



Action Front

Official Journal of 2/2 Field Regiment
Association

Volume LXX, No 2.

September 2010

Still
Priceless

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1. OPENING SHOTS.

This edition has some of the usual stuff hurled together to try and inform all of you of up-coming events and things past, as well as some interesting reading. There's Anzac Day 2010, NSW jottings and details of the Sydney lunch, information about the Melbourne Lunch on Sunday 7th November, and details about Crete and Greece next year.

In our last edition you noticed a few changes in layout. Well, some were planned, some were not.

Unbeknown to me at the time, Keith's computer margins are not the same as mine, and, as I send the newsletter to him by e-mail (sooo eeaassy!), I just sit back, heave a sigh of relief that I've finished, and all my layout is done and see how long before the printed edition arrives in my mailbox (which I find amusing, as I've already read it many times!)

Imagine my consternation when my last one dropped in! It didn't look like my edition at all! Gremlins again!

2. RANGING IN:

I didn't know where I was going to start this edition of Action Front, until I heard a disturbing report that one of our members did not wish to receive AF any more as there were few references to people that she knew. Now, MAY DENSLEY has been featured in this illustrious publication before and has been a stalwart in helping keep this association alive, and I would be the last person to discourage her interest, but unfortunately missives from our readers are becoming few and far between. I try and record as much as is given to me from veterans and their partners, (even when deadlines rush me past some info given). TERRY COLE and KEITH ROSSI also keep a fair bit flowing my way. I believe that we as an association have a mission to keep it alive and healthy, as is evidenced by our great turn-outs on Anzac Day. We consistently have more descendants marching than probably any other 6th Division unit (see below) and we have done that by keeping the Association together.

3. NEW LAPEL BADGES.

It was decided at a recent committee meeting to investigate getting new lapel badges made and offer them to members. This has now been almost finalised with Cash's and will soon be available for I think \$10 each. So for those of you that don't have a badge, I would encourage you to be in contact with Terry Cole, our hard working secretary.

VALE	
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, We will remember them.	
VX 16089	I.P. (Ivan) Allen
VX 52610	T.H. Bleakley
VX 672	J.M. Bowden
VX 12765	W.A. Horne
VX 856	Kingsley (Pat) Murphy
VX 29794	L.W. Rawiller
VX 80098	N.L. Trotter
"Lest We Forget."	

Rest Well Gallant Men

We, who are left, in gratitude, remember you still.

Our deepest sympathy goes to their loved ones and relatives.

Some may remember a particularly moving speech we had at our lunch in 2006 from an ex-POW. Gordon Newton VX 63513, a fine mentor, passed away in early September.

5. ANZAC DAY, Sunday 25th April 2010.

We have been blessed with the weather on the last few Anzac Days, and this year was no exception. I was picked up by Suzie and sister Liza, due to my lack of transport, nice and early. Thanks. The RSM (Ewen) gave marching instructions, Suzie took the Roll Call, whilst sister Liza waved to us from inside Young & Jackson's (I couldn't find my way through the barricades, so had to let her have a beer alone!) Derek walked around taking his usual quality photos.

We farewelled Keith Rossi early in his jeep, resplendent in uniform, in his well deserved role as Leader of the March.

The Brighton Grammar Cadets turned up looking great as usual (minus one -I wouldn't have liked to be him on Monday!) The jeeps eventually turned up, even though your editor was stressing out as 6th Div was marching off, Bill Kenny was sitting there in the jeep and the driver was nowhere to be seen! At the last second he materialised, fired her up and off we went. Phew!

Keith	Rossi		March Leader	VX 51628
Bill	Kenny			VX 29085
Bill	Rowe		marched again!	VX141086
Alan	Stewart			VX 691
Judy	Ager	Daughter	Bob Donovan	VX 876
Peter	Ager	SIL	Bob Donovan	VX 876
Roy	Auton	Son	Roy Auton	VX 980
Grant	Bedson	Grandson	Ted Bedson	VX 19559
Lorien	Bestel	Daughter	Leon Bestel	VX 927
Nicles	Bestel	Son	Leon Bestel	VX 927
Steve	Bickell	Son	Alf Bickell	VX 870
Jack	Cameron	Son	Jack Cameron	VX 32056
Terry	Cole	Son	Leo Cole	VX 937
Frank	Donovan	Nephew	John Donovan	VX 10677
Ray	Donovan	Son	Ray Donovan	VX 630
Denise	Fetherston-Haugh	Daughter	Dick Fetherston-Haugh	NX 3411
Denise	Fetherston-Haugh	Niece	Sheila Fetherston-Suters	X 139482
Ruth	Green	Widow	Leon Bestel	VX 927
Tyler	Greer	Grandson	Phil Wortham	VX 972
Valerie	Higgins	Daughter	VJ Leech	VX 903
Richard	Hunt	Son	Frank 'Hawkeye' Hunt	VX 54527
Mel	Johnson	Daughter	Doug Lennie	VX 5824
Teanna	Kenins	GGD	Fred Willett	VX 990
Diane	King	Daughter	Ray (Smiler) Stephens	
June	Lawrence	Daughter	Gil Smith	VX 867
Jenny	Mackay	Daughter	Frank 'Hawkeye' Hunt	VX 54527
Tim	Martin	Son	Jack Martin	VX 60717
Ben	McCallman	GGSon	Tom Thornton	VX 57687
Ewen	McPherson	Son	RE McPherson	VX 351
Lachlan	McPherson	Son	RE McPherson	VX 351
Sandra	Rhoades	Daughter	Dave Craig	QX 12039
Liza	Riches	Daughter	DG Wilson	VX 783
John	Ridge	Son	Leslie Ridge	VX 1428
Susan	Shaw	Daughter	DG Wilson	VX 783
Win	Stewart	Wife	Alan Stewart	
Terry	Swalwell	Son	Bill Swalwell	VX 1002
Louise	Taunt	Daughter	Bob Taunt	VX 984
Stephen	Taylor	Son	George Taylor	
Derek	Trewarne	Son	Bill Trewarne	VX 911
John	Trewarne	Son	Bill Trewarne	VX 911
Tamara	Willett	Gdaughter	Fred Willett	VX 990
Chris	Adams	Brighton Grammar		
Richard	Adams	Brighton Grammar		
Andrew	Bar	Brighton Grammar		
Michael	Longmuir	Brighton Grammar		

Alex McGuigan Brighton Grammar

That meant 4 Veterans, 33 descendants and one widow marching with us (Judy & Peter Ager marched with the Boer War contingent), and our Brighton Grammar friends. With our slouch hats to the fore, we looked pretty good, but your editor has to dress up a bit next time! We made it onto TV this year and, at the traditional Taunt's at Chaddy after the march, we were able to see and tell ourselves how good we looked! Nothing like a bit of modesty!

The slouch hat idea is also catching on! In my opinion the bravest unit of WW2, the 39th Battalion, are now also wearing them. Great idea Grant!

6. BOMBARDMENT. CRETE 2011.

At last I am pleased to announce that one of two proposed trips has been finalised with costings and general itineraries.

Premium Tours, run by our old friend Chris Lepouris from Sydney, has put together a similar tour to the 65th anniversary one, leaving Australia on Tuesday 17th May 2011 and finishing in Athens on Sunday 29th May.

Following on from there is the tour of Northern Greece, which returns to Athens on Thursday 2nd June and departs for Australia on 3rd June, arriving back on Saturday 4th June.

The package rate for return economy airfares (taxes included) and the battle of Crete tour (per person twin share)

AUD\$4950.00

Northern Greece tour (per person twin share)

AUD\$1290.00

This represents excellent value.

There may be slight variations to these costs, but they are a pretty good guide. Just watch yourself with the Euro, last time it was around \$2 AUD and it's easy to overspend.

The program is not completely finalised but the base in Crete is the El Greco hotel resort, east of Rethymnon, which is first class and right on the beach, so take your bathers! Long pants are required in the dining room in the evening! Localities which will be included are Rethymnon, Chania, Maleme, Galatos, Sphakia, Preveli, Suda Bay, and possibly Heraklion and places in between. Built in is a reasonable amount of free time to go into Rethymnon for shopping, sightseeing and lunch on the harbour. I'm trying to see if Samaria Gorge can also be fitted in (for Louise) but there are some logistical problems: getting in there, getting out by boat back to Sphakia, and then hopefully rejoining the tour for lunch there. It's about a 10km hike but that looks the easy part to organise. Northern Greece includes Larissa, Pinios Gorge, Platamon Tunnel, Thessaloniki, Vevi, Kozani, Meteora, Lamia, and of course Brallos Pass, which will be our main reason for going (a ceremony may be held on the first day, 29th May) with a repeat performance as we wind our way back to Athens.

You then fly back to Australia or join me in my little detour to Gallipoli and return via Istanbul! (No, I'm not trying to twist your arms, but it seems a shame not to go when you're SO close. And, it's beautiful, moving and peaceful.) I REALLY DO NEED TO HAVE NAMES OF THOSE WHO WISH TO GO ASAP. I've got about 8 so far but don't have a comprehensive list. Please e-mail (prefer) or phone me asap.

Brother dear has arranged his own itinerary, journeying to Anzac for the 25th April, Spain and other destinations, before doing his own thing in Crete with lovely wife Nonie. I told him to wait until the details were available, then decide whether to join the tour, but, what can you do? I hope we'll still be able to see each other at most events.

7. COUNTER BATTERY.

As stated in our last issue, Keith found two newspaper articles penned by Bill Cremor.

Here's the second:

Last to board HMT Glengyle at Sphakia, Crete, I was climbing up the rope ladder. Probably I was not at my best -that last 11 miles in three hours was not so easy for an old man.

A huge hairy paw of a typical corpulent RN bosun reached down under my armpits and hoisted me up.

"You'll be all right, son."

And then under the shaded arc-light he saw a lieut-colonel's badges.

Without a pause, there was a smart salute, and,

"Straight down and turn right to the wardroom, sir."

There was a second unrelated bit:

An unannounced night march had been ordered.

One young "reo" 20 years old, was charged next morning by the orderly sergeant with being absent.

His excuse to his impetuous BC was that he slept on his own, "and no one had told him it was on."

"WHO didn't tell you?" snorted the BC.

"Only 174 other men in the battery, sir," whispered the captain.

(Methinks we may know who this youngster is, n'est pas?)

8. A BLAST FROM THE PAST.

Eric McKinley was on guard duty somewhere in the Middle East. The C.O. Bill Cremor left his tent, so Eric challenged him for the password.

Old Bill, with a few choice expletives, asked why a man couldn't go for a leak without having to say a password.

"You'd have had me on a charge if I hadn't challenged you, even though I knew who I was talking to!" Eric replied.

9. JOTTINGS FROM NEW SOUTH WALES.

Please note the date for the Sydney lunch at Sydney Rowing Club.

Friday, 22nd October 2010. 11:30am for 12noon? The best way to get there, if you're coming from out of town, is to get to Circular Quay and catch a ferry to Abbotsford (Parramatta River service). It's easy and relaxing. All our members are welcome, but don't forget to book with Graham! His phone number is (02) 9456 6365. If you haven't been before, now's your chance. -Ed.

FIRSTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO APOLOGISE TO COL BRAGG FOR OMITTING HIM FROM HAVING ATTENDED IAN FRASER'S FUNERAL ON 20/02/2010. I HAD INTENDED MAKING SPECIAL MENTION OF HIM, HAVING TRAVELLED ALL THE WAY FROM FORSTER ON THE NORTH COAST (4.5 HOURS DRIVE FROM SYDNEY). HE ARRIVED THE PREVIOUS DAY MAKING IT EASIER TO ARRIVE ON TIME. SORRY, AGE DOES FUNNY THINGS WITH ONE'S MEMORY DOESN'T IT?! WE HAD 4 FOR THE MARCH, SAME AS LAST YEAR, COL BRAGG MADE THE LONG TRIP AGAIN MAKING UP FOR IAN'S ABSENCE. LAST YEAR COL HAD BEEN UNWELL BUT THANKFULLY HAS MADE A FULL RECOVERY. ROSS FULLER, TED GARDNER AND I MADE UP THE 4. RELATIONS, INCLUDING IAN'S DAUGHTER ROXANNE WHO BROUGHT THE BANNER, ROSS'S SON MALCOLM AND GRANDSON GAVIN, LEFTY GROVES' SON RAYMOND AND DAUGHTER LYNNE, SPUD MURPHY'S SON SHANE, MY SON DAVID, AND OUR NEW MEMBER ALAN JACKSON AND A SOLITARY MEMBER OF THE 2/3RD A.F.R. MADE UP THE 13. AS VICE-PRESIDENT, I LED OUR GROUP FROM MY USUAL WHEELCHAIR WITH ASSISTANCE FROM MY ELDEST SON DAVID.

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SPECIAL MENTION WITH REGARDS TO ALAN JACKSON BECAUSE IT WASN'T UNTIL THIS YEAR THAT I FOUND OUT THAT AS A MEMBER OF THE 2ND MEDIUM ARTILLERY REGIMENT HE WAS ENTITLED TO JOIN OUR ASSOCIATION. WHEN HE JOINED THE A.I.F. HE WAS POSTED TO THE 21ST FIELD REGIMENT AND WHEN THEY FINISHED THEIR TRAINING THEY WENT TO THE ATHERTON TABLELANDS WHERE THEY WERE DISBANDED, SUPPLYING REINFORCEMENTS TO THE 6TH, 7TH, AND 9TH DIVISIONS. HIS MATES, INCLUDING IAN FRASER, ROSS FULLER AND PROS AUSTIN, WHO WAS OUR VERY ACTIVE AND LONG SERVING PRESIDENT PRIOR TO IAN FRASER, WERE POSTED TO THE 2/2ND, BUT ALAN ENDED UP BEING POSTED TO THE 2ND MEDIUM REGIMENT, GOING TO BORNEO WITH THE 9TH DIVISION. THE REGIMENT WAS A MOTLEY GROUP AND THE SMALL NUMBER FROM SYDNEY HAVE ALWAYS MARCHED WITH US AND ALAN IS THE SOLE SURVIVOR ABLE TO MARCH. HE AND HIS LOVELY WIFE ANTOINETTE HAVE SUPPORTED OUR FUNCTIONS FOR MANY YEARS. AS MENTIONED LAST TIME, WE HAD TO CHANGE OUR USUAL LUNCHEON AND MEETING VENUE AFTER THE MARCH, SO I MADE CONTACT WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE 2/1ST A.F.R., JOHN HAYNES. BEING A N.S.W. REGIMENT, THEY ALWAYS HAD A LARGE GROUP FOR THE MARCH AND A LONG TERM BOOKING WITH A HIGH CLASS HOTEL IN CENTRAL SQUARE. DUE TO A SUDDEN REDUCTION IN THEIR NUMBERS OUR GROUP WAS THE PERFECT NUMBER FOR THEM TO KEEP THEIR BOOKING, SO WE WERE WELCOMED TO JOIN THEM AT THEIR VERY WELL ORGANISED FUNCTION WHICH HAD A VERY REASONABLE PRICE PER HEAD WHICH INCLUDED FOOD, BEER AND WINE FROM 11AM TO 2.30PM. WE ALL HAD AN ENJOYABLE GET TOGETHER WITH THEM AND LOOK FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR.

THE ONLY DOWN SIDE WAS THAT IT WAS TOO NOISY FOR US TO CONDUCT THE ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS, SO MY SON STUART (A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION, BUT WHO

DID NOT CAST A VOTE) CONDUCTED A POLL BY PHONE. WE FELT THIS WAS THE ONLY PRACTICAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM SINCE A NUMBER OF MEMBERS WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND A MEETING FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER. I WAS DULY ELECTED AS PRESIDENT AND ACTING SECRETARY, ROSS FULLER AS VICE-PRESIDENT AND ROY MURPHY REMAINED AS TREASURER.

ALAN AND SHIRL WILSON HAVE LIVED FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS IN THE R.S.L. VETERAN'S RETIREMENT VILLAGE LOCATED ON THE COLLAROY PLATEAU OVERLOOKING THE NARRABEEN LAKES. IT IS KNOWN AS "THE CUTLER VILLAGE" AND IT IS THE LARGEST BY FAR IN THE SYDNEY AREA. 11.5 ACRES OF LAND WAS PURCHASED BY SYDNEY LEGACY FOR 2,000 POUNDS IN 1936 AS A "HAVEN OF REST" FOR HOMELESS SERVICEMEN AND INITIALLY STARTED WITH FACILITIES FOR 20. THE R.S.L. THEN CAME ON BOARD TO BUILD A VILLAGE. IT NOW HAS 550 SELF-CARE UNITS PLUS A HOSPITAL, LARGE HOSTEL, 4 NURSING HOMES, COMMUNITY CENTRE WITH THEATRE, A CHAPEL, GYMNASIUM AND THERAPY FACILITIES AS WELL AS A SWIMMING POOL AND MANY SPORTING FACILITIES AND WITH IT'S OWN INTERNAL BUS SERVICE RUNNING A REGULAR TIMETABLE.

ALAN'S ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO A MEMORIAL WALL IN THE CHAPEL COVERED WITH THE PLAQUES OF VARIOUS UNITS OF THE ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE AND MERCHANT NAVY. HE REALISED THAT THE 2/2ND WASN'T REPRESENTED SO SUGGESTED TO ME THAT WE SHOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS AND I AGREED. SO ALAN PROCEEDED TO OBTAIN THE APPROVAL OF THE CHAPEL COMMITTEE AND THEN DID A SPLENDID JOB OF ORGANISING A PLAQUE TO BE MADE AS WELL AS WRITING A RESUME OF THE REGIMENTAL HISTORY ALL THE WAY FROM PUCKAPUNYAL TO WEWAK. ALAN THEN ORGANISED A PRESENTATION AND HANGING CEREMONY WITH THE CHAPLAIN FOR THE SERVICE ON SUNDAY 25TH JULY 2010. I UNFORTUNATELY WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND, BUT ROSS FULLER UNDERTOOK THE LONG TRIP FROM WENTWORTHVILLE (IN THE NORTH-WEST) TO WITNESS ALAN PRESENT THE PLAQUE TO THE CHAPLAIN WITH A SHORT SPEECH, WITH THE CHAPLAIN THEN READING OUT THE RESUME.

OUR NEXT LADIES DAY LUNCHEON AT THE SYDNEY ROWING CLUB IS SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY 22ND OCTOBER TO COINCIDE WITH A PROPOSED VISIT TO SYDNEY BY LACHLAN MCPHERSON. WE HOPE WIDOWED WIVES OF MEMBERS, AS WELL AS MEMBERS, WHO ARE LIVING IN N.S.W. MAY BE ABLE TO COME TO SYDNEY FOR A VISIT.

CHEERS FOR THIS TIME,
GRAHAM MONTGOMERIE.

10. PERSONALIA.

I've had a few letters from members since last time.

A lovely note from MARIE McCOWAN from Fletcher near Newcastle, with a suggestion that will be appearing in this edition, the re-introduction of the committee listing. We used to have this in all the issues but it somehow fell off. Thanks for the suggestion. See you at the Sydney lunch?

TOM BOSWELL has been in contact a couple of times, first by letter, telling his short 2/2ND history. He was driver in RHQ for COL ADAM, but before joining 2/2ND, he was a farrier with the 21ST Light Horse Regt. and was in camp at Wagga at war's start. In September '09 he fell and broke his knee and spent a month in Deniliquin Hospital, in the same 4-bed ward as (the late) PAT MURPHY, whom he had not seen since New Guinea. TOM was in contact with us again recently to give us the sad news of Pat's death. Thanks.

And from Queensland, ELSIE McKINLEY (ERIC) sent a donation (thank you) and congratulations on AF and to Keith for leading the March and his personal

message on AF (thank you again) and some nice reminisces. Yours (from Eric) has gone to "A Blast From The Past".

11. TERRY'S LETTER TO CASCABEL.

2/2 Field Regiment Association

ANZAC day for 2010 has again passed successfully for the 2/2 Field Regiment Association. About thirty members of the association marched behind the 2/2 banner through Melbourne to the Shrine of Remembrance, proudly led by veteran Bill Rowe, with Alan Stewart and Bill Kenny in jeeps.

The sad part of ANZAC day is the diminishing number of WW2 veterans able to participate. This unavoidable situation is balanced somewhat by the growing number of descendants of the Regiment who march in place of the veterans and who are determined to keep the history of the 2/2 Field Regiment alive as part of Australian heritage.

Of special pride to the association was the appointment this year of our president Brigadier Keith Rossi (Rtd) AM OBE RFD ED (Victoria) to lead the ANZAC day march in Melbourne. Keith is also a member of the RSL State Executive, is the RSL historian and is well known for his valuable work over many years in these and other positions. Keith was a sergeant in the Regiment at the end of WW2 but stayed in the Army and rose to the rank of Brigadier, which speaks volumes about his ability. Keith also saw service in Vietnam.

Keith has been prominent in the 2/2 Field Regiment Association for as long as anyone can remember and it has prospered under his guidance as president. Apart from Keith, the 2/2 Field Regiment Association committee is now composed of descendants of the Regiment, but despite this the Association's activities and some recent achievements that are led and encouraged by Keith are worth mentioning.

The annual luncheon for veterans and descendants of the Regiment is always well attended. These luncheons display a large photographic and memorabilia collection to the keen interest of attendees.

Continued publication of the association newsletter, Action Front, first published in 1939. The current editor is Lachlan McPherson who carries on the tradition with pride. The last veteran editor was the late Phil Wortham whose editorials and comments on WW2 history were outstanding. This newsletter has been continuously published for 71 years.

The excellent financial position of the association is well managed by Treasurer Kim Taunt.

The purchase from the AWM of a full copy of the war diary of the 2/2 Field Regiment 1939-1945. This diary is not available online and the association has purchased a copy for study and reference by veterans and descendants. It has been well worth it.

The republication in 2006, of the Official History of the 2/2 Field Regiment, 6th Division, 2nd AIF, 1939-1945. This is in Compact Disc format and is available to the public.

The establishment of an Association website, 2nd2ndfieldregiment.org.au. This website receives many favourable comments and was established and is maintained by Grant Bedson.

Investigations in 2008 led to verification of the location of the two gun stand by the Regiment on 21st April 1941 high on the forward slopes of the Brallos Pass, central Greece, part of the famous Thermopylae line. This stand by two 18/25 pdr guns of A Troop, 3rd

battery, delayed the advance of German troops into Greece by a vital 24 hours and enabled defensive positions to be established further into the pass which further delayed the enemy at their considerable cost. A Spirit of Anzac study tour to Greece in 2008 was disappointed when they failed to find this site. This occurred because the road system has changed dramatically since 1941. Subsequent reference to the War Diary of the Regiment found an original report by the officer in charge of the 2 guns, VX589 LT Jack Anderson MC which gave a map reference of the position. Using this information and original maps supplied by the AWM the position has now been established on Google Earth. This information will enable future generations to locate this proud battle site which sadly saw the loss of seven 2/2 lives. The position is very close to 38deg 46min 59.55seconds N, 22deg 27min 05.20seconds E. Jack Anderson sadly passed away in 2009.

There is planning for an official tour of Greece in 2011 by 6th Div veterans to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the defence of Greece. Keith is an adviser to the Minister for Veterans affairs about this tour. It may be possible for the Regimental Association to erect a commemorative plaque at the Brallos Pass battle site during this tour.

Thank you and well done Keith for your work on behalf of the Association for many years.

Terry Cole
Hon Secretary
2/2 Field Regiment Association

12. ANNUAL LUNCH Sunday, 07/11/2010.

Your presence is requested (demanded?) at 11:30 AM on Sunday 7th November at the Waverley RSL's Sunset Room once again for our 71st Annual Luncheon. We may have a surprise speaker that will open up your eyes and ears. \$50 for Veterans and wives, \$60 for the rest. See the attached flyer for lunch details.

13. BOOK REVIEW.

The Australian Light Horse by Roland Perry.
Hachette Australia, 2009, \$50

This prolific author's book about Sir John Monash was thoroughly enjoyable and this latest tome was eagerly anticipated.

Unfortunately it was two-sided. Enjoyment and disappointment.

Who said: "Never let the facts get in the way of a good story?"

Whoever it was must have read this.

I was reading along happily, when suddenly I thought "hang on, that trooper he just quoted was a sergeant only 2 pages before!"

Later, when Perry started describing the premature moves before Romani, he had the Turkish troops marching EAST from Palestine! Then we find Turks retreating WEST!

To say that Perry is geographically challenged is an understatement: there are at least 17 times in the book where he gets directions wrong.

To quote Kipling: "East is East, and West is West, and ne'er the twain shall meet." But north and south and other directions in between get similar treatment.

Now, don't get me wrong. I really enjoyed the book, as I think others will. However, by the end I was getting a bit fed up with continual references to, and quotes from, T.E. Lawrence interspersed therein. I thought this was a book about the Light Horse, not the story of the Arab Revolt.

And if much space was given to this area, why was there so little given to all the other forces who took part in the Middle East campaign?

I then read a review written by Jean Bou in Wartime Issue 51 on the same subject and had to go back and check the rest of the book carefully.

Did Perry really write that?

Well, yes, and more.

There are some shockers that stand out. For example, check who was the first governor of Queensland and WHEN. Others are more discreet, such as HMS Highflyer was an old out-dated cruiser, not a battleship; its Cape Helles on Gallipoli, not to be confused with Gaba Tepe; and Tripoli on Lebanon's COAST suddenly gets transplanted INLAND!

As I said earlier, I found Perry's book on Monash enlightening, but now I'm not so sure. I feel let down. What are the facts?

It's such a shame because this book is a great read.

14. PENULTIMATELY SPEAKING.

The Antipodes Festival and Battle of Crete Commemoration Ceremonies were held in May starting with a beautiful dinner at Philhellene restaurant in Moonee Ponds, run by John and Susie and partners, with mum's great cooking. Thank you to John Nikolakakis for running me home afterwards. Then it was the huge dinner dance at the Cretan Village in Wantirna South on Saturday night.

Sunday's ceremonies at the Shrine and the Australian Hellenic Memorial were followed by lunch at the Cretan Brotherhood in East Brunswick. KEITH ROSSI gave a speech on Saturday, did the service at the A-H-M on Sunday (I was honoured to be able to help) and was to speak at lunch. At all these functions we were entertained by Crete's premier musicians who came to Australia along with dignitaries especially. They were excellent.

Don't forget that up-coming events at the Shrine can be accessed by visiting www.shrine.org.au or phoning (03) 9661 8100.

15. CEASE FIRING!

I'll repeat myself: I always like to hear from you. Please write!

E-mail messages are especially welcome (cos I don't have to re-type them!) And you'll probably end up in print!

But please don't send documents in Windows 07, my computer has Windows XP which is not compatible and won't read the former. Adobe pdf attachments are fine though. Also, upper and lower case please.

My efforts for photos this issue are not happening, and I want get this out ASAP.

Thank you to all contributors for this issue, it would be much harder without you. Terry, Susie, Graham (and Stuart) all get kudos.

Stin ee-yiassou!

lachlan@alphalink.com.au

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The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery on Crete, Suda Bay.



THE THIRTYNINERS

In November 1946 an advertisement was placed in the Melbourne dailies suggesting that those who had enlisted for service overseas in World War II before the 31st December 1939 should form an association.

About 100 ex-servicemen turned up to a meeting in Treasury Gardens on 2nd December when it was decided to form an association to be named The Thirtyniners.

A constitution was drawn up and, on 3rd December 1946 the The Thirtyniners Association came into being. Some other States soon followed.

But time took its toll. The first State to go was West Australia which was seriously weakened by the death of President Jim Hall who was also President of the WA Branch of the RSL. K.T. (Katy) Johnson, 2/11 Battalion and a member of our Association held it together until his death a couple of years ago. In New South Wales the Secretary was Bert (Nipper) Beecher of 2/2 Fd Regt. After his death a lady Associate did her best to keep it going but there were too few left to support it and it just faded away.

In Victoria the President became ill, the Vice President spent more time in hospital than out of it, the Secretary died and the only remaining Committeeman was the Treasurer, Gordon White, a sailor in HMAS Sydney when she sank the Bartolemeo Colleoni in the Mediterranean.

In August the RSL hosted a meeting at which the remaining members voted to disband the Association. The Association formally ceased at the conclusion of their traditional service at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on 3rd September this year.

A wind up Dinner was held at ANZAC House, Melbourne, on 21st September at which the 39ers presented a cheque for \$60,000 to each of the RSL and Melbourne Legacy. The RSL has re-titled it's scholarship fund for Navy Army and Air Force cadets the Thirtyniners – RSL Cadet Scholarship Fund and will use the 39ers donation to help finance it.

Many of the original members of The Regiment were members of the 39ers but only two remained at the end - Jack Dihm and Alan Stuart. Congratulations to you both!

Hellenic-Australian Memorial, Crete

2011 will mark the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Crete, which was fought by Australian, British and New Zealand troops, with the assistance of the local population, against invading German forces in May 1941. Commemorative ceremonies for 2011 are still being planned and details will be advised on the DVA website once they are known. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery on Crete is located at Suda Bay near Chania. 197 Australians are buried in the cemetery, which is kept in excellent condition. Commemorative services on Crete are held at Suda

Bay and the Hellenic-Australian Memorial as well as at locally-constructed memorials at Stavromenos, Galatas and Preveli Monastery.

The memorial at Stavromenos has a strong connection with Australian service. Unfortunately it has suffered some deterioration over the years and requires refurbishment. The Office of the Australian War Graves (OAWG) has arranged for the community to apply for a grant under the Australian Government's Overseas Privately-Constructed Memorial Refurbishment Program.

ACTION FRONT

JOURNAL OF 2/2 FIELD REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2010

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