because of health reasons, would like to take part in the 2009 ANZAC Day March and be placed in a vehicle, PLEASE contact me so that arrangements can be made ASAP.

The other issue was our Association (and all other Medical Corps Associations/personnel) marching behind the RAAMC banner. The RSL have no problem with this.

An "edited" History on the "Battle for Australia Story" is attached, for your thoughts and/or comments.

5 Field Ambulance Bugle

I wrote a little about this WW 1 bugle in our September '05 issue but earlier this year the President of the 2/5th Field Ambulance A.I.F. Association, Victor "Bluey" Davis (and he is also one of our members), contacted me to ask if we would like to become the "trustees" of this bugle.

I asked "Bluey" if he could send me the details of their yearly reunion so that both Derek (our President) and myself could go to Melbourne to accept this "Treasure".

Unfortunately, Derek had a family health problem and could not make it but he asked if I could go with my wife, Ruth, and accept on behalf of our Association.

The 2/5th Re-Union was held at the Mercure Hotel in Swanston Street from 11.30am on Caulfield Cup eve (Friday, 17th October).

It was a delightful "mixed" re-union with about 40 or so attendees—this included four "Originals" of whom three are our current members (Neil Barrie, "Bluey" Davis and Tom Pritchard—unfortunately "Bluey" was an apology and was not able to make it due to his oxygen bottles not arriving at his unit).

Ian Eldridge, the 2/5th secretary, and his wife, Joy, did a marvellous job in organising the luncheon and especially making Ruth and I feel very much at home in everyone's company.

What most of us did not know was that at the end of WW 2 when the 2/5th was de-mobbed, the bugle "fell into the hands" of the QM—Ted Taplin and it lay hidden amongst his treasures.

Ted passed away a few years ago and his daughter (Mrs. Bev. Binge) was cleaning out her dad's "keepsakes" etc and came across this old silver bugle—which she nearly threw out, until she peered closely at the worn inscription.

The inscription reads; Presented to the 2/5th Field Ambulance A.I.F. together with the honour and prestige of the original unit. The 5 Field Ambulance Reunion Club. Sydney. August, 1940. (It was made by --it looks like-- "Boosep & Fawkes Ltd of London).

"Bluey" was the bugler for the 2/5th so everyone naturally thought he had it.

He was overjoyed to be re-united, after so many years, with the bugle—and he would still play it at their reunions.

I had the pleasure of having it presented to me, by their Secretary, Alan.

He read the following to the gathering;

"To the 5 Field Ambulance Association:

Since receiving your bugle in August 1940, it has travelled afar and on four occasions during WW 2 it left Australia with us. Firstly to Tobruk in the Middle East, and then to the islands of New Guinea and to places which included Milne Bay, the Ramu Valley and finally Balikpapan in Borneo. Unfortunately, upon returning to Australia with us, the bugle was lost for many years before being re-discovered and returned to our care just a few years ago, by our quartermaster's daughter, Bev





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ITEMS OF INTEREST *(continued)*...

Binge. Since then it has been played at a number of reunions by our bugler, Victor ("Bluey") Davis. The bugle has been much treasured throughout the years and we would now like to return it to your safekeeping, with the best wishes of the 2/5th Field Ambulance." October 17th 2008.

In responding, I read this letter from our President, Derek Cannon;

"Mr. President, 2/5th Members, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the 5th Field Ambulance Association I would like to express our appreciation and honour to have this historic and symbolic Bugle presented to us. Bugles have a long and distinguished history in military operations, dating back to the Revolutionary War. The Bugle Calls have evolved from the Continental Army contacts with the French and English armies during the American Revolution. In our time the Bugle Call has come to be most used for Reveille (Rise and Shine) and Last Post or Taps (Lights Out). But of course it was used for a general definitive signalling system of calls with the object of eliminating confusion evident during the American Civil War. 5 Field Ambulance Association will treasure and welcome the role of custodian of this most treasured piece of Medical Corps History. I thank the donor for keeping it safe all these years. I also thank our Secretary, Alan Curry and his wife Ruth for travelling to Melbourne to accept this piece of memorabilia. I wish you all a successful reunion. Derek Cannon RFD Lt.Col. (Rtd), President, 5 Field Ambulance Association."

I also read a letter that I had prepared;

"5 Field Ambulance Bugle:

This Bugle has been played every day since March 1915—at Gallipoli and all the battlefields on the Western Front that has involved 5 Field Ambulance. It stopped playing in 1921. Almost 19 years passed, then in August 1940, at a ceremony, Dr. Roy Park, C.O. of 5 Field Ambulance, handed over this silver Bugle to the 2/5th Field Ambulance A.I.F.

In WW 2, when the 2/5th was formed—this Bugle began playing again—and every day, in Libya, Tobruk, Syria, Papua New Guinea, Milne Bay, Buna, Gona, Sanananda –there are many, many more battle areas. This Bugle, which is close to 100 years old would have possibly been handled by about 50 or so people but I think you could count on one hand the number of people who have actually played it. This "Treasure" has been entrusted to our Association with the solemn promise that it will be safe-guarded until the day our Association is disbanded. Should that day arise, we, the custodians, will ensure it is passed on to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra—with all its known history."

After the luncheon I boarded a train to visit "Bluey". (He lives in Ringwood, about 20 minutes from Flinders Street Station).

What a surprise he and his wife, Betty, received when I turned up at their unit.

I told "Bluey" and Betty they were very much "missed" at the re-union and filled them in on what took place. "Bluey", as sick as he was, still "blew" a few notes for us.

He and Betty are a wonderful couple. They were not blessed with children but they have many, many good friends. It was a pleasure to be in their company.

Since arriving back home I was introduced to Mrs. Margaret Brewer (her husband, Allan, is also a member of our Sub Branch) who is a member of the Tilligerry Craft Class, and she offered to make us a carry bag to keep our Bugle.

She contacted me just recently to say the article was finished.

I went to their "craft" class and was taken aback at her finished product.

It is a real work of art and I could see that much love and care was put into making this carry case for the Bugle.

I expected to see maybe a felt fabric "draw-string" maroon coloured, carry bag—as I said—I was overwhelmed.

I took it to our re-union and the result was what you read regarding our Annual Re-Union. We have sent Margaret a "Thank You" letter.



Hunter—Military Book Launch

I was able to notify our members on email, of the book "launch" —"MILITARY of the HUNTER" —"Citizen Defence Forces Newcastle and Hunter Valley—1855-2005"

The "Launch" took place at Bullecourt Barracks on Saturday, 8th November from 1.30pm. Decorations and Medals were to be worn and the proceedings were to be opened by the Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP.

I had good intention of being in attendance but was away at Port Macquarie and did not return home until it was all over.

One of our members, Darren Waterson, has ordered one of the books for his dad as a Christmas present and I have ordered one for the use of any of our members to read—please contact me if you would like to read this book or if you would like to purchase one at \$35 plus postage.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Mr Don MELVILLE gave me some information regarding his dad who was a driver with 5 Field Ambulance during WW 1. (See 2'08 and 3'08 Newsletters.)

Don was going to visit the Somme battlefield to seek more info about his father's experience, so I put Don in touch with our member, Don Jarman, whom I thought may have been of some assistance.

As it turned out, after a phone call, both Don's knew each other!

Don (Melville) had met Don (Jarman) on many occasions some years ago in Leeton regarding Rotary Club activities. They "chatted" about old times and a few shared experiences. (What a small world, remarked Don (Melville).)



Don is going to keep me/us informed on any developments that may come to light during his "search".

He commented on "The ANZAC on the Wall" poem (see 1'08 Newsletter), where I had stated that the author was "unknown"?

Don said he recently attended a "Bush Poetry" night in Leeton and this poem was presented by one of the local bush verse fans.

The poet quoted the author as Jim Brown from Heathmont in Victoria.

Out of curiosity I contacted Telstra to find out about this "Jim Brown" and sure enough I got on to him straight away and he confirmed to me that he is indeed the author of "The ANZAC on the Wall".

Jim said he has just finished a poem about the recent discovery of the mass grave in Fromelles and he says it is as good as "The ANZAC" poem.

He kindly sent me a copy of his NEW poem titled "FROMELLES" and it is included in this issue for your thoughts.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The RAAMC Eastern Region History Committee

has elected a new President, Colonel Bill Molloy. Our Association wishes Bill a productive and fruitful tenure.

Bill is still collating information on the CMF history of the Medical Corps and although he has collected a lot of information to date he has a lot more people to interview and record. This is in the "in the pipeline".

Do you think you have something to give to Bill by way of your medical association during your days in the CMF? Do you possess any artefact/memorabilia that has a medical story attached to it? Bill would be very interested in your story, and any photographs you may have also! All accepted articles will be kindly acknowledged.



NOW—apart from "Bluey", who lives in Melbourne, do we have another Bugler in our Association?



The RAAMC Association Inc.

had their last meeting for the year on the 28th November, at Victoria Barracks. (Next meeting is 6 Feb. 2009, 11am at Vic. Barracks.)

(Prior to the commencement of the meeting, a number of the committee witnessed a wonderful parade by 1 HSB. It was their 40th Anniversary and was not widely advertised, which was a pity because the Unit was magnificent and deserved to be seen by more than just a handful of people.

Their Parade Ground Drill and Marching was first class, as was the bearing and performance of the Band. The Inspecting Officer was Major Don Chapman CSC, who gave a short, stirring speech.)

The two major recommendations from the committee meeting were:-

- (i) That ALL Medical Units are invited to march in the one block behind the RAAMC Corps Banner with any individual Association Banners following as per the Order of Battle. And
- (ii) Arrangements to be made to cater for at least 40 people (ALL are invited) to attend the Sydney Masonic Centre at the conclusion of the ANZAC March (\$55 per head Buffet food and drink)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The RESERVE FORCES DAY "LAUNCH"

took place at the Shore School in North Sydney on Saturday, 29th November.

A number of our key personnel from our Association were not able to be present including our President, Derek Cannon, Suresh Badami (our NSW Honorary Colonel), our ASM, Fred Bell and myself and Brian Tams. We tendered our apologies to the RFD Committee.

We were represented by Bill Molloy, Warren Barnes (who was Standard Bearer for his Association) and Steve Baldick. Steve said it was a marvellous day and a credit to the RFD Committee.

The 2009 Reserve Forces Day Parade will NOT entail a "street" march. The Ceremony will now take place in the Sydney Domain.

It will be a celebration to mark 70 Years and will have as their "Guest of Honour" all the original "39er's" they can muster PLUS the 1948 "Originals".

The plan is for a display of massed bands whilst the Formations and Associations from the various Division and Brigades to "Form Up" and March Past behind their various Associations' Standard Bearers.

(An "insert" was placed in the RSL (NSW Branch) Nov/Dec Issue—"Sidelines". I will write more in 2009.)

MEDALS (Kind thanks to DH & A Issue 6, Nov. 08 to "edit" some content.)

It has come to the attention that "some" medal mounters are adding "unauthorised" medals to their client's medal sets on the claim that the person is entitled to additional awards, and then they charge the client for the extra medal/s.

The only agency which has the authority to determine eligibility for Defence Medals is the Dept. of Defence. The unlawful wearing of a Decoration may bring a fine or 6 months in prison OR both, if found guilty.

NATO Medals are causing some confusion among both serving and non serving members of the ADF. A NATO Medal is a Foreign Award and as such they are issued by NATO. Australia is NOT a member of NATO.

For and Australian to officially ACCEPT and wear a foreign award, our Government has to receive a FORMAL OFFER by the country or international organisation, wishing to confer the award.

The NATO Non-Article 5 Medal with the Clasp "ISAF" was formally offered to Australia and accepted in 2007 by the Chief of the Defence Force on the authority of the Australian Government. (ISAF-- stands for International Security Assistance Force and refers to NATO operations in Afghanistan.) If you have received this medal (or any other Foreign Award) DO NOT WEAR it UNLESS your name has been individually approved by the Directorate of Honours and Awards.

There is a form available to complete—"Application for Approval to Wear Foreign Awards"—see the website—www.defence.gov.au/medals.

Do you have any Medals that have been LOST, STOLEN or DAMAGED?

There is a Lt.Col. Glyn Llanwarne (currently serving in IRAQ) who has made it his "hobby/mission" to return medals, that comes into his possession, to their owners.

As at July 2008, Glyn has re-united 392 medals to their families.

Glyn's web site is: www.lostmedalsaustralia.com and his email is: llanwarne80@hotmail.com

Any queries on medals—phone 1800.111.321

Have you heard of (i) Female Relative Badge and (ii) Mothers' and Widows' Badge?

During WW 1 these badges were issued to RAN and AIF on Operational Service and in WW 2 it was broadened to encompass the three Services.

The badges were only issued to female relatives and were to signify the relationship of the serviceman or if he/she had been Killed in Action. The badges were numbered but not related to the serviceman's number. They were NOT automatically issued but required an Application to be lodged and assessed.

Do you have a female relative that might be entitled to one OR both these badges? (Contact Archives on 1300.886.881 or Email: ref@naa.gov.au)



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MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS

John A'QUILINA enjoys our newsletters and he passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

John asked for any information regarding the RAAMC during the wars and I sent him our 7-page document (edited) of 5 Fd.Amb. in WW 1 and (the late) Lloyd Tann's book "The 2/5th Field Ambulance A.I.F.—a Unit History". I also sent John a copy of our "Honour Roll" and the DVD "Siege of Tobruk" values.

As some of our members know, John comes from Malta. He was 13 years old when WW 2 broke out and due to a mistake on his birth certificate, was able to join the army, at 17, and was posted to the Military hospital at Imtarfa (known as 90 General Hospital).

John and his family endured the longest siege in British military history which began on the 11th June 1940 and ceased on the 20th July 1943. The Island was bombed continuously by Italian and German aircraft during those 3,340 alerts. John's home was one of the very few that survived the raids.

The Axis forces had the Island "on its knees" and ready for invasion on a few occasions but it was not to be. The people were almost "starved into submission" but somehow managed to survive.

The endurance of these peoples and the soldiers, sailors and airmen who were placed at Malta were true heroes.

King George VI awarded the Island of Malta the GEORGE CROSS. The Citation read..."To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the island fortress of Malta to bear witness to a heroism that will long be famous in history."

(Thank you, John, for your letter and purchases. I hope this finds you and your wife, Edna, in good health. I thank you for the loan of the book "Fortress Malta", some of which I have quoted above—what a fascinating book.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

John OVERTON passes on his good wishes to all his friends in the Association and enjoys reading about them. He was particularly pleased when the RAAMC Association Inc. came to fruition.

He said John Straskye and Shaun Fletcher deserve a lot of credit for their endeavours to bring all the medical associations under "A larger umbrella".

It will be a great opportunity to, especially on ANZAC Day, all march behind the Medical Corps Banner with our own individual Association Banners following, and afterwards, hopefully, meet at Victoria Barracks or "somewhere" for lunch and refreshments.

John said The RAAMC Association Inc. may also act as a "sounding board" where common interests and exchange of information can take place.

He said this can only make us more united as "the curators of the traditions of the RAAMC".

John was very pleased to see the position of "Honorary Colonel" of the Medical Corps (NSW) pass on to our good member, Suresh Badami OAM, where the "traditions" will continue in good stead.

(Thank you, John, for your letter and kind thoughts.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

John ROCHE passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and wishes them all a "Happy Christmas". John wrote that he reads the "Rats of Tobruk" news because a few of his patients (and mates) were from the 2/1st Pioneers and the Field Ambulances.

He recently came across an article on Norma Hutton (wife of our late Arthur) and he enclosed it. (I contacted Norma to see if she minded me putting it in our newsletter—she did not mind at all and it is included as a separate "Feature Item".)

John said that he and his brother, Jim, "by-passed" World Youth Day and caught a train to Melbourne for a dedication service, at the Shrine of Remembrance, of the statue "Cobbers"—a jointly funded project between the "Rats of Tobruk" and the DVA.

John said it is located at the Domain corner—not far from "Weary" Dunlop's statue—and faces The Shrine.

John wrote that about 1,000 people attended the Dedication and included many from 15 Brigade ("of which I am a member").

The statue has red and white colour patches of the 60th Bn. and have also included a red and black of the 59th Bn. to show both were in it. (John said he has visited the original statue at the War Cemetery).

John also wrote about the death of one of his patients.

He was a 102 year old man and was a bachelor and "ex" bank manager.

John said he had a picture on his wall of Capt. Clarence Jeffery, of the 34th Bn. who, posthumously, won a VC at Villers-Bretonneaux. It was the old man's uncle.

John said that he saw Capt. Jeffery's grave when he visited Villers-Bretonneaux whilst on a tour recently. (John was very interested because he was RMO of 34 Bn.—the Illawarra Regt—in 5 Bde with 5 Fd.Amb.)

He said the old man was the son of a mine manager at Aberdare, near Newcastle, and he used to say to John that a good bank manager always reads the Sydney Morning Herald, daily, to read the Deaths and Probate.

He also told John that a good bank manager always had a bottle of whiskey in his bottom drawer for good customers.

John said even in the Nursing Home he had a bottle—"once I counted three."





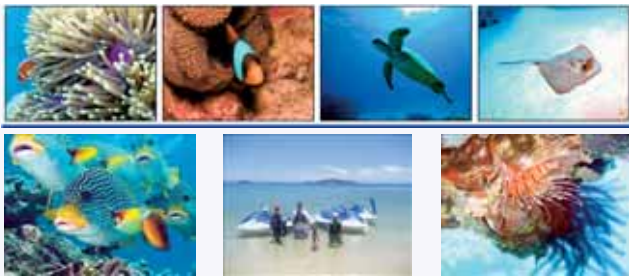
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MESSAGE FROM MEMBERS *(continued)*...

John also mentioned about Warwick Wilkinson's recent visit to Ypres—where his father was wounded—and the man who carried his wounded father out was himself killed a week later.

He also enclosed a "clipping" of a stamp depicting a monument to "The Liverpool War Heroes" and the central figure of the monument is of Capt. Noel Chavasse VC and Bar, MC, RAMC. MA, MB, BCh, MRCS, LRCP.

The monument is to be sited in the city centre, Abercromby Square, opposite the Bishop's Palace. It will be a permanent memorial to all 15 Liverpool-born VC holders.

Capt. Noel Chavasse is the only man to be awarded TWO Victoria Crosses during WW 1.

John finished off his letter saying... "hope you can read this as I've had a single malt—for medicinal purposes—if not, take it to a pharmacist—preferably over 70!"

(Good on you, John, thank you for your informative letter.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Jim ELLIS enjoys reading our news and he particularly enjoyed the last one because he read about old friends.

He asked to pass on his good wishes and Christmas greetings to his friends in the Association.

Jim said the article on the Spanish Flu' brought back memories of his mother-in-law.

She was an Australian Army nursing sister and nursed the victims of the flu' at North Head Quarantine Station.

He said there is a plaque in the Sydney Hospital Chapel for two nurses who died in the epidemic.

Jim was very interested to read the story of (the late) Dr. Clive W. Thompson.

He said exhaustion and stress was most real in parts of Dr. Thompson's story but he went on to perform with tremendous credit and courage.

Jim pointed out that Winston Churchill was stressed and depressed in WW 2 when the merchant shipping losses were at their worst then he went on and rallied the free world.

Then there was Clive of India who got so depressed that he tried to commit suicide, failed, then thought that he may have been destined for something better—and was proved right.

Jim also enjoyed the detail outlined in Don Melville's dad's experience during WW 1, in his diary entries.

(Thank you, Jim, for your letter and kind words. I still retain the memory of you performing "minor surgery" on my brother Pat, when you removed warts from his neck and arms. We were all in camp at Green Hills (in the early 60's) and it was a bright sunny morning as he sat on a chair outside the medical tent whilst you did your thing! Thank you, for your kind gesture of Life Membership for Andrew, it is very much appreciated.)

(I also wish to thank Jim for letting me know of the death of Capt. W.A (Arthur) Littler MM in late August. I got to know

Arthur when I was working as a Tally Clerk on the Sydney waterfront during the early 60's (Arthur was a port inspector) and although I did not know of his wartime background at the time, he always struck me as a very honest and straight talking man.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Steve BALDICK sends his good wishes to all his friends in the Association.

He recently attended two "Bill Molloy lunches", one in mid September and there were about 25 in attendance including Warren Barnes, Jim Roche and Warwick Wilkinson.

Bill had arranged to have our other good member, Dr. Bob McNerney, to be the "guest speaker" and Steve said it was an excellent and hard-hitting talk of some of Bob's war-time experience. He was hoping it was "taped" so that I might get a copy for our Newsletter.

Steve said he normally attends these lunches with our good friend, John de Witt, but Steve put John's apology in due to his ill health. (At time of writing, John is an in-patient in the Sutherland Hospital and our prayers are with him.)

The second luncheon was early in November and had Lt.Col. Paul Murphy (of TBS Travel) as "Guest Speaker". Steve said it was an excellent address mainly on the recent visit to Villers-Bretonneux and the monumental battle that involved our troops, over 90 years ago. His presentation was backed up by extracts from two DVD's which portrayed the day-by-day activities of the group that recently toured the battlefields. Steve said some of those present at the lunch had been on this particular tour and praised the record of it. He said it will soon be available to purchase at an estimated cost of \$50 for the 2.

Steve is looking forward to seeing us at the Re-Union.

(Thank you, Steve, for your letters, and your visits to John.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Estelle LINDSAY wrote to say what a great shock it was to finally meet me.

I had been to the funeral of our late member (and a work mate), Les Walford, which was held in North Ryde cemetery (mid September), and as it was near to Epping I thought I would call in and say hullo to Estelle and her son, Brian.

I could not call them on my mobile as it was "flat" so I took a chance and hoped they would be at home—they were.

I rang the bell and this rather stockily built chap emerged from the side of the house and asked if he could help me?

I announced myself and after a short pause, the "penny dropped"!



MESSAGE FROM MEMBERS *(continued)*...

"Alan Curry", he said, "come in, but we'll go around the back and surprise Mum."

I was a bit dubious because Estelle is 93 and I did not want to "frighten" her.

I need not have worried because she was thrilled to put a face to name. She said it was the best thing she has ever done when she joined our Association.

She astounded me when she said she had memorised the poem "ANZAC on the Wall" and I thought she was joking, but when she recited about 10 stanzas of the poem I could not believe my ears.

She recited it with much thought and said she had about 5 copies made for friends and family.

It was one of the best 20 minutes I have spent. She is an inspiration and her son, Brian, is a very dutiful son.

She wrote to also say that if she manages to live until October 2009 she will have lived in her home in Epping for 70 years. She said she came there as a bride in October 1939 and..."I am still here!"

She said the old house is so full of many happy memories—caring for children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. There have been countless dogs, cats, fowls, guinea pigs, birds etc, as the children had to have pets.

Estelle said she has always liked dogs and it was apparent as I entered her home.

These two little dogs greeted me—a "Jack Russell" cross (named "Maisy") and a "Terrier" cross, (named "Tiddlywinks" or "Tiddles" for short)—in a very affectionate way.)

They are 9 and 8 respectively and have never got under Estelle's feet—"they seem to know I can't walk properly." Estelle likes the warmer weather coming.

(Thank you, Estelle, for your cards and letters. I hope this finds you and Brian in good spirits.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Scotty" BOYD has recently returned from a memorable overseas trip to the Russian border. (I have placed "Scotty's interesting story in our "Features", in our new magazine.)

When he arrived back home our (3'08) Newsletter was waiting for him.

Scotty said a real "surprise" was to read that his ex RSM, Bill Thompson, had joined us. Scotty said he, Bill and his wife, Denise, became good friends during their time with 5 Fd Amb at Randwick—he passes on his good wishes to them both.

He apologised for not being at our Annual Re-Union and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and wishes them a "Happy Christmas" and healthy New Year for 2009.

(Thank you, Scotty, for your email and story. It is good to have you safely back home.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Warren BARNES asked to pass on his good wishes for the festive season and is looking forward to "catching up" at our Annual Luncheon. (Thank you, Warren, for your email. We also thank you for representing us at the RFD Presentation Night in September and accepting our Certificate.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Arthur WALTON is my cousin and also one of our members. Arthur was a sergeant in the 18 LAA (CMF) and thanked me for posting him their recent book "Take Post" and quite a few of the 18 LAA's newsletters.

(I was at a recent Sub Branch meeting when our secretary read out some correspondence about 18 LAA, so I contacted their secretary to tell him about Arthur. He was most pleased to hear of his whereabouts!)

Arthur is still very sick and in remission of lung cancer and I recently sent him some emails from my eldest son, Stephen, who is a builder and working in Doomadgee in the Gulf country.

(Stephen had also sent some photos of himself hunting wild pigs with some aborigine elders and then I had sent these and a family newsletter which, in part, was describing some of our holiday spots on the coast, to Arthur.)

(Arthur is married to his wife Yuyi and they have lived on 3rd Avenue in New York for over 30 years.)

He wrote back to say..."Thanks mate, it all sounds so idyllic—here we are living in the shadow of the Chrysler Building, a "stone's throw" from Times Square and the U.N. around the corner—in a noisy, hustling city that never sleeps.

So different, but I have never forgotten my roots, and I'm ever grateful for the life I enjoyed before NY—you may detect a slight twang in my accent, but I think I should be forgiven that after 33 years."

Arthur has since been in touch with some of his old mates (who were wondering what had happened to him?) from the 18 LAA.

(Thank you, Arthur, for your letters and emails, all the family is thinking of you and our prayers are with you. We hope that when you receive this magazine it gives you a bit of cheer.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

John WEAVER passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and hopes they all have a happy and healthy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year for 2009.

He apologised for not being able to get to our Re-Union.

John and Maureen recently returned from a 14 day visit to Thailand.



MESSAGE FROM MEMBERS (continued)...

They recently had 4 days in Bangkok which, as John put it, was "retail therapy" for Maureen with all the shopping malls etc. They did manage some touring and visits to interesting places like the Royal Palace and a barge trip. John said there are over 33,000 temples in Thailand..."but we only saw two!"

Then it was off to Phuket for 10 days. The highlight being a "surprise" visit to their eldest son, Peter, and his family (from Victoria). They did not know Mum and Dad were coming over!

John said the food was delicious, especially the seafood. The Thai people are always smiling and very courteous—and they love their King and their Royal Family. He said ..."No wonder they call Thailand the "Land of Smiles"."

They both recommend Thailand and hope to re-visit again in the near future IF the \$Aus holds up! And his health is ok.

He hopes to visit the Bridge on the River Kwai and Hellfire Pass (being a full day trip each).

(Thank you, John, for your letter. We will miss your presence at our Re-Union.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Don BOOTH and his friend (and our member), Terry Langworthy, had a trip overseas earlier in the year (a one night stopover in Narita—Japan) and one of the other stopovers was at Portsmouth in England.

They visited the HMS Warrior, at which they purchased a DVD, and if any member is interested in this 1880 war ship then this DVD is just for you. Unfortunately it is all silent and consists of "still slides".

Let me know if you would like me to post this DVD to you.

They also had champagne on the "London Eye", which is the new HUGE ferris wheel in London, then a cruise down the Thames and then it was off to Spain!

Don said they had a rotten 12 hour flight to Malaga and found the car they had ordered was not available BUT they were given a large Mercedes.

They weren't given any instructions about the vehicle, especially the applying and releasing the hand brake—(apply with the foot and release by pulling a handle on the dash! It took a bit of figuring out).

He had trouble adjusting to driving on the right hand side of the road but when they reached the little village of Alora, in the mountains, the streets were so narrow that one had to drive down the centre of the road! Don was sure the villagers were grateful when they departed.

When they left Spain they headed for Exeter and Devon, which is Terry's home. He was looking forward to visiting all his relatives and old friends.

They spent 14 days visiting and touring around and had a lovely dinner at Rick Stynes Restaurant and stayed at his hotel in Padstow, Cornwall.

Their next sojourn was to Ireland (Eire) and in a "bloody great Ford".

Don said it was great to drive until a car came in the opposite direction, and in some cases, a push bike, he said the looks on their faces were similar to the looks of the people in Spain—very invigorating!

He said they could only spend 9 days here—much to the delight of the local drivers who could go back to "terrifying" the tourists.

Then back to Japan, with 3 nights in Tokyo. "We got to see Mount Fujiama and had a trip on the Bullet Train BUT all too soon it was over and then, back to Cairns and POVERTY!"

They also sent a parcel with their letter and it contained a Harley Davidson Pack. It commemorates HD's 105 years of great motor cycles.

It consists of, among other things, a leather wallet and other "keep-sake" memorabilia—all in a shiny brown, card-board box.

Don thought our Association may like to use it as a "Door Prize" at our Re-Union but I think it would be better to go to a Harley Davidson enthusiast.

Therefore, if you are a motor bike enthusiast or even better, a HARLEY DAVIDSON owner/enthusiast, we would like to present this to you—courtesy of Don Booth and Terry Langworthy.

IF there be more than one member who would like this "Pack" we will put their names in a hat and draw the winner after our next meeting (ANZAC Day March 2009).

Don and Terry pass their good wishes for the Festive season to all their friends in the Association and hope they have a good re-union.

(Thank you, Don, for your very informative letter and gift. I hope we get some replies to go in the hat! It's good to have you both back home safe and sound.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

George DONNELLY is happy he joined our Association and was able to go through the addresses and email contacts to make contact with some old army mates.

He was thrilled when our treasurer, Brian Tams, said he certainly remembers him but Paul Shergold had a bit of difficulty to which George wrote that he will perform a brain re-charge on him.

George feels he has arrived "home".

(Thank you, George, I am glad you enjoy our newsletters and your new-found mates.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★





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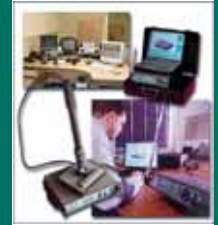
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MESSAGE FROM MEMBERS (continued)...

Don WIKNER passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and wishes them a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous NEW YEAR in 2009.

Don enjoys reading our newsletters and read with sadness about the passing of Brother Maltby and asked was it the same Arthur Maltby of FDS fame? He attached a photo taken in 1957 and said our good member, John de Witt may be able to verify this.

Yes Don, John did verify that this was Brother Basil Maltby.
(Thank you, Don, for your email and photo of the late Bro. Basil Maltby)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Rayda NOBLE kindly informed me of an email she received from her friend in Cairns.

There was a park named after one of the "Rats of Tobruk" and it is called the "David Trego Williams Park", and situated in Trinity Beach.

It has a gazebo mounted over these various small plaques that tell of the Siege of Tobruk. What a wonderful gesture and what determination from a lady to see this project come to fruition.

She also sent me photos of the naming of the "Rats of Tobruk" Park which is in Albert Park (Vic) and right opposite their "Rats" hall.

They had a small gathering and dedication and two of our members were present—Neil Barrie and Tom Pritchard.

Also included were some "cut-outs" from local newspapers.

One was in the Herald Sun (Oct 25 edition) about the WW 1 Bugle being presented to our Association.

The other interesting article was about "The Little White Soldier".

His statue stands at a place called "The Beauty Spot" which is on the Nepean Highway at Carrum, on the mouth of the Patterson River (Between Melbourne and Frankston).

He always faces east to watch the sunrise and is a reminder of what sacrifices were made to protect our land and enjoy the freedom we have today.

The city of Kingston has spent \$200,000 on landscaping and floodlighting with the latest addition of the planting of Rosemary Bushes. He is seen by the passing traffic and at night he is a beacon to the "boaties".

(Thank you, Rayda, they were great emails cut-outs you sent. I hope that when you read this, both you and Alan are in good spirits.)

Alan BECKERLEG asked to pass on his good wishes to all his friends in the Association and hopes they have a good reunion.

He also sent me a copy of the first and second issue of the 25th Bn Association's magazine "Black over Blue" and if any member would like to read these newsletter I would be most happy to post them to you. (Alan is a Vice President)

He also included a poem titled:-

"The Engineer" (by Ian Coate)

In times of great adversity, when backed against a wall.
When soldier's lives are on the line there's someone
you should call.

When obstacles become too great, do not give in to fear.
Get on your two-way radio and call an Engineer.

They find a way to overcome all problems in their way
Their skills of ingenuity will always save the day.

They're soldiers of ability to think outside the square

They'll do the jobs that have the risks,
which others wouldn't dare

They have a mind for making things that sets
them from the rest
and when it comes to breaking things,
they've proved they are the best

In battles past they've shown their worth,
they're cunning as a fox
the way they overcome their tasks is quite unorthodox.
Their soldier skills are dinki-di, as good as any grunt.
When battle starts they know their place
—they're always at the front.

So, if you need a helping hand, there's one
you should implore
The soldier from that canny place—the Engineer Corps
and if you need a real good mate to join you for a beer
you know the man to call on—that's right
—the Engineer.

(Thank you, Alan, for your letter and inserts,
we hope this finds you in good health.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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(This poem is a tribute to the missing ANZACS at Fromelles, and the Greek-born Aussie schoolteacher, Lambis Englezos, who set his heart on finding them.)

"FROMELLES"

(Author—Jim Brown)

Struth! It's really bonzer, back in my home town again.
In the years I've been away to war, not much has changed since then.
The old main street, I swear, it never looked so good to me
the shopfronts and verandahs still show pride and dignity.
The settlers chose the townsite well—beside the river flowing.
The burning yearning to come home what kept me going.
I wish Jack was with me now to see our old home town
We're as best mates, we never let each other down.

There's Bert the Blacksmith—what a great bloke through and through
gathered 'round his smithy's forge—he taught us all he knew
like how to make a horseshoe—how to wrought the iron.
With new shoes on, Jack and I would set our nags a flyin'
we'd gallop through the gullies and o'er the bush clad hills,
like Clancy of the Overflow, we'd never fear the spills.
Bert was firm but gentle—and his manner fatherly.
G'day Bert old mate—he's staring straight through me.

Aahh—there's Mary the prettiest girl in town
Jack and I both fancied her—this beauty of renown.
The only time that Jack and I nearly came to blows
was competing to win Mary—we were stupid, heaven knows.
We shaped up, foolishly, hot-blooded, in our prime
"Don't fight, she cried, it's my choice and I can't make up my mind"
but secretly she promised she would always wait for me.
Mary darling, I am home—she's staring straight through me.

Mary!—why does no one answer? Oh, now I'm feeling strange
I am spinning round and round and everything has changed
my eyesight's going blurry, I now feel rain upon my face
I turn my head and focus—I am in a different place.
Mud—there is mud everywhere, and dead bodies all around.
There is shooting, and men screaming—what a dreadful sound.
What awful hell am I in? these sights—these sounds—these smells?
it's coming back—I'm wounded—near a village called Fromelles.



I remember the whistle—Fix Bayonets! Charge! And our gallant band
rises from the trenches to race 'cross "no man's land"
with bullets spraying everywhere, we can hardly see at all
machine guns mow us down like wheat—I see my comrades fall.
We break through the German line—Press On! the order sounded,
behind us, the line closes, we are stranded, and surrounded
so face to face, hand to hand, we all fight desperately
the blue eyes of a boy I killed are staring straight through me.
But he got me with his bayonet—I fall in to the mud
another digger falls on me with a sickening thud,
as I push him off me I can only see his back.
He rolls over—Oh, good God! It is my dear mate, Jack.
I know that we're both done for, but this is not a time to cry
As boys together we have lived, as men, now, we will die.
His last word is my name, he whispers tenderly
with his last breath he smiles—now, he's staring straight through me.

No more we'll race our horses, o'er the valleys or the farms
The best that I can do right now is hold him in my arms
And wait to die—I'm soaking wet. My wound is gushing blood,
It flows with Jack's like a crimson river through the mud.
We swore we'd stay together, fight together, come what may
We've honoured that, and fell together, at Fromelles today
I'm feeling strange again, the darkness closes in
The pain is gone, the sound is fading, no more battle's din.

I'm floating to a white light in a tunnel up ahead
I have crossed the Great Divide—fair dinkum, I am dead.
I'm through that blinding tunnel—coming out the other side.
Back in Fromelles with Jack, and all the other ANZACS who have died.
Our disembodied spirits see they're dumping us in holes
Hasty words in German, sounds like "Lord God rest our souls"
Among the pile of ANZACS—familiar faces now I see
Would you believe it? Jack and I—staring straight through me.

The French soil covers us—now who will say good-bye
to mum and dad, Jack's family,— and tell them not to cry
Who will show them where we're lying, what do we do now
No one will know that we are here—it seems wrong somehow
To be lying here in secret, so far from Australia
Literally a cover-up of a battle failure
Our spirits yearn to drift back to the land we all call home
But while we lie in unmarked graves, we are not free to roam.



Are we doomed to linger here? Does anybody care
Will no one come and find us, that's our greatest fear
Our anguished spirits cry—did we survive the Dardenelles
Merely to just vanish in this battle at Fromelles?
That's what we feared at first, but now see with clarity
'cause on this side, time's all the same, in eternity
We will see it takes many years, before someone will try
To find us, but in this world, that's just the blink of an eye.

An Aussie Greek kid, Lambis, reads about the first world war
And in his heart we see a passion growing to know more
Then, as a man, he's come to see the battlefields of France
And we are waiting, 'cause we know this is our only chance.
Our swirling spirits call to him—will he hear our cries?
"Count the headstones carefully"! then you'll realise
The names of fallen ANZACS will outnumber the headstones
He's counting, yes! He knows! This ground is hiding ANZAC's bones.

With fingers crossed we watch him try to solve the mystery
For years he sifts through evidence so painstakingly
Entries in war diaries, aerial photographs archived
In Germany and England—thank God they survived.
His case is so persuasive, an excavation has begun
A Skeleton—a tarnished badge—the ANZAC Rising Sun
If only they could hear us cheer—our souls are now released
God bless you, Lambis! Our families, and spirits have found peace.

Now Jack and I can roam once more beneath our Southern Cross
With our graves in France acknowledged, as our nation's loss
With the lads from Britain, more of them than us lie there
Found because just one man showed determination rare
To find the missing ANZACs—a selfless course well run
Not for fame or fortune, but because it should be done
A cemetery will be declared in newly hallowed ground
At last the waiting's over—at last we have been found.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(Ed.note: Jim Brown is also the author of "The ANZAC on the Wall" and he was inspired to write this poem when he read of the research done by Lambis Englezos.
Jim is a bush poet and performs in many Victorian country towns and clubs.
Jim has a CD with this and other "Banjo Patterson" classics for sale at \$25 which includes postage.
If you would like a copy of Jim's CD, please contact me.)
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☐ Please order me a copy of Sir Keith Jones’s book “One Man’s Story” an autobiography (\$25)

☐ Please loan me “Siege of Tobruk” Values video. I will return this ASAP.

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acknowledgements in next issue. You may like to Direct Debit through the Internet--BANK: C’Wealth, BSB: 062-260, Account Name: 5th Field Ambulance Association, A/c No: 00901381) and would you kindly identify yourself.

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