



ISSUE 3/95

"MICE OF MORESBY" - MEMBERS BULLETIN

ORDERLY ROOM GOSSIP has survived its first year of publication! Its continuance depends on members contributions so don't hold back if you have a "STORY" of long Past service years, etc. LETS HAVE IT NOW!!

MEMORABILIA! Just one word that covers all those things we keep as souvenirs reminds of past occasions which bring back vivid memories of long ago. We all have these items to remind of us of past events and places; but will they mean anything to those we leave behind? Have you given any thought to what will happen to those treasured items? Your committee has taken on the task of collecting memorabilia for safekeeping for posterity and it is envisaged that these things will be turned over to a museum or like body for preservation and for the edification of future generations. Perhaps you have items such as these and after consultation with your family members would be prepared to send them to our committee when you have no further need for them. Give this some serious thought and your committee is open for suggestions regarding the eventual disposal of such

memorabilia as we may have accumulated. We have already a number of interesting items; embarkation rolls, orders of the day, photographs newspaper cuttings and so forth.

Meantime an indication from members of what most likely could be passed onto the committee would be of tremendous help in the early planning of what steps could or should be taken for the future. **HOW ABOUT SENDING IN YOUR LIST TO GET THE RECORDS STARTED.**

"50 YEARS AGO"

Members will recall the complimentary comments of the G.O.C. 2 AUST CORP Lt. General STAN SAVAGE promulgated through routine orders March '45 - "The work of the 55/53 Bn did in the forward area along the NUMA NUMA TRAIL is equal to the best yet done by any other Bn. If I may be permitted to use an expression familiar to all troops, I would say "The 55/53 Bn will do me."

Peter Lovett a former editor of the Bellarine ECHO pays tribute to the man who rose from army private to lieutenant general and became the founder of LEGACY.

"STAN THE MAN"

His name remains firmly in the minds of many Geelong residents, particularly ex-service men and Legacy Club members.

This year as Australia begins to commemorate Australia Remembers -

the 50th anniversary of the end of World War 2 - memories of the man are surfacing.

Stan Savige fought from Gallipoli to Bougainville. He began his military service as a private and ended it as Lieutenant. General Sir Stanley Savige, achieving this without a military college background

Between war and peace Savige's other strong link was Legacy, which he founded. He was always immensely proud that within two years of founding the Melbourne Legacy Club in 1923, a Geelong counterpart was formed. Other clubs were quickly established at Ballarat and Bendigo in 1926.

Initially, the main objective of Legacy was to help find work for ex-servicemen. But within a year the group turned its attention to the care of children and widows of ex-servicemen.

Without question the early efforts of Savige and his supporters provided the ongoing help and welfare that is today shared by children and widows of Geelong ex-servicemen.

Savige had a fatherly attitude and inspired devotion and confidence alike in young people and old.

Jim McGregor, of Newcomb, has fond memories as a young boy of attending Legacy camps organised by Savige at Somers on the Mornington Peninsula and applauds the idea of commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War 2. "Fifty years on is usually the time when all British historians and chroniclers endeavour to tell what things were really like," he said.

"I am concerned that Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Savige and others are rapidly being forgotten, and that now there are few who can remember it was Savige who took the surrender from the Japanese on behalf of the Allied land, sea and air personnel in the south-west Pacific area in September, 1945."

"It is something we want the people of Australia to realise, particularly in Geelong."

Savige died 1954. His deeds in peace and war will be honoured in Geelong and Australia at anniversary functions during the year.

THE STORY OF 53 YEARS AGO

The following article appearing in "HARRY PECKS" POST the official organ of the 2/5th Field Regiment association. Co-author Captain Fred Bastock is the nephew of Les Bastock (55/53) Killed in Action 19th December 1942: -

WHY WERE THE JAPS SO HARD TO DISLODGE IN THE BUNA / GONA / SANANANDA AREAS?

One often wonders why the AIF. Militia and US. Army forces had such great difficulty and took such heavy casualties to capture Buna/Gona/Sanananda in Dec/Jan 1942-3. There are many reasons.

First you have to consider the terrain of the area President, Ken Broadhead, and Secretary Fred Bastock (2/5 Field Regt), went on separate trips to the Kokoda track and Buna/Gona areas last year. They both commented on the fact that even 50 years on, the whole Owen Stanley Range and Buna/Gona/Sanananda coastal area is a terrible place to even contemplate military operations in our current well equipped and well supported situation, let alone in the conditions which prevailed in 1942.

Basically Buna/Gona/Sanananda were 3 Government station/mission villages close together on the northern coast of New Guinea. The whole area, about 10 miles long, was fairly flat, was crossed by 3 rivers, innumerable creeks and much of it was swamp and this was the wet season. A few tracks led inland from the coastal villages but these were quickly impassable for vehicular transport. The vegetation was thick jungle, forward vision was poor and very short. The area was poorly mapped and

commanders FOs and BCs and gun areas had to make do with local improvements to aerial photographs. There was no infrastructure to support the logistics of a military campaign. A number of airstrips had been hastily prepared 6-10 miles inland to handle Dakota 47 aircraft. Sea-borne supplies and reinforcements ex-Port Moresby/Milne Bay were landed with primitive facilities at Oro Ray about 17 miles east of Buna and then a monumental struggle began to get supplies to the front.

Things were so bad Bn and Bty ammunition resupply Jeep were running on Metho and food and drinkable water were difficult-to-obtain items.

Next you have to look at the strength and the defensive preparations made by the Japanese. The Official War History state that 12,000 Japanese defended the area - 3 000 at Buna, 7 000 at Sanananda and 2,000 at Gona/ Ambagu/ Kumusi - that's a lot of Japanese and they were dedicated, desperate and well armed with guns of many types, anti-aircraft guns capable of firing in the ground role, mortars and vast numbers of heavy to light machine guns. The 12 000 Japs had not been idle. It must have been obvious to the enemy from the start of the retreat from Imita Ridge on the southern side of the Owen Stanley Range that the coastal area would have to be defended against heavy attack. The number, strength and quality of the defensive position was quite staggering. A US Army training manual produced in 1944 shows the layout of the defence and describe in detail their method of construction and enormous strength.

In the Buna Village to Cape Endaiadere area alone, with a frontage of 5,000 yards x 1,500 yards in depth, there were 225 bunkers, each capable of holding a gun/heavy automatic weapon and 1 or 2 more machine guns and several crews to man each of the weapons, 66 fire trenches of average length 100 yards, 51 breastworks, 16 light-medium anti-aircraft gun positions all

capable of low angle fire and 1,300 yards of barbed wire entanglements. All these positions of course had interlocking field of fire, were mutually supporting, were extremely strongly built, were well camouflaged and could only be destroyed by the penetration of heavy projectiles through the firing slits so that the detonation of the projectiles destroyed the weapons and killed the occupants. Another effective method was for our soldiers to fling hand-grenades through the firing slits into the interior of the bunkers. This required the soldiers to get right up to the outside of the bunkers first and many, many of our soldiers were killed or wounded trying to get that close.

Initially we had 2 Regts (6 Bns) of US 32 Div who were supposed to quickly knock out the Japanese forces at the end of November. The Japanese quickly showed how poorly prepared for battle the Americans were. The Australian forces consisted of those AIF and Militia Bns who had fought their way over the Owen Stanley Range, were lightly armed and had suffered considerable battle and sickness casualties. Apart from being exhausted many units of the 3 Militia Bns were under half-strength.

The Australian forces closed up on the Buna/Gona/Sanananda area and were committed to digging out a large, determined, well-entrenched enemy force who had nowhere to go and were there to fight it out. Supporting arms were required quickly. Tom Hanson's 51 Bty of 2/1 Fd Regt was progressively flown in to Dobodura and Popondetta airstrips and thus a Troop of 4x25 Prs was available to support 32 US Div and another Troop to support the Australian forces! Aust. Mtn Bty were also supporting 32 US Div with 2x3.7 Hows (pre WWI vintage). Armour was also brought in by sea - initially a platoon of Bren Gun Carriers (totally unsuitable) and later General Stuart Light Tanks (37mm gun) from 2/6 Armed Regt. More artillery was fed into the campaign - 2 then 4x25 prs from 2/5 Fd Regt and 4x4.5" Hows (WWI vintage) from 13 Fd Regt when 3.7" How. ammunition was exhausted and much later 2 Bty (25 Prs) of 2/1 Fd Regt. Whilst our infantry battalions were

strengthened with the 3" Mortars and MMGs they couldn't carry over the mountains and were supported as much as possible by the General Stuart tank direct fire at bunkers and defended positions and our guns provided covering fire for their attacks. It really got down to a struggle between men in the open armed with rifles Light and Sub-Machine guns and grenades against a maze of heavily protected Japanese in bunkers who were heavily armed with guns, mortars and a large number of heavy to light automatic weapons. To make matters worse the dense jungle vegetation and the very effective camouflage screened many of the bunkers from forward troops and artillery observers and any open area was a 'killing ground' for the fire from many interlocking machine gun fields of fire. Our infantry casualties were extremely high. US and Australian casualties for the campaign Dec/Jan were 6,370. To make the situation even more difficult ammunition resupply was extremely erratic and rations and fresh water supply and casualty evacuation in forward areas was a continuing night mare.

What was needed was accurate heavy weapon support for the infantry and the ability to see the targets. The weapons which would have been effective against the bunkers were the 155mm guns with 44kg projective which had just been issued back in Australia to heavy Btys (Coast) and the heavily armoured General Grant Tanks with their 75mm and 37mm guns which were held by the Armed Division in WA Neither of these equipments were available in New Guinea and even if they were, would have been enormous problems getting to the region and getting ashore and then moving them. The guns weighed 14 tons each and the tanks would have had similar difficulties. The campaign ground on, very much like WWI - attack. after attack. for very small gains at extremely high cost in casualties and sickness. The Japanese did not enjoy our Artillery poundings of their positions and staged a "FSN Coral- type raid" on Hanson's post at night and knocked one of

the 4x25 Prs out for a short time. The Japanese were pushed back and back. to the sea and eventually Gona and Buna and finally Sanananda were captured. Of the 12,000 defenders only 2,000 escaped the rest stayed permanently. From the Gunner's point of view it must have been a frustrating campaign because our weapons could not do what was required to destroy the enemy bunkers - we tried everything at our disposal even to bring up a 5 Pr A/Tk gun from 2/1 A/Tank. Regt to see if it was effective against the bunkers without success mainly because of inability to get the gun close enough to see the targets and till be able to operate the gun and also because the projectile did not have sufficient destructive force to destroy the bunkers or to do any real damage unless the projectiles were able to be put through the embrasures into the interior of the bunkers. Because our FOs could not see the fall of shot due to the dense jungle, they developed on site the first 'sound ranging' technique which became most effective, and this system was improved taught and practised at the School of Artillery and all tropics-bound Regiments in WWII and probably was the basis of procedures adopted by RAA regiments in Malaya and South Vietnam. The campaign was heroic but costly for the AIF and Militia Bns, many of whom had already done enough over the Owen Stanley Range without being asked to make this bloody sacrifice. For the record, the heroes of the campaign came from 39 Bn, 2/1 Bn, 2/2 Bn, 2/3 Bn, 2/14Bn, 2/16 Bn, 2/27 Bn 2/25 Bn, 2/31 Bn, 2/33 Bn, 2/7 Bn 3 Bn, 36 Bn, 49 Bn, 55 /53 Bn, 2/6 Armed Regt, 2/9 Bn, 2/10 Bn, 2/12 Bn and the US Army 126, 127, 128 and 163 Regts. In all, 17 Australian and 12 US Bns took part in what must have been one of the tougher campaigns for the Australian Army in WWII.

This article also appeared in 36 Bn' "Marching On" Journal February 1995 (Thank you "Marching On").

WHAT MAKES UP "THE BATTALION"

KEITH IRWIN President of 36 Bn Assn has kindly allowed us to reprint his address to those attending their ANNUAL 19th December gathering.

An Infantry Battalion at battle strength was made up of about six hundred men. But six hundred men do not make a battalion. The six hundred men have to learn the soldier's trades and disciplines. Even then they are not a battalion. An effective battalion in being, ready to fight, implies a state of mind - I am not sure it is not a state of grace. It implies a giving and a taking, a sharing of almost everything - possessions, comfort, affection, trust, confidence, interest. It implies a certain restriction, and at the same time a certain enriching and widening of the human spirit. It implies doing a hundred things together - marching to the band, marching all night long, being hungry, thirsty, exhausted, filthy being near but never quite mutinous. It involves not the weakening but the deferment of other bonds and interests; the acceptance that life and home are now with the battalion. In the end it is possible to say 'the battalion thinks' or 'the battalion feels' and this is not an exaggeration.

Apart from commandos and other specialised forces usually raised for a particular purpose a battalion is the smallest fighting unit which may be said to be self-contained. It can feed itself, care for its sick and wounded. It has medics, cooks, grocers, storemen, postmen, policemen, engineers and clerks, who record all things great and small. And to fill the needs of the human spirit a battalion has a padre and a band - bugles and colours to give my mystique beauty and dignity to its ceremony. It has wheels to move with, eyes and ears to see and hear with, a network to speak with and mortars to roar with. But all these amenities and services are there for one purpose, to aid, succour, and

support the fists the battalion fights with. These are its four rifle companies. A rifle company usually fights at a strength of about a hundred ranks - ten or fifteen at company headquarters to command and service the company and about thirty in each of the three platoons. A company is probably the largest formation in which everyone knows everyone else. It is a family.

1995 ASSOCIATION PICNIC DAYS

In response to member requests during 1995 picnic days will be held:-

29th March, Lions Park - The Entrance Rd, LONG JETTY

10th May, Japanese Gardens - Chisholm Rd, AUBURN

Commencing from when you get there (say) about 10.30am and finishing about 3pm. Barbecues are available at both venues. MAKE THESE A FAMILY DAY OUT.

PLACEMENT OF A PLAQUE ON 'SPIDERS' GRAVE

Photographic evidence of "ASSIGNMENT COMPLETE" will be available on ANZA DAY.....YES! The plaque with "RISING SUN", etc has all happened thanks to the generous donations received from so many members.

VALE - BILL DAVIES - President 53 Bn WWI

It is with great sadness that we report the recent death of Bill Davies .. Bill was 96 and lived in the RSL Retirement village at Narrabeen. He enlisted June 1917 at the age of 18 and served with the 53 Bn 14th Bde 5 Div, was wounded in action (gassed in March 1918) and discharged November 1919. Bill represented NSW at the 'Return to the Western Front commemoration' in 1993. He will be sadly missed by those who knew him .. a legend in his own time! A wise and respected gentleman whose company was always valued as a special experience .. a proud teacher, most tolerant understanding, and always available with sound advice and encouragement.

FAREWELL TO A DEAR FRIEND

SYDNEY GOSSIP

Jack Stevens (ALEXANDRIA) and his wife Joan recently had an "AT HOME" luncheon gathering for Jack's "B" COY mates. Those present were Jean and Denny Jacques Francis and Roger Smith, Nancy and Norm King, Ina and Ray Gentles and "VOLUNTEER" Fred Denny. Food was laid on and the boys "backed up" in true army style.

Having made them very comfortable, Jack produced his slides and photos of their trip to Moresby and Sanananda which brought back many memories. The possible reason for Larry Scanlon's later trouble with his knees and hips was revealed from one slide showing Larry on the beach at Sanananda carrying a very heavy crate on his shoulder with "mates" Denny and Jack. standing by empty handed. Denny appeared to be saying, "Follow us Larry and you won't get lost."

Larry was asked later how heavy was the crate and his reply was, "Not as bloody heavy as Denny and Jack who I have been carrying for years." Jack who possesses a remarkable memory and can relate a good story recalled his first meeting with the Yanks at Sanananda. Jack, having learned to fire grenades using a cup discharger on the on the EY Rifle was sent by Les Ison to instruct the Yanks located across the track, they, having been lent an assembled rifle earlier without instructions. The Yanks gathered around while Jack put the butt of the rifle to the ground and loaded the grenade in the cup attachment whereupon the Yank sergeant inquired , "Don't you fire it from the shoulder." Jack said, 'If you did you would certainly bust your shoulder. The Yank in charge quickly replied, "Now I know why we have three men in hospital with busted shoulders." (TRUE STORY)

Bob Quinn (EARLWOOD) reports Bruce Hilton, Hec Lowe Roley Ahern and Norm Harrang are all in good shape whilst Vic Piper bravely copes with the constant "Ups and Downs" of his health pattern.

SOUTHERN AREA REPORT BY FRED DENNY

Fred Denny (THIRLMERE) is concerned for his mate Jim Jenkins hoping for a quick return to good health that he can join him a the local watering hole for "one or two". Meantime, he has take the opportunity to wish Harold Richards (Name, etc not yet on As n. roll) a happy 85th birthday and reports Harold is good company and a worthy partner anytime he breasts a bar.

Tiny Harper (CAMDEN) No change in his general condition and fortunately his brother Reg is always close at hand to take care of his every need. Fred Denny makes favourable mention of a recent get-together of a select group of

"B" COY boys. They were Norm King Roger Smith, Jack Stevens, Denny Jacques and Harry Scanlon. (You could have guessed them.) The "do" was a luncheon at the City of Sydney R.S.L. No doubt Fred will be seeking his mates support to 75th Anniversary Wollondilly (Picton-Thirlmere) Sub-branch celebrations incorporating "Australia remember 1945-1995" on 30th April. A good program March Service , Dinner, etc cost \$20. The only hitch will be how to get home safely.

WESTERN REGION - BOB ELLIS (KATOOMBA)

Kevin Pracey (PENRITH) has been given a further reprieve period for his throat condition. Never complains and reports he is doing well.

Roy Hollis (BLAXLAND) Bearing up quite well despite an aggravating back condition. Having been blessed with a beautiful granddaughter now 3 years old, he has in typical form become quite childish in his behaviour. Sets a poor example, leaving the parents to smooth out the rough edges brought about by his over indulgence (I wonder bow many others have travelled the same path.) Good on you Roy!

Wal Molloy (SOUTH WINDSOR) is now about the 80 mark and doing quite well.

Ross Clements (DURAMANA) is feeling the financial effects of the drought. His property is his fixed assets and he has very little cash flow. Even if we cannot help to solve Ross's financial dilemma, a friendly phone call would no doubt give him an encouraging lift. 063-37-7797

Some gossip has been unearthed concerning Bob Ellis himself. It is told in the club bar that he has established a "love nest" somewhere up north. The hopeful outcome could be a controlling influence on his addictive drinking habits (could it be possible).

Charles Cover (ERUDGERE - via MUDGE) Reports good rainfall in the area. Everything quite green and ploughing commenced ready to sow the fields. (See Ray Gentes report for the "A" COY boys invited to a Mudgee Reunion.) The Western Area fellows are considering an annual November get-together, possibly at Lithgow. For more information, phone Bob Ellis, preferably after 6pm on 047-82-6535

NEW ENGLAND REGION - NEVILLE WHITE (SINGLETON)

Clem Pagett (MACKSVILLE) and Bill 'Tojo' Tomlin (NAMBUCCA HEADS) are planning to meet with Neville for a visit to the Army Training Centre at Singleton. That will be after Clem has completed an interview of stars connected with the Tamworth Country and Western festival. The recordings of his discussion being passed to the media at his hometown Macksville.

Jim Rolandson (NAMBUCCA HEADS) who has retired from his accountancy practice to the North Coast will be travelling to Melbourne soon and he, too, will be calling on Neville. (Editor's Note - Please pass on Jim's address details, etc to Trevor) Clem and Jim were members of Neville's platoon at Milne Bay. In fact, the platoon area they vacated 3 days before the enemy attacked was just where the bulk of the Japanese forces landed. Neville doubts that his 33-strong garrison would have survived such a heavy

onslaught.

Noel "Ned" Kelly (GUNNEDAH) is keeping well and gives his services to the local "Meals on Wheels". Well Done, NED!

NORTH COAST

Some say it' very nice "to be in the money" but most people say there is much more to life. For instance, Clem Pagett (MACKSVILLE) has just inherited a private brewery stock from his mate "Pommy Jack" across the street who bequeathed 48 dozen bottles of brew to his "Aussie mate" Clem.

It's rumoured there's a standing invitation to anyone passing through Macksville to make a social call on Clem and Dorothy to pick up some local gossip and quite likely partake of a "cuppa" or - - -. more likely to be talked into a beer while it lasts.

Clarrie Meredith (MERMAID WATERS) recently motored to Sydney to visit his two sons and on his return trip unearthed Harry Mitchell (Nambucca Beach) who was RAP 55/53 living previously at Moree. Harry who is a very active bowler and blessed with a good voice was recently recruited into the local R.S.L. entertainment group. Harry spent 36 years in the police force: and is proud of his Number Plate COP 333.

Jim "Jappy" Loneragan (MACKSVILLE) was contacted and reminisced the "AQUITANIA" trip to More by recalling many names of "D" COY members.

Bill "Tojo" Tomlin (NAMBUCCA HEADS) reports that Neville Eyre (Lamb Island) was contacted and in the near future will be moving back to the mainland (New address details, please)

CENTRAL COAST AND BUNTER REGION (ERIC GRESHAM)

A BRIEFREPORT OF ERIC DILEMMA -

Despite the very clear advice given to all association members never to go holiday trip without the Unit Nominal Roll in the glove box that is exactly what Eric did. Fortunately, he make out reasonably OK but think of the "Cuppa and Slice of cake" opportunities be could have enjoyed. However, his trip with Marj (Eric was at least smart enough not to leave her standing behind in the hallway with all the luggage) took them to Cowra where they visited POW camp site and the Japanese gardens, then onto Trundle (Eric says "Not sure why we went there.") and then to Coonabarabran. This tour was then followed by a visit to Gunnedah to visit 'Ned' Kelly and his sister Alma - on to Wauchope to see an old army mate from the 22nd BN - Incidentally mate Allen has a cellar stock of 300 plus bottles of home brew - Eric had a great time. (No mention is made of Allen's surname or his address.) That's not being absent minded that's being deceitful cunning and selfish. Sorry readers to take you through Eric's recent experience but the story was related to let Marj know that we know what she has to put up with (Bless You Marj).

The Cenotaph parade 9th Dec. enhanced by the attendance of the Army Re- enactment Group with 'Skeeter' Mathews in charge was a great

success - - - - to quote Eric - "We are proud of our Skeeter and his Re-enactment Group. A great show though he thinks Skeeter got a bit too 'bossy' when lining us up - (a bloody voice like a foghorn - don't know where he got that from)- CONGRATULATIONS SON!", says Eric.

(Eric, you should know the authoritative voice comes automatically with the uniform.) By popular request we will have the re-enactment group whenever possible and add the trimmings of "dressing" the cenotaph flag staffs and hopefully a TV cameraman in attendance.

Mick Riotta (BUFF POINT) has supplied verses on the "Bougainville Campaign" and "Conungra Training Centre" - Tom Delbridge (BERKLEY VALE) contributed "The Flag". The balance of these will appear in our next bulletin (Nov.) as space is limited in the issue No. 3. Charlie Renouf is recovering from a recent bout of sickness and looking forward to attending next ANZAC DAY parade

Bill Franks (LAKE HAVEN) also praises the re-enactment group and we appreciate his special comments concerning TV coverage. Val Mitchell (BUDGEWOI) is an old D' COY boy 83 years old and doing well. Geoff Morris (BERKELEY VALE) an old sig man who told a story of his Sanananda experience in Bulletin No. 2 is also doing OK.

Tom Wrench (PATONGA) at one time a 3BN member is contemplating a trip to Victoria via the coast road and I quote Eric - "I hear it's a very popular drive and I am also interested in doing it. So I hope Tom goes first." (Where's you sense of adventure Eric?).

Les Royston (GREENPOINT) an old H. Q's boy, though not a regular attender to our functions is always interested in keeping in touch and would like

to hear from W. Heath HQ PIONEERS (not listed on our Nominal Roll)

Ralph "Stumpy" Johnson (NORAHVILLE) was recently listed for a knee operation. "Ding Dong" and other mates wish him a speedy recovery. "Stumpy" left the UNIT to serve with 2/6 ARM Div. and did well there.

(Ed Thank you Eric and Marj for your good reporting. I hope you accept the friendly roast in your own good spirited way.)

Skeeter Mathews (WHITEBRIDGE) reports Billy Elliot (Mayfield) enjoyed a family outing on 26th January to celebrate his birthday and mentioned what a special occasion it was for him. (Bill was a sergeant with "B" COY)

Bill Fordam (MALLABULA) sends his regards to all. He is scheduled for a hospital visit to have his "Bow Legs" straightened and expects after the operation to be a 6 footer at least which will make him very happy.

Bill (or is it Ern) Morgan (SPEERS PT.) is well and planning a holiday most appropriately to Holiday Point the other side of Foster. Sends his regards to all. Skeeter and his army enactment group are increasing in demand and receive invitations outside the state; one request being as far off as Tasmania which we all know is that spot precariously hanging on to the mainland. On Friday 24th February when Remembrance Year Events were officially launched the Re-enactment Group played an important role at the proceedings held at the Sydney Town Hall.

Alex Bennet (KOTARA) recalls his early army service as batman to Unit Chaplain Rev. John Ridley (MC. from WWI/Fromelles) After several

moves later he became BN ORD. ROOM Sergeant and he relates:-

"I've read your 'Orderly Room Gossip' with much interest and thought I would like to contribute this story." - (Brother John before his sad death after some 21 years

army service was somewhat drawn to Ross Clements - DO one could imagine why.) Alex had on occasions worked with Ross Clement's Transport Section and one day Ross was driving him in a jeep and coming to a steep down hill Alex must have expressed some concern about the speed, whereupon. Ross lifted the steering wheel off the column (it was loose) and handing it to Alex said, "Have a go yourself." - I wonder if Ross remembers!"

Alex is particularly anxious to know the whereabouts of Nev McDowell and other B COY orderly room associates of his time.

Rex Marsden (SUMMERLAND POINT) is recovering from a recent cataract operation and no doubt Peter Wright and others nearby are keeping a close watch over him.

Peter Wright (SUMMERLAND POINT) is accustomed to coping with the unusual. He was most surprised to meet up with Bill McLeod and June along with Mick Riotto and Nola at the Toukley RSL on the same day at the same time. All three being "C" COY mates. (Editor says, "Suggest you buy a lottery ticket and call it 3 of a kind.") Peter also got himself involved with a window display competition in Toukley. The theme for the display being "Australia Remembers". Peter added his support with Jap flags and other memorabilia and that display took first prize. (Well Done Peter). Peter also recalls the days we were associated with Yanks and he rattled off. the often heard saying of times we all well remember.

- The Yanks were over paid, over sexed and over here This

usually prompted the response:

- The Aussies were Underpaid, under sexed and under MacArthur

Remember - Thank You Peter!

Cyril Gallager (BUDGEWOI) (TPT) recently passed away and 8 members, mostly his transport mates attended the chapel at Bankstown followed by a burial service at Woronora Cemetery. An appropriate condolence card to his wife May and family has been forwarded on behalf of all association members.

George Voutier (YARRA WONGA - VIC) He by chance met with Ken Bryant 'C' (COY Sanananda) at his golf club and in turn put him in touch with his old cobber, Tiny McNiven. Ken and Tiny were pre-war surfer mates, both earning their 'bronze' with same club.

Ken is a 'guest' of the Royal Freemasons Hospital Melbourne - not able to play howls - he is however still capable of "putting one down" not a bowl but a Toohey's. Tiny's wife suffered a stroke some time back and he has wisely moved her to be with the daughter whilst awaiting alternate accommodation. No doubt he will be making himself known to local association members. - Regards to Ken, Tiny and families.

AUSTRALIAN ARMED FORCES RE-ENACTMENT HERITAGE UNIT

PRESIDENT: H Matthew Ph (049) 43 2685

FOUNDER: N Lewis (049) 43 5426

HISTORIAN: M Quinlan (065) 74200

SECRETARY J. A Sayers

63 Allowah St, Waratah. 2298 Ph: (049) 60 2492

December 9 , 1994

The Unit provide support to the 55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion Association ("Mice of Moresby") at their Annual Remembrance service The Unit embussed in Newcastle at 0700 hrs for Sydney. The service was conducted at the Cenotaph where 15 of the Unit provided a Flag party, honour guard and catafalque party for the service under the control of RSM Sayers.

The "re-enactment Unit" were dressed in jungle greens at the request of the 55/53 BN Association, to provide the battalion veterans with atmosphere of their service in the pacific, WWII

The ceremony was under the control of battalion marshals, Harry Matthew, (also Unit CSM) Peter Wright and Cenotaph Custodian Jim Neilson (also 55/53 Battalion). The solemnness of the occasion was further enhanced by the Unit bugler playing a theme revered by the battalion veterans - "Memories".

The Unit were later invited to the "Mice of Moresby's Reunion" .

The Unit Departed Sydney with the satisfaction of perhaps being the first non-service unit to provide a catafalque party and service on the Sydney Cenotaph,

Martin Place , and with having provided the 55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion Association with support for a very solemn occasion

The above is an extract from a recent issue of the B.C.O.F. Veterans Associations (NSW) newsletter

CANUNGRA LAMENT

Tramping up hills with packs on our backs
Over the staircase to buggery and back,
The Bi's ambush you and pelt you with lead,
I'm sick of Canungra I wish I was dead.
Up at reveille and out on parade,
Race to the river and back up the grade.
Porridge for breakfast of M & V stew,
I'll be glad to say "Farewell Canungra" to you.
Five hours trek up a treacherous path,
Bodies perspiring no chance of a bath,
Loaded with packs that would stagger a horse,
I'll never return when I finish this course.
A rest day a week with twenty parades,
Stripping a bren and hurling grenades,
Parading for church, for pay and for beer,
I could murder the bastard who sent me up here.
No time to write letters, no word from the dame,
Feet full of blisters and bloody near lame,
Climbing rope ladders like Tarzan the ape,
And they say Canungra will get you in shape

Well if I'm still alive on the twenty eighth day,
They will still need a horse to take me away,
For the man that I was will be left in the hills
And I'll in Gladesville like all other dills,
So beware all you fellows, steer clear of this place,
For once you arrive you're not in the race.
Canungra will get you and then you will be,
A slap happy bastard at Gladesville like me.

WHO REMEMBERS.!!

The Committee of "ORDERLY ROOM GOSSIP" have been encouraged not only with the favourable comments for the initial issue but also with contributions received for our 3rd Issue.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE ASSISTED.

DESPITE OUR EARNEST INTENTIONS TO KEEP THE COST OF PRODUCING THE "GOSSIP" TO AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM, THERE IS A "BOTTOM LINE" EXPENSE AND WE WOULD URGE MEMBERS PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ASSOCIATION FUNCTIONS TO HELP WITH AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (SAY \$5) TOWARDS ITS COST