

2/2 FIELD REGIMENT 78TH. ANNUAL LUNCHEON

1939 - 2017

Sunday

29th. October 2017

11.30 a.m. til 3.30 p.m.

Waverley RSL "Sunset Room"

161 Coleman Parade

Glen Waverley 3150 (Melways 71 C2)



Opposite the Glen Waverley Railway Station with plenty of parking spaces.



Wheelchair access and a lift up to the Sunset Room

We are again conducting our Annual Luncheon at Waverley RSL and we wish to make our 78th Regimental Dinner one to remember by having as many 2/2 veterans and their families coming along to commemorate this special occasion.

We can set up family tables or arrange tables for those who wish to sit in the company of particular people as well as mix and match those who are new to our Regimental Dinner with the aim of them meeting new friends. The cost this year is **\$ 50** per person for the Veterans / Wife / or Widows and **\$ 65** per person for the rest of us for the meal and drinks

Note: We will also conduct a short Annual General Meeting to elect the committee and also to vote for an annual membership subscription of \$ 20 per year to be implemented so that the association can survive in the future



CUT ALONG HERE

I WILL / WILL NOT BE ATTENDING THE ANNUAL LUNCHEON AT THE WAVERLEY RSL AT 11.30 am FOR LUNCH AT 12.30 pm. ON SUNDAY 29th OCTOBER 2017

I WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY GUESTS AND ENCLOSE \$..... BEING FULL PAYMENT FOR THE LUNCHEON.

NAME (please print).....

NAME(S) OF GUEST/S.....

Please make all cheques payable to " **2/2 Field Regiment Association** "

c/o **57 Marianne Way Mount Waverley 3149**

Direct Deposits to BSB 063 001 Account: 0090 2130 please advise your name on the remittance and/or email notification to kimtaunt@optushome.com.au

Action Front



Official journal of the 2/2 Field Regiment Association

Volume LXXVII, No 2.

Sept. 2017

Still Priceless

MOVING UP:

1. PARTY	1
2. VALE	2
3. OPENING SHOTS	2
4. BOMBARDMENT	2
5. RECONNAISSANCE	3
6. COUNTER BATTERY	4
7. PERSONALIA	5
8. THE SERGEANTS' MESS	6
8. DIARY DATES	7
9. ADJUTANT'S REPORT	7
10. CEASE FIRING!	8

1. PARTY

Please find included in this edition your invitation to the annual luncheon, held again at the Waverly RSL. You will also find a short review of our friend Steve Kyritsis OAM's latest book, as well as a continuation of Derek Trewarne's review of Roald Dahl's *Going Solo*. Mel Johnson has provided her recap of the 2017 Anzac Day march, and there is some important information regarding upcoming dates.

The personalia section, previously dormant under current editorship, is back, and will hopefully grow anew in subsequent editions.

2. VALE

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
we will remember them.

VX 39986 Frank Williams

And to all members of the Regiment who died in WW2 and have deceased since.

Lest We Forget.

Rest Well Gallant Men and Women

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife,
Throughout the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

T. Mordaunt

3. OPENING SHOTS

Welcome once again, friends, to another edition of Action Front.

This is the 77th year of publication, and I thought I'd take the time to be a little bit nostalgic about the preservation of our association. This time in 1979 the then editor, the late Phil Wortham, wrote that maintaining a commitment to the 2/2nd Field Regiment Association was "the last extension of our service", and called for maximum participation at the regimental dinners and Anzac Day march. Phil was a veteran, and 37 years ago was speaking to a readership who comprised markedly of veterans themselves. Just to highlight how times have changed, the Oct '79 edition features an invite to the Regimental Dinner, with a note that "MALE GUESTS ONLY MAY BE INVITED"- a rule I'm sure we're all happy has slackened. I am delighted, as I'm sure Phil would be, at the turnouts at the ANZAC Day marches, and I'm proud of the entire unit for their tenacity and commitment.

Phil Wortham had no cause to call for donations (at least in the archives that I own). In today's money, subscriptions in the late 1970s were netting \$838 in the '78-'79 financial year, and \$1878 in the '77-'78 financial year, adding to financial reserves of a modern \$30,895. (source: Reserve Bank of Australia)

On this note, the committee has discussed yearly membership, and has agreed that a vote be taken at the Annual General Meeting on 29th October 2017, to set an annual fee, with consideration also going to other payment options (for example larger, better value amounts). On the back page I've listed the details for anyone who wishes to make a donation, and have included the names of those who have generously donated since April (anonymous donations are also welcome).

4. BOMBARDMENT

A short and sweet note from the president:

In light of our achievements in the past year which are, to put it mildly, amazing, we have decided to apply for the Shrine Medal for 2017. The plaque placement at Brallos the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital alone should put us in solid contention.

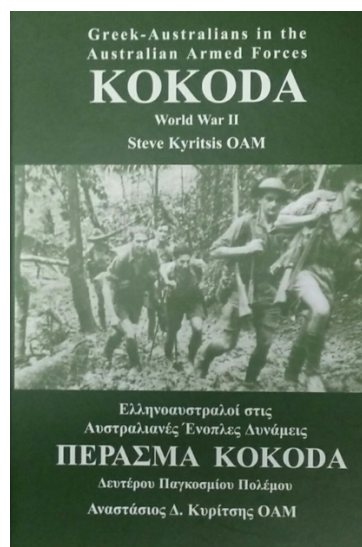
We are having another plaque dedicated at the Australian War Memorial on 21st February in the Reg Saunders garden at 2 PM. I would hope that all of the Committee can be present along with other notable guests. See the Adjutant's Report for more details.

It is hoped that as many members as possible can come to the annual luncheon. We hope to have the Greek Consul General for Melbourne there as our guest as she leaves at the end of the year, and it is a great opportunity to catch up with the association.

Lachlan McPherson
President, 2/2nd Field Regiment Association.

5. RECONNAISSANCE

Greek-Australians in the Australian Armed Forces: Kokoda



Mel Johnson recently attended the launch of Steve Kyritsis (OAM)'s latest book, *Greek-Australians in the Australian Armed Forces: Kokoda*, and Steve kindly expedited a copy to your editor.

Greek-Australians covers the outbreak of the Second World War, and shifts perspective neatly to growing threat to Australia from Japanese troops, who were massing at Gona, on the north side of Papua. While serving as an independent history in itself, *Greek-Australians* follows the journeys and actions of both migrant and native-born Greek-Australian soldiers who fought for their country, Australia, in the Battle for Kokoda and Port Moresby.

“If the Japanese reached the Australian lines through sheer weight of numbers, they were met with bayonets and desperate hand to hand struggles”

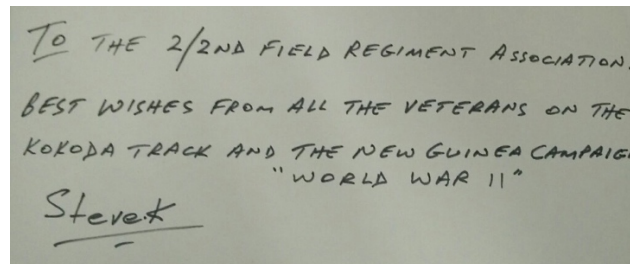
As decades pass, a macro perspective of war can take place; actions become battles, battles become fronts, fronts become the wider theatres and continents on which countries, rather than men and women, fought and died. With *Greek-Australians* comes that all-important human factor of war, featuring real people that had identities deeper and more nuanced than ‘soldier’. For example, would W53929 PTE Varol Spartalis have imagined, when photographed escorting a surrendered Japanese major at Bougainville, that he would personally become part of published

history? *Greek-Australians* ensures that the contribution of such people, rather than simply armies, is embedded in our understanding of such history.

“The arrival of fresh Australian troops confirmed enemy plans to retreat – a retreat which was remorselessly pursued by the Australians”

The book itself is beautifully bound and printed, and features sharp images of Australian and Japanese land, sea, and air forces.

Greek-Australians in the Australian Armed Forces: Kokoda should be a welcome addition to any historian’s library. The reviewed copy has been dedicated to the regiment, and will be submitted to the 2/2nd’s memorabilia collection.



Copies are \$40 (including delivery), and can be ordered online through the order form here: <http://www.2nd2ndfieldregiment.org.au/2017/09/order-form/>. Proceeds go to Hellenic RSL sub-branch, and to the Australian Hellenic Memorial Foundation.

6. COUNTER BATTERY

ROALD DAHL, RAF PILOT IN THE GREEK CAMPAIGN (part 2)

Continued from March '17: Notes compiled by Derek Trewarne

In March 2017, Derek Trewarne provided a detailed review of author Roald Dahl's service with the RAF in WW2, which your editor broke into two parts. We left off last edition after Dahl's experiences in training, including a spectacular crash between allied and Italian lines. Derek's review is continued below.



Source: Roald Dahl Nominee Ltd.

Roald was once again ready to finally join his squadron which was no longer in the Western Desert but now serving in Greece and equipped with Mark 1 Hurricanes. In April 1941, after only two days learning how to fly a Hurricane, Roald set out across the Mediterranean for Greece, this time making it safely to his Squadron which had been reduced to 14 aircraft plus the Hurricane he had flown from Egypt.

Eighty Squadron was one of a small number of RAF squadrons sent to Greece initially to assist the Greeks fighting the Italians and protect shipping. Following the invasion by German troops, it was also required to provide some air cover for allied troops falling back from northern Greece and eventually their evacuation. By this stage in the Greek Campaign, the RAF had only 18 combat aircraft in Greece: 14 Hurricanes and four Bristol Blenheim light bombers. Hopelessly outnumbered by German aircraft, the loss of allied aircraft and pilots was a daily occurrence.

On the 15th April 1941, Roald miraculously survived his first day in action, attacking six Junkers Ju-88s that were bombing shipping near Chalcis and he successfully shot one down. On the 16th April in another air battle he shot down another Junkers Ju-88. There followed days of desperate aerial combat because by mid-April 1941, southern Greece was in range of the German Messerschmitt's. On the 20th April 1941, Roald took part in what became known as the 'Battle of Athens'. Of the twelve Hurricanes involved, five were shot down but Greek observers on the ground counted 22 German aircraft downed. Because of the confusion of the aerial engagement, none of the RAF pilots knew which aircraft they had shot down.

Eighty Squadron was twice relocated because of ground strafing and finally, with only five aircraft left, the decision was made for the five most senior pilots, some of whom were from other squadrons, to fly the remaining aircraft to Crete. The other pilots, including Roald Dahl, were flown back to Alexandria in a de Havilland. *According to Roald in his autobiography, the five pilots fought valiantly on Crete when the Germans attacked but only one of them survived and escaped to fight again.*

Eighty Squadron re-assembled in Haifa (then in northern Palestine) and was re-equipped with Hurricanes. The squadron was to provide air cover for the allied army and navy in the Syrian Campaign against the 'Vichy French'. There followed a month of intensive air combat with daily sorties during which time Roald shot down a Vichy French Air force Potez 63 and a Junkers Ju-88. At this time he started to experience black-outs, which the squadron doctor felt resulted from the serious head injuries sustained when he crashed in the Western Desert; his flying days were over and he was invalided back to England.

Roald was initially posted to a RAF training camp in Uxbridge while attempting to recover his strength enough to become an instructor. However after meeting the Under Secretary of State for Air, Major Harold Balfour in London, whom he impressed because of his experience and conversational abilities, Roald was appointed as assistant air attaché at the British Embassy in Washington D.C. In 1946 he was invalided out of the RAF with the substantive rank of squadron leader.



PERSONALIA

Jottings from near and far

The Personalia section is back. If you would like to keep the association updated on what's happening, or if you have an anecdote you would like to share, please email [djabor@gmail.com](mailto:djaboor@gmail.com)

Lachlan McPherson

Lachlan's brother Ewen and wife Nonie cruised the SE Pacific in late April and early June including going to Milne Bay where the Japanese suffered their very first defeat on land in WW2, which was helped from many sources especially the fine work by Nos. 75 & 76 Squadrons RAAF in their Kitty Hawks, the 18th Brigade, the militia battalions of 7th Brigade and the Americans building the aerodromes.

Lachlan took himself off in a slightly different direction to Dili, East Timor and returned via Darwin and witnessed the on-going struggle the East Timorese endure after many years of brutal Javanese-led brutalities by the Indonesian military. No-one knows how many Timorese were murdered during this period. However, the people remain stoic and friendly towards us Australians even though a succession of parliamentarians have much to feel guilty about –from Whitlam to Howard and many in between.

Lachlan then took off for Britain with fellow committee member Sue Shaw accompanying for the Clan McPherson Gathering in Kingussie, where they were part of the Royal Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, leading the performance onto the Esplanade right up to the official positions (and with a broken rib!). They continued through the highlands to the Isle of Skye, Glencoe, Oban, Robbie Burns birthplace at Alloway and an added on afterthought, which turned out to be up there with highlights, Oxford where they stayed in student accommodation and were treated like royalty. Where next!?

David Jaboor

Your editor is (temporarily) a Queenslander again while he completes his final social work field placement at the Toowoomba Base Hospital. Toowoomba is a nice enough city, and its size and military history (and presence) reminds me of Albury/Wodonga. He'll be a Victorian again in November 2017, and will likely be in camouflage for a few months while I transition fully (and finally) out of the Army Reserve.

Terry Cole

Terry has just competed and won a NSW Clay Shoot Championship - congratulations Terry!

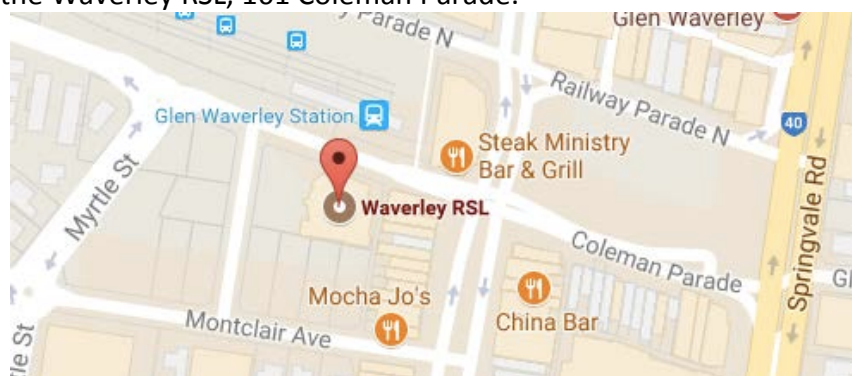
Ian Gleeson

We look forward to hearing and seeing photographs of his visit in particular to the Brallos Pass Memorial.

8. THE SERGEANTS' MESS

Annual luncheon, Sunday 29th October 2017

The regimental dinner will once again be held from 11:30am – 3:30pm in the Sunset Room of the Waverley RSL, 161 Coleman Parade.



Dedication of Plaque at Australian War Memorial, Canberra

Everyone welcome to attend including members, friends and the general public. A great opportunity to spend some time in the national capital in late summer. There has already been strong indication from several to attend. It would be wonderful to see as many as possible attend.

Full details will be posted on the website closer to the time.

Committee Meeting

There is no formal committee meeting set for December this year, however we will gather for lunch at Geelong's Wool Exchange Restaurant on Tuesday 5th December 2017, at 1130h. Everyone is welcome to attend; however, we need confirmed numbers to make the booking (Geelong is a 60-minute train journey from Melbourne).

Those who plan to attend should contact Mel Johnson (E: dexta33@bigpond.com P: 0355932271)

8. DIARY DATES

Please put these dates in your diaries:

Sunday 29 th October	Annual Luncheon
Tuesday 5 th December	Committee lunch meeting
Wednesday 21 st February	AWM Plaque Dedication – 1400h

9. ADJUTANT'S REPORT

ANZAC DAY MARCH - Tuesday 25th April 2017

Everyone came prepared for the rain fortunately for us fine weather prevailed whilst we marched. Veterans and members were all in good time which enabled all to catch-up and also make sure the vehicles were in place for our veterans and that the banner and banner bearers were ready.

We marched off at the exact scheduled time of 0945 hours with the six banner bearers and several members of a cadet unit. This year we were led by veterans Algy Drewett (with daughter and granddaughter) in the dark green Bentley and Bill Rowe and Frank Williams in the dark green Jaguar. For Bill this was the first time he had opted for the provided transport.

President Lachlan joined by Sue Shaw were next followed by the Pan Cretan Association members who were in traditional costumes and they certainly looked very striking and were warmly received. And then falling in were all the descendants.

As we marched down St Kilda Road the Banner Bearers and Cadet Unit were setting a very brisk pace (oh! the exuberance of youth) and the efforts of Lachlan to slow them down were to no avail so he hurried forward so they could hear and let us all maintain an even pace. As usual we had descendants in the crowd and also great to see all ages watching and applauding.

We all gathered afterwards for group photos with many returning to Federation Square for drinks etc. Others ventured home or onto the football at the MCG for the traditional Anzac Day match.

ROLL CALL

Bill Rowe	Veteran		VX141086
Frank Williams	Veteran		VX39986
Algy Drewett	Veteran		VX657
Tony Tsourdalakis	Pan Cretan Association		
John Karadakis	Pan Cretan Association		
Ross Thomas	Pan Cretan Association		
Chris Stavrinidis	Pan Cretan Association		
Ian Armstrong	Son	Max Armstrong	VX105
Mary Armstrong	Daughter in Law	Max Armstrong	VX105
Jenny Attrill	Daughter	John Donovan	VX10671
Jack Cameron	Son	Jack Cameron	VX32056
Terry Cole	Son	Leo Cole	VX11937
Ray Donovan	Son	Ray Donovan	VX630
Barrie Fitzpatrick	Son	Jack Fitzpatrick	VX889
Betty Fitzpatrick	Daughter in Law	Jack Fitzpatrick	VX889
Shirley Blatchford	Sister of Betty	Jack Fitzpatrick	VX889
Peter Fitzpatrick	Grandson	Jack Fitzpatrick	VX889
Sue Foley	Daughter	Alan Pitts	VX13928
Nicole Hii	Granddaughter	Algy Drewett	VX657
Rick Hunt	Son	Frank Hunt	VX54257
David Jaboor	Grandson	Roy Jaboor	VX90
Michael Jaboor	Son	Roy Jaboor	VX90
Mel Johnson	Daughter	Doug Lennie	VX5824
Andrew McPherson	Grandson	Ron McPherson	VX351
Lachlan McPherson	Son	Ron McPherson	VX351
Tim Martin	Son	Jack Martin	VX60717
Diane Pay	Daughter	Algy Drewett	VX657
Susan Shaw	Daughter	DG Wilson	VX783
Kim Sparkes	Daughter	Jack Dare	VX679
Kim Taunt	Son	Bob Taunt	VX984
Derek Trewarne	Son	Bill Trewarne	VX911
John Trewarne	Son	Bill Trewarne	VX911
Kate Negri		Bill Trewarne	VX911
Tamara Willett	Daughter	Fred Willett	VX990
Teanna Willett	Granddaughter	Fred Willett	VX990
Rob Williams	Son	Frank Williams	VX39986
Elyssa Wilson	Granddaughter	Ron Telford	VX18714

Finally, a sincere thank you to all those who attended this year and helped to maintain the strong and proud traditions of the 2nd /2nd Field Regiment. Hopefully next year we can continue to march with our veterans behind our banner.

Mel Johnson,
Hon Secretary

10. CEASE FIRING!

Thank you again to all members for their support, contributions, and readership of Action Front. For those who can donate (any amount) to the association, the EFT details are:

Account Name: 2/2 Field Regiment Association

BSB: 063 001

Account No: 0090 2130

Please advise your remittance by email: kimtaunt@optushome.com.au

Soldier on.

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Vice-President: Ross Fuller

Donations

The 2/2nd Field Regiment Association extends its thanks the following donors since last edition:

Ron Stark Marie McCowan

Ian Kirk Lin Hodgens

Algy Drewett Terry Swalwell