



Volume LXXXV

March 2024

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## **OPENING SHOTS**

Welcome all to your March 2024 edition of Action Front – now in its 85<sup>th</sup> volume.

To guide the most pressing reading, please refer to The Sergeants' Mess (page 2) for details of the 2024 Anzac Day march.

Long-term calendar entries should be made for the regimental dinner and AGM on Sunday **13 October 2024**. Timings and an agenda will be released closer to the date.

In this edition we provide an update on the Association's new website, and reintroduce members to the Facebook page (dormant since pre-COVID). The Committee offers its sincerest thanks to Lee Fallon and team for their work making the Regiment's, and the Association's, history available to all interested.

Website: <https://www.2nd2ndfieldreg.com.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/2nd2ndFRA/>

Forms can be downloaded for Membership, and Serviceman's Profiles, which we hope will allow us to gather a trove of information we can use for material in this publication.

As with previous editions, this newsletter would not be possible without the Committee's readiness to send information and articles of interest, and Sarah Jaboor's dedication to putting that material in sound order.

And finally, please use the new means of communication to get in touch with the Committee with any articles, queries, histories or personal information about either the Association, or your Action Front newsletter. They will be well received.

I also remind our readers that annual memberships (\$25) for those who can afford it are now due. Please refer to Cease Firing for details.

See you all at the march.

**VALE**

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

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

**Lest We Forget.**

## THE SERGEANTS' MESS

### ANZAC Day 2024:

When	Thursday 25 April 2024 at 0900h
Where	Collins Street East (East of Swanston Street) Melbourne, same as last year
Dress	Semi-formal, as you would for the Regimental Dinner
March off	Anytime from 0930-0945h (approx.)
Reunion	Star Hotel, Raglan Street South Melbourne (short stroll from The Shrine) From 1200h onwards RSVP req. names and numbers to <a href="mailto:president.2nd2ndfieldreg@gmail.com">president.2nd2ndfieldreg@gmail.com</a>

### The reason we wear a poppy:

On November 7th, 1920, in strictest secrecy, four unidentified British bodies were exhumed from temporary battlefield cemeteries at Ypres, Arras, the Asine and the Somme. None of the soldiers who did the digging were told why.

The bodies were taken by field ambulance to GHQ at St-Pol-Sur-Ter Noise. Once there, the bodies were draped with the union flag. Sentries were posted and Brigadier-General Wyatt and Colonel Gell selected one body at random. The other three were reburied.

A French Honour Guard was selected and stood by the coffin overnight of the chosen soldier. On the morning of the 8th November, a specially designed coffin made of oak from the grounds of Hampton Court arrived and the Unknown Warrior was placed inside. On top was placed a crusader's sword and a shield on which was inscribed: "A British Warrior who fell in the GREAT WAR 1914-1918 for King and Country".

On the 9th of November, the Unknown Warrior was taken by horse-drawn carriage with Guards of Honour and the sound of tolling bells and bugle calls to the quayside. There, he was saluted by Marechal Foch and loaded onto HMS Verdun bound for Dover. The coffin stood on the deck covered in wreaths, surrounded by the French Honour Guard.

Upon arrival at Dover, the Unknown Warrior was met with a nineteen-gun salute - something that was normally only reserved for Field Marshals. A special train had been arranged and he was then conveyed to Victoria Station, London. He remained there overnight, and, on the morning of the 11th of November, he was finally taken to Westminster Abbey.

The idea of the unknown warrior was thought of by a Padre called David Railton who had served on the front line during the Great War, the union flag he had used as an altar cloth whilst at the front, was the one that had been draped over the coffin. It was his intention that all of the relatives of the 517,773 combatants whose bodies had not been identified could believe that the Unknown Warrior could very well be their lost husband, father, brother or son...

THIS is the reason we wear poppies. We do not glorify war. We remember - with humility - the great and the ultimate sacrifices that were made, not just in this war, but in every war and conflict where our service personnel have fought - to ensure the liberty and freedoms that we now take for granted. Every year, on the 11th of November, we remember. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them.

## PERSONALIA

Diana West (nee Hale) was going through some pictures, including those inherited from her parents and theirs, and found the below photo of the 1980 regiment reunion dinner. Her dad, Ted "Kanga" Hale, had written the details on the back.



**2nd /2nd Field Regiment Association**  
Regimental Dinner 1980

**Back:** Doug Gregor, Ted Hale

**Seated:** Eric Meates, Albert Willcox, Max Anderson, John Anderson mc, Sandy Mc Donald

Diana also mentioned her dad took many photos while away with the regiment which she is sending to the State Archive in Tasmania along with any relevant letters. Once these have been processed by the Archive they will be available for use. Thank you, Diana, for sharing this photo with the Association.

## BOMBARDMENT

We are pleased to announce that the long-awaited new website for the 2/2 Field Regiment Association Inc. became a live reality on the morning of 4 December 2023.

<https://www.2nd2ndfieldreg.com.au/>

Many months of work involving hundreds of painstaking hours came to fruition with the launch. This is an exciting milestone for the Association, aligning with the Association's 5-year strategic plan (2022-27) and providing a much-needed new look that will attract families, researchers, and historians to learn of the invaluable and important role played by the 2/2 Field Regiment in North Africa (Bardia, Tobruk) 1941, Greece and Crete (Servia, Brallos Pass, Perivolio, Sfakia) 1941 and New Guinea (Aitape, Wewak) 1944-45.

Our newly reactivated Facebook page also aligns with the webpage, and there is a section for people to "blog" and ask questions and seek information. The website still has a lot more information to be gradually added as we continue our research and learn more of our forebears. You, the reader, are a vital resource and are invited to contribute to the success and currency of the website. Items we are looking for include but are not limited to:

- ACTION FRONT issues from the 1950s
- Old photos of 2/2 members for a future montage of all who served the 2/2
- Veteran Profiles (download file from web page)
- Missing photos of Life Member's to complete page
- Any missing Life member's information, we are sure there are more!

We are actively seeking sponsors and advertisers for the website and will offer to link your business to our webpage or provide space for your business to add a copy. We acknowledge there may be some typos and even some errors, we encourage your feedback to assist us to further enhance your experience.

## 2/2nd Field Regiment Association Inc.

HOME ABOUT HONOUR BOARDS ACTION FRONT EVENTS ITEMS FOR SALE LINKS BLOG CONTACT

Preserving the history of those who served with the 2/2nd Field Regiment, 6th Division, 2nd A.I.F. 1939-1945.



The 2/2nd Field Regiment Association proudly represents former members of the 2/2nd Field Regiment, 6th Division, 2nd A.I.F. We welcome the support of their families, relatives, descendants and friends in our mission to preserve, study and promote the history of the 2/2nd Field Regiment, 1939-1945, as part of Australian Military Heritage.



Connect with us on Facebook

Latest Newsletter

2023\_november.pdf  
Download File

Personal emails have been replaced with Association title specific emails and we encourage you to update your email address book and use these to go directly to the intended recipient. These are included at the end of this edition.

We acknowledge the work of Lee Fallon and the hundreds of hours in time spent in bringing the web page to reality.

## **COUNTER BATTERY**

### Report of Hellenic Medal Ceremony by Mel Johnson

The event took place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at the Hellenic RSL, South Melbourne. Hosted by Mr Steve Kyritsis OAM, President of the Australian Hellenic Memorial Foundation with Consul General Emmanuel Kakavelakis, Consulate General of Greece in Melbourne and Colonel Ioannis Fassianos the Military Attache of Greece in Canberra making the medal presentation to forty recipients. The presentation included an individually boxed Greek Medal and certificate with the name, rank and service number of the veteran.

Veterans from the 2/2 Field Regiment and recipient:

VX107	SYME John Douglas	Andrew Syme
VX685	MERLO Henry Dominic	Andrew Merlo
VX825	McVEIGH Thomas Richard	Granddaughter*
VX889	FITZPATRICK John Charles	Geoff Fitzpatrick
VX1096	McKAY Walter William	Grandson*
VX4541	OSBORNE Thomas Stanley	Kate Boulton
VX5824	LENNIE Douglas Donald	Mel Johnson
VX13928	PITTS Allan Reid	Sue Foley
VX15411	WELLER Francis George	Jan Earl

\*For the McVEIGH and McKAY family if you can forward the respective name of the recipient on the day I can include on this list - thank you.

Excerpts from Neos Kosmos: During WW2, 17000 Australians served in Greece, of whom 840 were killed and buried on Greek soil. Many soldiers were captured and some paid the ultimate price in battle, said Steve Kyritsis OAM, President of the Australian Hellenic Memorial Foundation, who presented the event.

Steve Kyritsis was instrumental in helping to ensure that the descendants of Australian veterans were traced and honoured. There had been previous presentations of the medal to veterans since the 1970's. The Consul General in Melbourne Emmanuel Kakavelakis initiated a survey to locate any veterans and their families who had not yet received the Hellenic Campaign Medal. (Since this ceremony there have been inquiries from families of veterans and the Consul General will look at conducting a medal presentation in the future)

The Consul General and Colonel Fassianos in their speeches could not hide their emotion while thanking Australia and the veterans who stood by Greece in difficult times and thus “forged unbreakable bonds between the two countries”. They stressed that the sacrifices made back then should not be forgotten and underlined the need to keep the memory alive.

*“We must strive to keep the memory of this campaign unquenched. We owe it to the fighters and the dead of the great struggle for the freedom of the peoples.”*

Channel 7 with Nick McCallum filmed the whole ceremony and parts of it were shown on the main news that evening. In talking with Nick he expressed his real passion for covering real community events.

#### Book review by Malcolm Fallon

Title	Where the flaming hell are we?
Author	Craig Collie
Pages	323 + 44 of acknowledgements and bibliography
Published	2023 Allen & Unwin, ISBN 978 1 76087 919 8
Price	\$22 to \$38 - delivered in 4 days from AMAZON online, \$22 with free postage

An account of the story of young Australians and New Zealanders fighting the Nazis in Greece and Crete. Whilst the 2/2 Field Regiment is not specifically mentioned, this book contains many verified accounts taken from soldiers' diaries and a large array of books written documenting Regiment experiences. ACTION FRONT and Cremor are quoted along with others from the role of those who served in the 2/2nd. Names include Ern Moor (VX933), Sgt. A. T. Fletcher (VX865), Lt. R. L. Newbold (VX904) to name but three that I have cross referenced.

Quite critical detailed accounts of the tactics, embarkations and evacuations of the ANZAC troops into and out of Greece and Crete, this reader was left in no doubt about how British aristocrats were promoted well above their ability and given leadership responsibilities that they were totally inept to not only make but to follow orders from above. There are documented accounts of orders being totally dismissed or ignored in the field with disastrous ramifications to our men.

One could be easily led to believe that the British hierarchy used ANZAC forces as nothing more than fodder to the Nazis. The book gives good insights to what our forebears battled against in sometimes atrocious conditions not only in Greece and Crete but prior in Northern Africa.

If you are a strategist you are left in bewilderment at some of the decisions and more so the non-decisions that were made or not made for the ANZACS! Australian leaders must have been dismayed and frustrated by their British counterparts who were given command over them.

Certainly this book is one for the bookshelf that gives the reader a good look into the army lives of our fathers, grandfathers and others. Not too difficult to read, I used "Google Earth" in part to follow the paths of the book to gain a greater depth of understanding.

I rated this book 4/5 - Malcolm Fallon.

### **CEASE FIRING!**

Thank you again to all members for their support, contributions, and readership of Action Front.

The 2/2nd Field Regiment Association relies on your donations to preserve the Regiment's history, and provide ongoing support to its membership. An annual donation of \$25, for those who can afford it, helps with these costs. Donations can be made to:

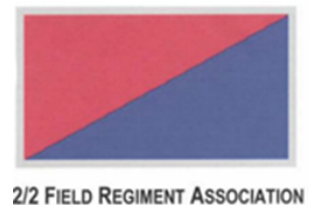
Account Name: 2/2 Field Regiment Association

BSB: 063 001

Account No: 0090 2130

Please advise your payment by email: kimtaunt1951@gmail.com

The regiment can also be supported through a range of 2/2 souvenirs:



2/2nd Name Badge: \_\_\_\_\_ \$25

Action Front (book on DVD): \$60

2/2nd War Diary (DVD): \$60

Bumper Sticker: \_\_\_\_\_ \$6

Soldier on.



## 2/2 Field Regiment Association Inc.

### LIFE MEMBER'S

1944	J.S. WHITELAW * CB OBE	NX112427
19	W. E. CREMOR* CBE OBE	VX86
19	R. F. JABOOR* OBE ED	VX90
19	Sir A. H. RAMSEY * CB CBE DSO ED	VX27
1954	C. F. ADAM*	VX28926
1959	N. McI. McMILLAN*	VX33344
19	C. F. COULSON*	VX878
19	L. C. CREED*	VX1070
19	D. M. DONALDSON*	VX919
19	P. J. AUSTIN*	NX121948
19	H. E. DAY*	VX773
19	F. F. WILLIAMS*	VX39986
19	W. H. QUITTENTON*	VX10420
1969	C. B. COLSON*	VX51444
1971	R. DALE*	
1975	L. G. PARKINSON * MBE	VX54
1977	F. H. WOOD* MBE ED	VX68
1983	K. V. ROSSI* AM OBE RFD ED	VX51628
1987	P. F. WORTHAM*	VX972
1993	R. K. TAUNT*	VX984
2015	W. J. H. ROWE*	VX141086
2016	K. TAUNT	
2019	L. W. McPHERSON*	
2022	T. M. COLE	

**\*\* Further to be added as information is identified & verified.**

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