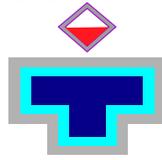


**The Furphy Flyer in Mufti.**



**I HOLD FAST**

Official Organ of the 2/24 Australian Infantry Battalion Association Inc.

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COMING EVENTS FOR 2008

**2/24<sup>th</sup>'s Shrine Pilgrimage – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2.00pm  
(Assemble 1.30pm)**

*(see inside for further details)*

**9<sup>th</sup> Division's Shrine Service and Luncheon, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October**

*(see inside for further details)*

**Wangaratta Weekend Reunion, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> November**

*(see inside for further details)*

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**Vale**

K. Bubb	VX105226	14 March 2008
E. M. O'Brien	QX50944	20 May 2008
Gladys Anderson		20 July 2008
J T Hogg	VX53783	29 July 2008

All members of the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association offer their deepest sympathy and understanding to those bereaved by the passing of members of the association.

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### **Annual General Meeting, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008**

The meeting was opened by our President, Alan Macfarlane.

Those attending :- Janice Young, Michael Oakley, Bob Clark, Keith Clark, Doug Dobson, Alan Nicholson, Keith Anderson Alastair Davison and Roland Nicholson.

Apologies were offered on behalf of Eric Elsdon, Owen Lewis, Charlie Scales and Frank Tyrrell.

The minutes of last years Annual General Meeting were read and adopted. The current financial statements were read and accepted.

The election of office bearers resulted in the following –

President :	Alan Macfarlane
Vice Presidents :	Doug Dobson and Alan Nicholson
Secretary :	Michael Oakley
Treasurer:	Roland Nicholson
Assistant Treasurer/ Secretary :	Janice Young
Committee :	Bob Clark, Keith Clark, Eric Elsdon, Mark Quinn and Keith Anderson and Sandra Sharpe.
Editor :	Frank Tyrrell
Web Site :	Alastair Davison

### ***The following is the President's report on the Associations activities during the previous year.***

To all members – I am pleased to report, once again, regarding our Association activities during the last twelve months. Again, I am pleased, as I am sure you are, that our Association is alive and well.

### **The Annual Shrine Service – 21/10/07**

Was well attended with a visit also, to our tree memorial by the faithful and a few new faces. After our service we all enjoyed afternoon tea within the Shrine precinct. Our thanks to the Shrine staff for their assistance.

### **9<sup>th</sup> Division Shrine Service and Luncheon – 19/10/07**

Sadly the numbers are dwindling making it difficult to reach the minimum numbers required for catering at the MCG. It is my firm belief that the coming event on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008 will be the last luncheon of this nature, so let's make it the best attendance for some time, bring your carer!

### **Wangaratta Reunion – 9, 10, 11/11/07**

Again this was a great weekend with 180 present at the Council's Reception and our Annual Dinner on the Saturday evening. The attendance at our Saturday afternoon service at the Wangaratta Cemetery was even healthier with Wangaratta High School students plus the Cadets in support. The highlight was the blessing and official opening of the new gates for which we must thank the Cemetery Trust, Paul Moss-Holland, Greg Larkins and John Elward who made it possible for us to obtain a State Grant to help finance this great achievement.

### **ANZAC Day March and Reunion - 25/4/08**

Again our numbers were on a par with last year, some missing and some new faces. It was wonderful to have the fine group of senior students from Wangaratta High School carrying our Battalion Banner so proudly and so well turned out.

My thanks to Doug Dobson who proudly led the Battalion in the absence of myself on other duties and Alan Nicholson on the sick list. I was able to watch the Battalion approach the Shrine area in step and good order.

Our annual Reunion lunch at the Pascoe Vale R.S.L. was well attended by all category members and our thanks to the staff at Pascoe Vale for their hospitality. Once again we thank Peter Wright of Moreland Bus Lines for transport from the Shrine to Pascoe Vale.

### **Birthday Lunch – 4/7/08**

This annual event continues even though attendances are low. Maybe we oldies don't like our June/July weather. The enthusiasm is still there to continue.

### **Finances**

Thanks to Treasurer, Roland Nicholson and thanks to Members support, we are in a healthy position with our annual subscription retained at only \$10.00 which is helped greatly by the many donations, large and small, for which on your behalf, I say a big 'thank you'.

As usual it has been an honour to have been your President and I thank all the hard working and enthusiastic members, especially Secretary, Michael Oakley and Margaret, Treasurer, Roland Nicholson, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, Janice Young, Editor of the "Furphy Flyer", Frank Tyrrell and Pam plus the support of my wife Faye.

### **Battalion Birthday Luncheon 2008**

On Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> July, thirty nine Association members and friends attended the annual Birthday Luncheon at the Pascoe Vale RSL. It was a friendly and inviting atmosphere with the tables set up in a square so that everyone could see everyone else. Our President, Alan Macfarlane, welcomed and thanked us for attending, especially those who had traveled great distances.

One of the Scully girls bought a CD of Vera Lynn tunes which was played in background while we were served roast chicken and fish and delicious sweets.

The door prizes were picked out by our seven 2/24<sup>th</sup> attendees and Roland Nicholson was "barrel girl" taking the prizes to each of the winners. Thank you to the RSL for donations of lunches & wine and Janice for her donations of prizes.

Even in the middle of winter the Birthday lunch is a great way to spend time with fellow members. Thanks again to the friendly staff of the Pascoe Vale RSL for their hospitality and generosity.

#### **Attendees:**

Doug Dobson; Bob & Dot Clark; Hautie Crick; Edna Bridgeman; Beatrice Frazer; Roland & Alan Nicholson; Fran & Bernadette Scully; June Mitchell; Robyn & Maudie Stevens; Trish Beecroft; Nance Ormsby; Mrs Mckenzie; Keith Clark & Janice Young; Bruce Pollerd; Alan Macfarlane; Maree & Kathleen Scully; Glen, Mark, Renee and Jan Denton; Curley Callendar; Cameron Blackwood; Shane Neal; Mark, Harry & Molly Quinn; Maryanne Scully.

Apologies : Owen Lewis, Marion Weir, Michael Oakley.

### **Sick Parade**

Eric Elsdon, Charlie Scales and Marion Weir.

*To all our members who are not feeling 100% we hope that the coming months of Spring, plus the warmer weather, brighten your spirits and make you feel better*

## Letters to our President and Secretary.

*From **Bill Horrigan** of Beaumaris .....*

While reading the latest "Furphy Flyer" a letter from Bruce Gray of Beaumaris caught my eye. Bruce is a near neighbour of mine and while we had a passing friendship he reminded me that we had a further bond when he saw my name in the "Furphy Flyer" as an associate member, joining when my close relative Bert Londrigan passed away some years ago. We now enjoy more chats and reminiscences than we might otherwise have had. Regards to all members and associates.

*Thanks for your note Bill, best wishes to you.*

*From **Mary-Jane Joscelyne** of East Melbourne*

..... Antony and I enjoy reading the "Furphy Flyer", love the stories- especially enjoyed reading about Alan Spowers last year. Alan was my Godfather, a very special and lovely man.

Kind regards to all from Antony and myself.

*Thanks for your kind words Mary-Jane.*

*From **Max Oakley** of Geilston Bay TAS .....*

Please find enclosed a cheque for subs.

I was heading towards the last ANZAC Day parade when I became sick and I hadn't recovered enough to make the trip, so, hoping for next year.

Please pass on my best wishes to all those that are unwell and to all those that are well.

*We look forward to seeing you next year Max. Hope your health improves.*

*From **Cliff Hoskin** of Marysville .....*

Just a short note to the Gang of the "Furphy Flyer". I am sending you a cheque to cover subs and a little over to use as you like.

I had open heart surgery this year but am OK now. My wife is an invalid so I have a full time carers job. I read the "Furphy Flyer" and see some of the boys I was associated with sixty or so years ago are still battling on.

We still live in the same house, 56 years. Three of our family live here in Marysville, they keep an eye on us and call in every day.

I will close now wishing you all good health from the wife and I.

*Great to hear from you Cliff. I reckon after this year's cold winter, especially in Marysville, you*

*will be looking forward to warmer days. Best wishes to the both of you.*

*From **Jack Devlin** of Trafalgar .....*

Please find enclosed a cheque for subs and a donation. Best wishes to all. Also, please excuse the handwriting, I have been ill for some time.

*There was nothing wrong with your handwriting Jack, it's better than mine ever was. Hope your health improves and 2009 is a great year for you.*

*From **Dawn Catherall** of Surrey Hills .....*

Enclosed is a donation to the 2/24<sup>th</sup> that Jack would have wished I know. Thank you for forwarding the "Furphy Flyer" to me. I enjoy reading same from start to finish, even though it saddens me to read the long list of "Vale" recently.

Wishing you every success.

*Thank you Dawn, your support is very much appreciated.*

*From **Wilma and David Evans** of Ballarat .....*

Please find enclosed our subs. We do enjoy reading the "Furphy Flyer" and congratulations to the Association for doing a great job.

*Thanks and best wishes to you both.*

*From **Vern Collier** of Oakleigh East .....*

Sorry to miss the ANZAC Day march and the Reunion dinner. I hope to have better luck next year. Regards to all.

*Good to hear from you Vern.*

*From **George Pomeroy OAM** of Manly .....*

Enclosed is cheque for subs and a donation to be used in whatever way you need. Having problems with my writing but, I am in my 90<sup>th</sup> year.

Best wishes to all.

*Lovely to hear from you George, thanks for you support.*

*From **Fay Hall** of Box Hill North. Fay is the daughter of Sgt Tom Mackie, 12<sup>th</sup> Platoon, 2/24<sup>th</sup>, KIA 2/5/1941 .....*

Dear Alan, thank you so much for your letter and the two copies of the "Furphy Flyer", they were very interesting reading.

I would also like to thank you for taking the time to meet with me and Tom's granddaughter,

Carolyn. As I have never spoken to anyone who was in Tobruk with my father it was very special to me.

I am enclosing a donation to the Battalion Association which I hope will be of some help in the good work that you do. Kind regards.

*Thank you Fay for your note and support.*

*From **Cameron Blackwood** of Glen Iris .....*

Hi, my name is Cameron Blackwood and my father is Corporal James "Scotty" Blackwood (VX94591) from C company, 13th platoon (Lt Lee). He joined the 2/24th when it was in Australia in the table-lands and was involved in the Tarakan landings (and taking the airfield). My father had a bit of a bad turn at the start of the year and is in a Home in Malvern.

I've just found the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Association and I can't believe it took me this long to find it! Anyway, I managed to make it to the lunch last month and it was great to meet and talk to people.

I just thought I'd write in and say 'Hi' and see if anyone has any memories, photos, stories or outrageously tall tales to share (and I'll pass them on to my father, so don't make the tales too tall).

My details are: Cameron Blackwood *Phone:* 03 9809 1523

Email: cameron.blackwood@gmail.com

Cheers and great work on the Furphy, Regards Cam.

*Welcome to the Association Cameron. It will be great to see you, and I hope your father, at our get togethers.*

*From **Tom Karnatz** of Belgrave South .....*

My father, Thomas Allan Karnatz, was a member of the 2/24<sup>th</sup> and was captured at Tobruk. He then spent around four years as a prisoner of war. Dad passed away on the 20 January 2008.

In going through some photographs we found three photos we believe to be of the funeral for Burnie Kennedy who passed away in a German POW camp. They may be of value to his family members or perhaps for the 2/24<sup>th</sup> historical records. I hope that you can put the photos to a practical purpose. Regards to all.

*Thank you Tom. I believe you may be referring to **Newton Bernard Kennedy VX33859**, a POW who died in November 1943.*

*If anyone needs more details or can add to his story, please contact our Secretary.*

*From **Jack Caple** of Warnambool .....*

I would like to comment on the item about the dedication to the El Alamein memorial by the Australian Governor-General. It is of interest that the first memorial built after the war disintegrated due to the poor selection of stone.

The dedication comprised of many political and military heavy-weights, plus veterans David Hampton, Len Crowther, Joe Madeley and myself. At the conclusion of the ceremony the many ambassadors present laid wreaths, with the exception of one – the German ambassador.

So, afterwards, I asked the Governor-General, why? He said it was their 'protocol', yet the Governor-General later laid a wreath at the huge German Memorial, there at El Alamein, and said 'that was his privilege'.

The new memorial is a sight to behold and it was an honour to take part in such a memorable event. The Governor-General said during the dinner at the Hotel that given three months training these four veterans could do it all again. Not to sure about that.

The battle field has changed that much it's hard to comprehend how we camouflaged from each other in such flat ground. All in all it was a wonderful experience. Regards to all.

ps. I hope to make Wang in November.

*Thanks for your note Jack. Good to hear that you still enjoy travelling overseas.*

*We have also received notes from **Lorna Hill, Olive Dickson, Dawn Cleary.***

*Thank you all for your support and kind words.*

*Thanks to **Mick Benson** and **John O'Brien** for forwarding articles for the "Furphy Flyer". I will endeavour to include them in the November issue.*

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*"If I'd been around when Rubens was painting, I would have been revered as a fabulous model. ..."*

*Kate Moss ?*

*"Well, she would have been the paintbrush. ...."*

*Dawn French.*

*This item, extracts from the official Australian War History volume "Tobruk and El Alamein" by Barton Maughan, was taken from the November 1975 edition of the Furphy Flyer in Mufti. It was "included to show the magnificent role fulfilled by the Battalion at the historical El Alamein battle and the reason for our pilgrimage to the Shrine of Remembrance on the nearest Sunday to the 23<sup>rd</sup> October each year".*

The night of 23rd October was clear and illumined by a brilliant, almost full moon. As soon as it was dark a hurried hot meal was served to the men out in front, start lines were laid and the routes to the forming-up positions taped. As the leading battalions moved forward, following the tapes, a cool southerly breeze was blowing.

The noise of the Eighth Army's transport, which had been reverberating like city traffic as night fell, lessened in time, then ceased. A strange, sustained quietness reigned between the opposing armies. In the deceptive peace the illusion was created that time stood still; but one by one, unarrested, the irretrievable minutes moved on. In silence the men who were to go forward waited as the moment came ever closer, when the guns in concert would strike the first chord of their harsh overture to battle.

When the hour for action was drawing near, a throbbing, at first half imagined, then faintly heard, stole through the night and grew into rhythmic, surging sound. The Bomber aircraft that were to support the army's assault approached from the east and passed over. A few distant points of light then flickered unimpressively from the desert on the British side; they came from the muzzles of the long-range guns opening up in advance of the shock moment so that their first shells would fall in the same, split second as those from the massed field artillery. In an instant, at the stroke of 9.40 pm, flashes from hundreds of guns were seen sparkling in a long line across the desert. As a quiet interval follows a lightning flash before the thunder roll is heard, so the sound of the guns took time to reach the infantry. Seconds seemed to be drawn out into minutes while flickering gun flashes continued to play silently up and down the line, and only the droning rhythm of the aircraft then flying above the enemy positions could be heard until the sound wave crashed with a roar of furious hammering from the sharp, staccato reports of the guns pounding at a combined firing rate of some thousand rounds per minute. The rapid bark of the guns almost masked the dull crunch of aircraft bombs and shells exploding in the enemy gun line but the resonant clang of heavy mortar bombs bursting closer to the front rang out clear and loud above the gunfire.

For fifteen minutes the counter-battery bombardment continued unabated. Suddenly the guns were silent. There was a breathless stillness, as if their force was spent. Above the Eighth Army's hidden battle array two searchlights pointed long, still fingers into the sky. Five minutes passed. At 10pm the two beams swung inward, intersected and stopped, forming a pointed arch dimly seen in the moonlit vault, like a remote symbol of crossed swords. At that instant the British guns opened a barrage of unimaginable intensity, eclipsing their first performance, and to the urgent drumming of the guns the infantry men stepped out from their start-lines in slow, measured paces at the even rate of 75 yards per minute. A continuous stream of glowing tracer shells, in seeming slow motion, sailed in the air over the heads of the advancing Australians and pointed the direction of their attack. White and coloured flares shot up into the sky above the enemy wire. The moon shone down. The fight was on.

On the extreme right of the corps attack the 2/24 Battalion advanced with two companies forward - Lieutenant McNamara's on the right and Captain Serle's on the left.

30-31 October. The 2/24th and the 2/48<sup>th</sup>, numbering scarcely 450 men between them, had meantime set off on their desperate eastward advance of 2,250 yards, marching to the sound of guns - not to the distant sound of the enemy's, but in the face of the close, harsh bombardment of their own - and were strewing the desert way of a long fight with fallen wounded and dead, yet sustaining still their forward progress, their soldierly spirit suffusing the performance of their task with a greatness transcending its purpose. Both battalions were soon knocked about by fire from anti-tank guns, heavy mortars and machine guns; both successfully took their intermediate objectives (though not without fighting) but then found themselves advancing with ever-dwindling strength against ever-stronger opposition. As they fought their way on and one or other battalion or company heard its neighbour in trouble to right or left, groups from one crossed to the other to help.

In the 2/24th, which advanced with one section south of the railway line on the open right flank, the heaviest opposition was encountered on the left. Captain Harty's company on the right had, by comparison, an easier passage.

Lieutenant Kearney's company on the left had a stiff fight in which Sergeant Dingwall commanding the left platoon led his men against three posts in succession and overcame them. Then the other two platoons attacked a troublesome enemy strong-point on the left and Dingwall joined in, storming the post's 88mm gun and capturing it. Captain Mackenzie's and Lieutenant McLeod's companies were meanwhile following up. McKenzie's company was caught by enfilade machine gun fire which cut down several men and badly wounded Mackenzie. Lieutenant Nelson took command and soon had to come to the help of Kearney's company, held up in front of the

first objective. Some of the 2/48 also came over to help and the post was overrun, whereupon the following companies passed through.

McLeod's company fought its way forward under increasingly heavy fire but this came mainly from posts in front of Nelson's company, which had been held up by a German strongpoint; soon Nelson was wounded. The company sergeant-major, Sergeant Alleyne, took command and led the men through the wire but he too soon fell mortally wounded. Lieutenant McLeod brought his company across to help. Corporal Anderson charged one post single-handed, spattering the occupants with light machine-gun fire and killing all, but as McLeod's men moved into the assault on the strongpoint anti-tank and heavy machine-guns firing point-blank put them to ground. McLeod, calling on his men to cover him, charged the gun crews with Bren gun firing but was shot down and killed. Sergeant Lewis who had taken command of the left company continued the attack in conjunction with men from McLeod's company, overran another post and then with only nine men dug in to hold the ground he had taken. When McLeod was hit, Warrant Officer Cameron rushed to his assistance but was also wounded. Finding McLeod dead and himself again in command of the company, the wounded Cameron led back the survivors, numbering only eight, to contact the rear company, where they dug in, covering the front between the road and the railway.

Colonel Weir decided to concentrate his meager force and, when they were gathered in, led them, 84 strong, to a position due north of Thompson's Post. There they dug themselves in for all round defence. While there he received a message from brigade headquarters telling him that it had been reported - and how incredible it must have seemed to those men! - that Thompson's Post was unoccupied; the proposed barrage had therefore been cancelled and Colonel Weir was instructed to verify the report. Responding with fine leadership to a fearful mandate, Weir made himself the patrol leader and set out with fifteen men to find out.

"*Crumbling* had indeed been continued and relentless pressure on the enemy maintained; at the cost, however, of crumbling two fine battalions, than which there were none better - British or German - in Africa, nor probably in the world." (2/24 and 2/48)

The survivors of the 2/24 and 2/48, who had suffered more casualties during the day, were taken back to the original front line on the coast sector (the defences opposite to which were still occupied by the enemy) to sleep the night and muster next morning at their saddest roll-calls ever.

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### 2/24<sup>th</sup>'s Shrine Pilgrimage, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2008, at 2.00 pm.

We will be gathering at the Shrine again this year for our Shrine Pilgrimage. Weather permitting, we shall meet at our tree at approximately 1.30 pm., with the ceremony taking place in the Inner Sanctum of the Shrine.

The wonderful Shrine staff provide guards for the traditional service which includes the singing of the hymn, Abide with Me, followed by the laying of the wreath and the observance of One Minute's Silence. The Last Post, Lament and Reveille are then played in this very sacred place.

Later we will adjourn to an ante room where afternoon tea (kindly supplied by all attending) can be enjoyed by all.

I would encourage everyone to come along and spend 1½ to 2 hours at this iconic Melbourne landmark, remembering the men of the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion.

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***Thank you to Lois Rourke for sending in these two poems. She says they were all the rage when the Americans were here. The copies she gave me were written on Australian Comforts Fund writing paper.***



***Somewhere in Australia Written by a Yank***

Somewhere in Australia where the sun is like a curse  
Where each dull day is followed by another slightly worse

Where the brick red dust is thicker than the shifting desert sands  
And a white man dreams and wishes for greener, fairer lands

Somewhere in Australia where a woman is never seen  
Where the sky is never cloudy and the grass is never green  
Where the dingoes nightly howling robs a man of blessed sleep  
Where there isn't any whisky and the beer is never cheap

Somewhere in Australia where the nights are made for love  
Where the moon is like a searchlight and the Southern Cross above  
Sparkles like a diamond necklace in the balmy tropic night  
It's a shameful waste of beauty, when there's not a girl in sight

Somewhere in Australia where the mail is always late  
Where a Christmas card in April is considered up to date  
Where we never have a payday, so we never have a cent  
But we never miss the money cause we never get it spent

Somewhere in Australia where the ants and lizards play  
Where a hundred fresh mosquitoes replace everyone you slay  
So take us back to San Francisco, let me hear the mission bells  
For this god-forsaken country is a substitute for hell.

***The answer to Somewhere in Australia by an Aussie girl.***

Somewhere in Australia where the Yankees are a curse  
If I wasn't such a lady I could think of something worse  
Where the Yankees hides are thicker than the brick red dust they scorn  
And the baseball players hollering wake the roosters up at dawn

Somewhere in Australia where a woman's never seen  
With a Yank like you, said poet, what a mug likes you old bean  
Where the din of canned music robs a girl of precious sleep  
And she wakes up early mornings to the howling of a jeep

Somewhere in Australia where the nights are made for love  
Where a Yankee reeling homewards calls out curses from above  
Where you can't enjoy the moonlight on a starry tropic night  
For always round the corner there's a blinkin Yank in sight

Somewhere in Australia where the air raid siren screams  
Where the Aussie girls are getting thin for the lack of their ice cream  
Where you can't buy any chocolate since the Yankee herd has come  
And you can't walk down the footpath without standing in some gum

Somewhere in Australia where the mails are always late  
Where you never get your mail on time, cause the Yankees mustn't wait  
Where the picture shows are crowded with the Yankee pleasure bent  
Who think the world was made for them with their dollar and their cent

Somewhere in Australia there's a Yank whose name is mud  
And will never rest betwixt heaven and earth until we have his blood  
So take him back to Frisco, let him hear the mission bells  
For despite the Jap and Togo we can manage just as well.

---

Over the last few months we have received Annual Subscriptions and Donations from the following members. Thank you for your support and your kind donations.

Please note that receipts will not be sent unless a reply paid envelope is enclosed with your subscription. All subscriptions and donations will be acknowledged in the Furphy Flyer in Mufti.

**Subscriptions :**

Bill Shelton, J & R Richardson, Cameron Blackwood, Fay Hall, Wilma & David Evans, Jonathan Mitchell, Jack Devlin, Vern Collier, George Pomeroy, A & D Neville, Bill Horrigan, James Blackwood, Cliff Hoskin, Bernadette Scully, Maree Neal, Kathleen Curtis, Max Oakley, Dawn Cleary, Cameron Blackwood,

**Donations :**

Lorna Hill, Dawn Catherall, Bill Shelton, J & R Richardson, Fay Hall, Jack Devlin, George Pomeroy, A & D Neville, Bill Horrigan, Mary Joscelyne, Marion Weir, Olive Dickson, Fran Scully, Dawn Cleary, James Blackwood, Cliff Hoskin,

**Memorial Wall Donation :**

Vern Collier,

Welcome to New Members

It's with much pleasure that we welcome new Associate Members.

**Jonathan Mitchell**, Jonathan is the Grandson of Robin Mitchell.

**Fay Hall**, Fay is the daughter of Tom Mackie.

**Wendy O'Brien**, Wendy is the daughter of Keith and Gladys Anderson.

**Lorraine Holland**, Lorraine is the niece of Ted Turner.

**Cameron Blackwood**, Cameron is the son of James Blackwood.

And **Bernadette Scully, Maree Neal, and Kathleen Curtis**.

Also joining the Association is **James Blackwood** VX94591 (see letters pages) and Brigadier **Zac Isaksson**. Alan tells me that Zac and about eighty to ninety men of the 2/48<sup>th</sup> Battalion reinforcements were posted to the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Tobruk when we had lost over half our Battalion. Zac, a Lieutenant, rejoined his battalion with others but, over forty remained with the 2/24<sup>th</sup> for keeps.

Welcome to everyone and we hope to see you at our functions.

**Congratulations.**

Congratulations to Tom McLucas who was listed in the 2008 Queens Birthday Honours. Tom was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community of Bundaberg, particularly the Returned Services League of Australia, and to the sport of cycling. Tom was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1987 for his service to the community.

**Tom McLucas OAM BEM**, the Committee and Members of the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion Association joins with the Governor-General in congratulating you.

**Thank You**

Marion Weir has made a marvellous donation to the Association. The donation, 'to be used towards whatever is most needed', was sent in memory of her dear friend of many years, the late Robin Mitchell.

Thank you Marion. Alan and the committee are very grateful for your support and I know they will allocate this donation to something special.

**2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion Pennant**

The Battalion’s Pennant resides at the Wangaratta Council Chambers. Positioned at the top of the stairs it is very impressive and emphasises the strong bond between Wangaratta and the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion "Wangaratta's Own".

Unfortunately, the pennant was showing signs of wear and tear and needed to be replaced. The Council has very generously paid for the new pennant, plus another pennant to be located at Wangaratta High School and used for their ANZAC Day ceremonies on ANZAC day eve.

We are aware that several people have been responsible for replacing the Pennants and we thank them all, particularly Cr Roberto Paino and Cr Don Joyce.

The Association is very grateful for the support from the Council, Schools and the local community for our efforts to preserve the story of 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion for the interest of future generations.

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**Wangaratta Weekend.**

I am pleased to announce that the State President of the Returned and Service League of Australia, Victorian Branch, Major General David McLachlan (Retd) and his wife Louise have kindly accepted an invitation to attend this years Wangaratta Weekend Reunion.

Barring the possibility of his having to attend the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremonies associated with Remembrance Day in London, he will attend the Saturday afternoon wreath laying ceremony at the Cemetery and give the Toast to the Battalion on Saturday night.

---

An elderly lady was in a large department store shopping for a fishing rod and reel for her husband. Having selected the one she wanted she went over to the desk to pay for it. When she got there she noticed that the assistant was blind.

Without hesitation he asked the lady to drop the item on the counter so he could ring up the item on the cash register.

The woman dropped the item on the counter and the assistant said that it was a Jarvis Walker Rod and Reel, catalogue item 2461, costing \$140.00.

The astonished woman was amazed because that was exactly what she had selected.

The assistant then asked if she was paying by cash or card. If it was by card he told her to drop it on the counter and he would know what type it was.

The woman dropped her card on the counter and was astonished when he correctly said it was an NAB Visa card.

As she reached for the card to give it to the assistant she accidentally dropped it on the floor.

Unfortunately, as she bent down to pick up the card she broke wind. Hoping the assistant did not notice she quickly gave him the card.

Swiping the card he said that the cost was \$152.50.

“How can that be?” said the woman, “You just quoted me \$140.00”

He replied, “Yes that’s \$140.00 for the Rod and Reel, \$10.00 for the duck caller and \$2.50 for the blood and bone”.

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A husband returns home to find his wife in bed with a naked man. “What are you doing?” he shouts.

The wife turns to her lover and says “I told you he was stupid!”.

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These days about half the stuff in my shopping trolley says “For fast relief”.

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Ninth Division Shrine Pilgrimage and MCG Luncheon, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008

These two functions, organized by the 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Association- Victoria, have proved to be very successful over many years. Firstly, the Shrine Pilgrimage, to remember and respect our fallen and since passed on comrades and secondly, the Luncheon, to foster and maintain the comradeship and esprit-de-corps of the Division.

In the early days, both functions were well attended but, as the years roll on, attendances have dwindled, especially the Luncheon. To ensure the continued success of the Luncheon at this marvelous venue it is important that we support it. If you are able to attend, please do so and if you require a carer to assist you, that person, whether wife, son, daughter or friend, would be most welcome.

**Assemble : 11.30 am. at the East Entrance of the Shrine**

**Lunch : Venue, MCG : Tom Wills Room in the Southern Stand.**

Entrance off Brunton Ave, Gate 7, then use lifts 16 or 19

**Parking:** Underground parking, Tower Number 4.

**Bus:** Please advise if you will be requiring a bus from the Shrine to the MCG. The bus will cost \$2.00, payable on the day

**Cost:** Luncheon will cost **\$35.00** per head. Please forward payment, made payable to 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association, to our Secretary prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> October.

*The following address was given by Dr. Mark Johnston at last years 9<sup>th</sup> Division Pilgrimage. Mark is an associate member of the 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association and patron of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division Association*

"We are here to remember the 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Division, which during World War II was the best known of all Australian Divisions. In fact wartime newspapers usually referred to it as "the famous 9<sup>th</sup> Division". It was not only admired by Australians. The great German General Rommel called it "an elite formation", and the man who beat him at Alamein, the British General Montgomery, referred to "that magnificent 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Division". Of course Army units only get that kind of reputation by fighting hard and achieving remarkable things. The 9<sup>th</sup> did that: in 1941 it held Tobruk when the Germans were sweeping all before them everywhere else. In 1942 it fought the terrible battles around Tel el Eisa, when Rommel had finally taken Tobruk off other troops and was advancing on Suez. As Montgomery's tribute suggested, it was critical in the victory at El Alamein, one of the war's great turning points.

Ten in New Guinea, it had the lion's share of fighting in 1943 campaigns, and in 1945 made two landings in Borneo, where it swept all before it.

These victories brought fame and they brought honours: the 9<sup>th</sup> Division, for example, won more bravery awards than any other Division. But it all came at a great human cost. Of the 45,000 men who served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Division, the huge total of about 10,000 were killed or wounded. The two Victorian Battalions of the Division, the 2/23<sup>rd</sup> and 2/24<sup>th</sup> Battalions, between them suffered more than 2,200 killed and wounded. Every 9<sup>th</sup> Division veteran can talk of mates who died in this force. So in remembering what a great Division the 9<sup>th</sup> was, and its outstanding achievements in the desert and jungle, we must always recall the men, the troopers, gunners, sappers, signalers and riflemen who had the guts and the skill to ensure that the 9<sup>th</sup> Division never lost a campaign and contributed substantially to Allied victory."

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**Wangaratta Weekend and Reunion 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Saturday Night Reception / Dinner and Sunday BBQ Lunch**

In order for us to organize catering for the Dinner and Lunch we need to know who will be attending. All inclusive costs for the functions will be \$30.00 per head for the dinner, \$10.00 per head for the BBQ Lunch and payment is required beforehand. Please complete the slip below and indicate which events you will be attending.

**Mail slip and cheque, payable to “2/24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion Assoc. Inc”, to :-**

**Secretary 2/24<sup>th</sup>, 10B Somme Parade, Edithvale 3196.....by the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008.**

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Dinner (Friday) at Wangaratta RSL – Yes / No

How many people ? \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner (Saturday) \$30.00 each – Yes / No

How many people ? \_\_\_\_\_

BBQ Lunch (Sunday) \$10.00 each – Yes / No

How many people ? \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for total \$ .....

*Please let us know what Motel you are staying at so that Members can keep in touch.*

I am staying at .....

*Please list below those attending the Wangaratta weekend.*

*If you or your guests are not original members of the Battalion, could you please indicate what your relationship is, for example, wife, daughter, grandson, mate, etc. This is not compulsory, but it will help to update our records and match names to faces and faces to names.*

**Name.**

**Associated with Battalion Member**

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**We look forward to seeing you at Wangaratta !**