

**55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion Association—
Support Group
ORDERLY ROOM REPORT
OCTOBER 2017 (2-2017)**



*55/53 Aust. Inf. Bn. Association
("The Mice of Moresby")*

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Presidents Report

Since my last report, we have had another ANZAC Day March and luncheon. There was about 7 Veterans and approx. 50 people for the lunch. I would like to thank those people on the committee who did a great job for organising a wonderful lunch. I hope to see you all on Saturday 2nd December for our annual reunion and luncheon.

Don't forget the 75th Anniv. Kokoda Day 3 Nov 2017. see page 4 below for details.

Arthur Perry



Mice of Moresby Secretaries Report

Recently I had the opportunity to visit Clyde Parsons our recent past President to collect the records of the Association. Clyde has some health issues, but in great spirits. When I returned home in a few boxes I found some extraordinary items. The battalion association records included Meeting attendance book, Donation book, Address book, lists of members, a few histories of the battalion at war (compiled by Alex Bell) photographs, memorabilia, and in particular a series of Orderly Room Reports commencing in 1994, compiled by Alex Bell and Trevor Harper. We owe these gentlemen a great debt. Why not give Clyde a phone call 02 4294 4367!

The Gossip Reports were compiled by region to region. In which various regions around the country a person who had the responsibility of contacting and communicating with members in that region and passing on important information to Alex & Trevor. For example the Hunter and Newcastle region person was Harold (Sheeter) Matthew the father of Carol, Bryan and step father of Ross Berghoffer. Fred Denny (grandfather of Rob Denny. was the coordinator for the southern highlands area. Regular luncheons were held in these regions each year which maintained long term friendships and 'mateship' through a shared experience at war. With the coming inevitable time of passing, these soldiers supported each other and their families in their time of grief. Amid the continued sadness with the loss of Comrades on the battlefield and in civilian life, humour expressed in the Gossip Reports was a remedy.

Alex Bell was the president of the association for over twenty years and Trevor, Secretary for at least twenty five years. At the retirement of Alex, Peter Wright took over the reigns as President until he passed the baton to Clyde. On Trevor's retirement Beverley Dawson was elected Secretary. I sincerely thank Alex, Trevor, Clyde and Beverley for their outstanding work in maintaining the values and philosophy of a group of men and their families who were responsible to the magnificent country have to day. If it were not for the efforts of these people the association would have disappeared. You all have done great work. Thank you.

This edition will include a number of articles from some of the early Orderly Room Gossip reports. Younger members should carefully read these.

ANZAC Day 2017 Anzac Day was well attended this year. The numbers of veterans marching were a credit to the efforts of the veterans themselves and their families who came along to march with them. They included Frank Rogers, Ray Gentles, Fred Denny. Also in attendance were the many of the Support Group who we thank for their contribution in bringing along the Battalion Banners and carrying them proudly during the March. Particularly, we thank Rob Denny for organising the wheel chairs as without wheel chairs some veterans would not be able to participate. The bright orange/gold banner was prominent on our TV screens later that day on the evening news bulletins.

ANZAC LUNCH: The Anzac Day luncheon was well attended with 51 people present. Members of the battalion who could not be with us were sadly missed and in particular Charlie Jennings who for reasons outside his control was not able to be with us.

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC 2017: About 150 people attended this years commemoration service at the Kokoda Memorial Walkway at Concord. Reg Chard and Ray Gentles attended the event. The former NSW Governor Dame Marie Roslyn Bashir AD, CVO., gave the VP Day Address which focused upon the bravery of the soldiers who fought and died and well as the legacy their generation has provided in making Australia what it is today.

COMMITTEE MEETING

Your committee met on 15th July 2015 at Granville RSL the main matter for discussion was the 75th Anniversary of the battles fought at Sanananda. The following is the finance report provided by Bryan Mathew who reported favourably as to the present financial position.

Treasurers Report:

Opening Balance of Cheque Account (as at 31 January 2017)	\$ 1,122.78
Income: from Sanananda Day Luncheon and donations.	\$ 1,495.00
Expenses: Anzac Day Luncheon, wheelchairs & Accounts	\$ 1,366.02
Balance as at 30 June 2017	\$ 1,132.78
Term Deposit Balance as at 21 Jan 2017	\$ 10,006.89
Plus Interest	\$ 21.12
Balance as at 21.1.2017	\$ 10,028.01
Total Funds: as at 30.6. 2017	\$ 11,160.79

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW GUINEA CAMPAIGN 1942-43

This year is the 75th Anniversary of the Campaign in New Guinea the 53rd Battalion on the Kokoda Track; 55th Battalion at Milne Bay; the merging of the two battalions as the 55/53rd Bn in October and the subsequent action at Sanananda.

Our Commemoration and Annual Reunion will take place on **Saturday 2nd December 2017** at the Sydney Cenotaph at 1100 hrs followed by the Reunion Lunch at the **Great Southern Hotel at 1230 hrs**. It would be wonderful if as many Veterans as possible would be able to attend.

Following the committee meeting. Rob Denny has been in touch with the new President of NSW RSL Mr JAMES BROWN as special guest. Mr Brown is a grandson of NX65644 ALLAN GIFFEN BROWN, who served in the Battalion Mr Brown had a great uncle NX52643, WILLIAM MILROY, BROWN, who also served in the battalion. Both were wounded at Sanananda. Thank you, Rob. Rob is investigating the possibility of hiring chairs and taxis. Having a taxi available will make it easier for veterans to travel from Martin Place to the hotel.

It is hoped that representatives of other battalions or groups will be able to attend our commemoration and reunion. Regrettably due to the march of time there are fewer and fewer veterans attending. All the same we intend to invite representatives from the 7th Division Assoc., 36 Battalion, 49 Battalion, 14 Field Regiment Assoc., 7 Div Calvary Association, 14th Field Ambulance Assoc. and 39th Battalion Assoc. If you have any suggestions please let me know.

We are grateful to Ross Berghoffer who has generously volunteered to prepare a history of the Battalion Association. It is anticipated that it will be available at the Reunion. Thank you, Ross.

If you would like a copy of the committee minutes, please contact Peter Dowling.

At the end of this newsletter there is an attendance form which will cover the Cenotaph Service as well as lunch. If you are unable to attend both don't feel that is a problem. The more of you who come, the better as it will be as it will be the last opportunity for many of the veterans. Please let the committee know as early as you can. Remember if you are able come into the city the day before and stay at the **Great Southern Hotel**, 717 George St., Sydney Phone 02 92589 4400. Nola Riotto recommends staying at the **Hyde Park Inn**, 271 Elizabeth St., Sydney. Phone: 02 9264 6001 (RSL sub branch members get a discount). Give them a ring.

NOTICE GENERAL MEETING 7th OCTOBER 2017

Don't forget to put the 7th October 2017 in your Diary. Members are invited to attend the Granville RSL club on Saturday 7th October at 1100 hrs.

KOKODA TRACK MEMORIAL WALKWAY (KTMW) – CONCORD – KOKODA DAY 75 YEARS ON

3rd November 2017 at 10.30 am

On 2nd of December Australian troops including soldiers from the 2/31 Battalion marched into Kokoda Village finding that the Japanese had withdrawn. The following day (3rd December) the top brass from Port Moresby flew in and a raising of the Australian Flag ceremony was held. Since the creation of the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway there has been an annual Commemoration Service at the KTMW. This year in the absence in Sydney of a formal Government recognition of the what our soldiers achieved in PNG during WWII, the board of the KTMW are organising a very special commemoration service for the whole of the Kokoda Track and Northern Beachheads Campaign. Every battalion and service group who served in this campaign will be invited to attend and acknowledged for their role they played in keeping our nation free from invasion by the Japanese. This country would be a very different place today if not for our soldiers, our fathers, uncles, husbands, and grandfathers and great great-grandfathers who fought and died for this country. We owe a great debt to all of these men; many who had their lives destroyed by the experience. Lest we Forget.

So, if you are able you are invited to attend this event please do so. It is envisaged that a parade of veterans and their banners will commence at 10.30 (1030 hrs). Please put these details in your diary and come along. As more fuller details are available they will be put on the Battalion Face Book page.





The following are from 3/1995 edition of the Orderly Report

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)

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.

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 at the local watering hole for "one or two". Meantime, he has taken the opportunity to wish Harold Richards (Name, etc not yet on Assn. 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, leave the parents to smooth out the rough edges brought about by his over indulgence (I wonder how many others have travelled the same path.) Good on you Roy!

**2001/1 Orderly Room SECRETARY'S REPORT
LEST WE FORGET**

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------------|------------|
| N J BARNESLEY | J BRADFORD | I M CORNISH | J D CURTIS |
| J EYRE | J K GARBETT | W C GEARY | J GEORGE |
| L R HAYDEN | W H ISAACSON | A E LINTERN | J MURRAY |
| | W H PEARCE | J ST CLAIR SMITH | |

We extend to the families of our Fallen Comrades our sincere sympathies and on those occasions when we gather together.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

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The past years activities have been well covered in the report from the President and I wish to extend my thanks to him and the committee and members who have been so supportive of me during this time.

I remind members that the Newcastle luncheon will be held on the FIRST WEDNESDAY in APRIL and OCTOBER, at Hamilton RSL Club. This allows this function to be held so as to not clash with other functions, specifically KOKODA DAY.

The annual Church Parade will be held at St John's Church, Glebe as usual on Sunday 7th May and your support is required to carry on the tradition established by our WWI Battalions, from whom we inherited a proud tradition of service. The ladies of the church congregation provide a wonderful morning tea and we should respond to their hospitality by attending this service.

A further reminder to members that we may march off on ANZAC day earlier than usual so DON'T BE LATE. When we parade with our Fallen Comrades banner, we represent them and all who have since passed on, so let's put our best foot forward on this last ANZAC day of the century.

Some humour from the 1/1997 edition

POSITIONS VACANT (Unpaid Advertisements)

We start the 1997 issue of 'Orderly Room Gossip' with a few articles or suggestions for putting your particular skills to good use.

Position No. 1

A Nuclear Warden posting! be careful, the equipment list for each warden which should be ready at all time is: -

1. Gas Mask
2. Tomahawk. to be carried in belt
3. Stirrup pump. to be carried over left shoulder
4. Extension ladder. to be carried over right shoulder
5. Long-handled shovel, to be carried under left arm
6. Rake, to be carried in left hand
7. Scoop, to be carried in right hand
8. Whistle. to be carried in mouth, lanyard around neck
9. Webbing belt. to be worn around waist. with 10 hooks six (6) for carrying sandbags four (4) for carrying buckets full of sand
10. Two wet blankets to be carried around neck
11. Flashlight to be hung around neck
12. Steel helmet
13. Two-way radio (walkie-talkie) with 36 ft aerial
14. Sand in all pockets
15. Small ship's anchor, to be dropped when warden wishes to stop
16. Large broom, to be inserted in the only remaining space so that warden may sweep ground of radio-active dust as he proceeds

(Editor - Salary arrangements to be discussed after physical test at 1st interview)

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Something a little more serious from the same edition.

Lieutenant-Colonel (Percy) Woods 55 Bn WWI

(Born 1885 - Deceased 1937)

Although commissioned in the Militia in 1909 he enlisted for WWI in the 3rd Battalion at Randwick in 1914. He was again commissioned in Egypt in the field after 5th Division transferred to the 55th Battalion and was then posted as adjutant; Major (March 1917) and Lt/Col (August 1917) taking over command of the unit.

He was awarded the MC in January 1917, DSO January 1918 Bar to DSO December 1918 and was mentioned in despatches 5 times.

During his time as CO the battalion gained many honours in various military displays apart from its outstanding record in front line service. In one of Wood's letters home to a friend he comments.

"The Turk is a good fighter and is very fair to us he is game and brave and very cool he will take a bullet with no trouble but Johnnie Turk does not like the bayonet - if you can get close enough to him, he will go for his life."

In after war years he commanded the 55th Bn Militia and became Patron of the 55 Bn Veterans Association.

PRESIDENTS REPORT 2003

Peter Wright as his time as president of the association provided the following report on his pilgrimage to New Guinea which was reported in the 2003 edition of the Orderly Room Report.

To change the subject, I was fortunate enough to be chosen to join seventeen ex-servicemen and two war widows to return to Papua New Guinea for the dedication of memorials at Milne Bay and Popondetta (Popondetta). The representatives came from all over Australia, seven from NSW six QLD, 4 Vic, 2 SA and 1 from WA. Because we all had so much in common, we bonded together into one large happy group. I think another contributing factor was that there were no high rankers, one lieutenant, the remainder all OR's. The young DVA crew that went along to help we old guys were absolutely fantastic, they catered to our every whim. Even applying sunscreen to our arms and faces. We had a brand new Hercules to take us to the memorial sites. Very noisy, and very small windows, fortunately only one hour flight to Milne Bay. To reach Popondetta one hour to Nadzab, then change to twin Otters to Popondetta.

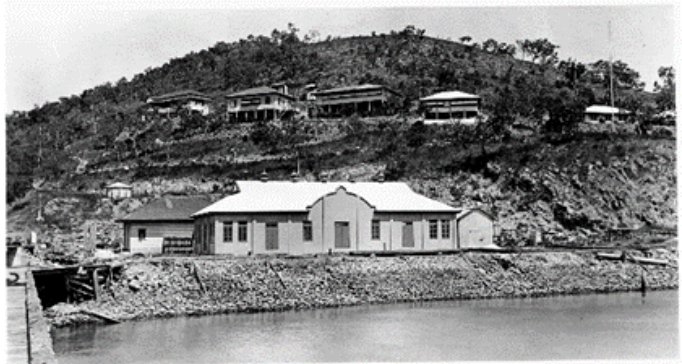
Port Moresby is now a dirty run-down area, the main shopping centre is modern, but we were warned not to go outside of the hotel as the "Rascals" are very dangerous. The houses all have electric fences, razor wire topped and all windows fitted with bars. Even the police station was burn down just before we arrived.

What we knew as "Ack Ack" Hill, Mt Touabouga, on the city side, because of the view, is the yuppie area, the prime minister's residence on top, then the high Commissioners place, just below that and other high rollers all the way down, on the other side are native huts along the shoreline and a few higher up, the old shore battery buildings are now toilets.

Looking from the harbour back towards the shore the small village we knew as Hanuabada along the waterfront has almost trebled and now stretched along the foreshore. The main airport is the old Seven Mile Drome, now Jackson's, and to make access easier the controlling body have cut a road through the mountains, leaving a great big open scar, which will no doubt cover over in years to come. The "Macduhi" is still visible.

Milne Bay as we knew it, one giant coconut plantation grown for the copra, is now all overgrown. The locals have found a new source of income, a smaller palm from which they obtain Palm Oil and everywhere you look from the air, these crops looking like apple orchard.

The jungle has grown over everything and the beachhead of Buna, Gona and Sanananda are unrecognisable though we all crammed around the windows trying to recognise landmarks.



The monuments at Milne Bay and Popondetta have all been restored and maintained, a pleasure to behold the natives are very proud of their work, and the amount of wreaths and leis that were made and handed out to the party was very touching as of course were all the dedication ceremonies of which we were all nominated to take participate.

GUESS WHAT?

Right in the middle of one of the hymns at Milne Bay, the skies opened up and we were all drenched. TYPICAL!

My bowling club, Halekulani, gave me a plaque to honour the Fallen Comrades" of the 55/53rd Australian Infantry Battalion. I presented it to the president of the Port Moresby RSL Club and he assured me that it would be given a prominent position.

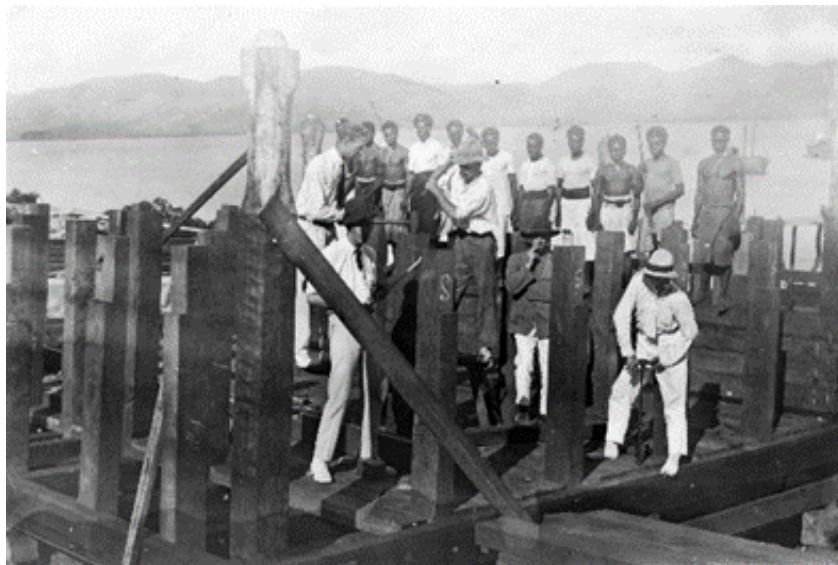
Knowing that our party would be visiting a local school I approached my St George Bank to see if I could get some pens. 100 pens and balloons were gratefully handed over. Imagine my surprise when we arrived at the Ted Diro Community School to see about 600 kids around the parade ground.

The last day of our trip was to the Bomana War Cemetery a day of mixed emotions. I was pleased to see that the cemetery was so well attended, looking splendid in the bright sunshine.

It was also pleasing to see that our members who were killed in Bougainville had been brought here and buried alongside their mates. Unfortunately, there are a number of headstones that indicate an "Unknown Soldier is buried here". On the hill overlooking the 3,774 graves is a tower whose walls have lists of the names of those whose bodies were never found.

I have taken photos of these and several "C" Company mates: but the memory of this day will live in my heart and mind forever.

(The above is a selection of photos views of Port Moresby taken in the 1930s not long before the militia battalions were ordered to New Guinea. The photo below is the construction of the Moresby jetty in 1934. My grandfather Gilbert Turnbull is the chap in the middle in white trousers with his hand on his face—Peter Dowling)



Also from the same edition Trevor Harper contributed the following.

ASSOCIATION MEMBER PROFILES

Profile Milton James Evans

Milton James Evans (Greenacre) was born at Bangalow where he attended school and enjoyed a firm Methodist upbringing on the family farm. Just before joining the army when he acquired a truck and turned his talents to operating a small 'carrying' business.

Enlisting in the 41st Battalion Militia in the late 40's, he was then transferred to 53 Bn until October '42 when he was assigned to New Guinea force for a time later to come back 55/53. Malaria, as with others caught up with Milton and he was discharged late '43.

45 years association with Scouting recently earned him an award of an attractive plaque recognising his work in that field since the age of 18. As has been a member of MUIOOF and recently received a special 50 year jewel in appreciation.

The most memorable event in his life was in 1976 when he joined a party of Scout friends on a 12 hour journey to the South Pole.

Milton even today is a dance enthusiast and is an expert at the fireplace on the occasions of association picnics.

Profile Adrian Nall

Adrian joined the 55/53 Militia late '39. On an account of his age he missed out with an early application to join the AIF in 1940. By September '41 with his special talents "DIT DIT DAH DAH" etc, he had passed through progressive ranks to be commissioned as a Lieutenant. Adrian well remembers setting up a forward Sig. centre at Owers Corner and the Sig. section then being quickly recalled for the Sanananda stint. Adrian also became a long time casualty to Malaria and after returned to civvy street become involved with the manufacture of electronic equipment.

During a hospital 'top Over' he met an attractive nurse Meryl and decided she was the one and has never looked back since. Meryl's service experience has been well documented in personal diaries and an important part relates to her time in Singapore when the 2/14 took care of the 8 Div. POW's. In 1945 Meryl & Adrian returned to PNG and well remember the special occasion when they visited the Sogeri War Cemetery.

Adrian has a cousin, a Sergeant in 14 Fd Regt.; and a brother a pilot serving with the RAAF.

(As of January 2017, Adrian continues to be a member of the Battalion Association and living in Queensland).

Profile W. A. (Bill) Saville

WOII CSM 'B' Coy 53 Bn later NI726 Lieut. ANGAU

(Clarrie James (Dubbo) has provided this profile)

Following the Civil Administration turmoil in Moresby Feb. '42. Bill along with

Sgts Harry Jacka, Bill Ryan, John Sherlock, Bill Moses together with Cpl Clarrie James were recruited as patrol officers. proceeding to Wauvia Lakekarnu River area, to Bulldog - Wau supply line then by goat track over the Owen Stanleys.

At the end of August '45 instructions had moved Bill and Clarrie in the direction of Salamua towards Lae and back to Wau. Places like Goroka, Maralinin (Markham Valley) Chivasing Arane (New Britain) were part of their 'stomping field'.

Summing up comments generally - hair raising experiences - dodging hostile natives and Japs'. Clarrie says Bill was a damned good soldier, played hard but was always there when the chips were down. (Editor - This report just briefly touches their experiences. Grab Clarrie at the next reunion to get the total story with much greater accuracy.

Profile Stan Cannon (Goonellabah)

Stan served with 14 Bde Transport who flew to Lae from Milne Bay where the Brigade was finally discharged. On the plane trip, the transport boys met us with Scottish Forestry unit. On arrival at Lae they were then taken under the caring wings of the 2nd Marine Air Wing who considered them to be undernourished. Fresh vegetables and meat were on the menu and a cash handout of US \$14 to boot. The pay back of the cash turned out to be on the NEVER NEVER plan. The work plan was for the Scottish Forestry boys to cut logs and 14 Bde Tpt to handle the transport of same to the A.G.H. and other units.

Stan at a later stage drove the water truck for 53/55 Bn and on occasion provided transport for our boys on Picture Night. Stan and Agnes have just celebrated 50 years of marital bliss and I'm sure we all wish them all the best for the year ahead.

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[And some humour same edition](#)

How Lucky Can You Be (Related by Ray Harris)

Recently I read in a magazine a request for a photo or poster of a B17 Flying Fortress. This started a train of thought.

The Story

We were camped at Bootless Inlet to cover a possible landing site for Japanese. When we lined up for our evening meal a burst of bullets came through the area. We quickly dropped behind any available cover and as you can imagine all sorts of thoughts raced through our minds. Had a party Japs got behind us of what?

Explanation

The machine-gun fire that raked our mess line was friendly. It happened that a Flying Fortress had undergone a routine maintenance service and was taken upstairs to do a proving flight. They put the plane through its paces and in the course of same a .50 calibre gun was fired. But due to altitude condition the grease or gun oil had frozen

But as they came to land the lubricant thawed. So, the triggers were still depressed and we copped the burst through our camp area. Nobody was killed or wounded. What a fluke!

Next morning American officers from the unit involved expressed their regret about this unusual happening. But all's well that ends well.

Alex Bennet (Kotara) submitted the following story.

I think it was just outside Moresby where morning after morning breakfast was just baked beans. - Before leaving Australia I got to know a soldier attached to us but because he was a university student he didn't go to PNG with the battalion.

Around Christmas time that year I received a parcel from him with a note saying he had used some of his food coupons and periodically bought these tins for me. And there it was a parcel of nothing else but tins of baked beans.

(Editor - My personal experience was to go home on leave and mother puts before me something special that she had been saving and knew I would enjoy. - "Herrings in Tomato Sauce" - I'll bet there are many more members with similar experiences. - Alex - and Thank You for your story)

TRUE OR NOT??

(Contributed August 2017 by Marilyn Dowling nee Campbell)

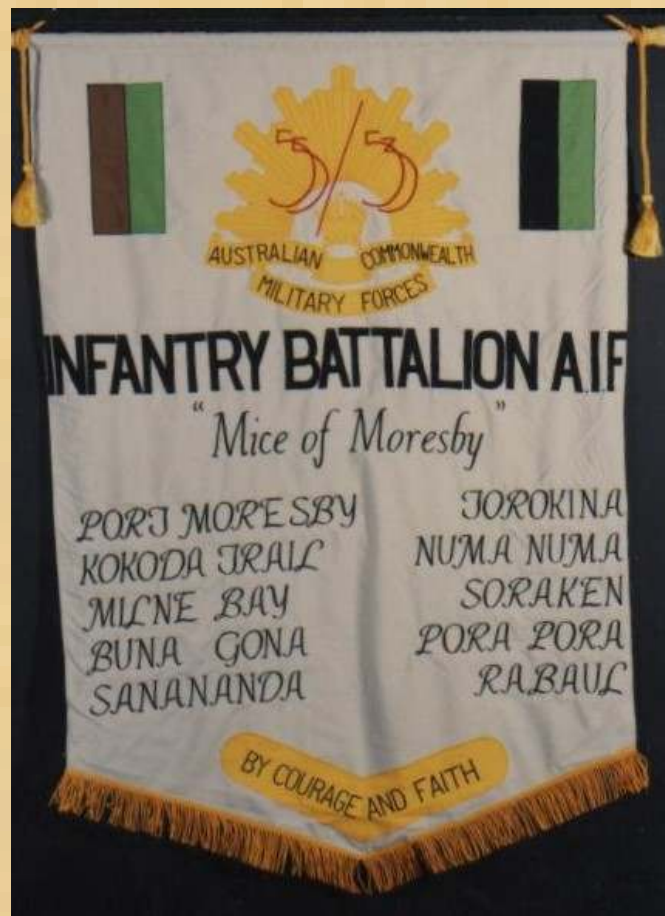
This is a previously unpublished story – probably based on some facts. It was not long after Keith Campbell was transferred from the 55/53 Battalion to New Guinea Force as part of the Biscuit Bombers (probably in mid 1943). His unit (6 Movement Control), were stationed at 7 mile drome (Jackson Field), with a small number of Australian soldiers and a few Australian and American Airman including Lionel Van Praag (The Flying Dutchmen and World Champion Speedway Racer). To entertain themselves they procured some copper tube from the workshop and other bits and pieces and constructed a moonshine still. To make the mash they raided the native gardens and kitchen to acquire sufficient suitable vegetables and made a brew which was with the help of the American Airman and ground crew started up the still. In no time, they were producing moonshine. Once a suitable quantity was produced they decided to test it. Well! The result was extraordinary. They were all drunk in no time. Keith reported that it was the first time in his life he had the DT's. With the effects of malaria etc. and alcohol poison Keith was seeing spiders crawling up the wall. They were very lucky not to have been busted by the provos. For years afterwards Keith could not face drinking spirits of any sort. Just beer. There is no wonder that the Biscuit Bombers on occasions missed their targets. P.S . Lionel Praag taught Keith how to ride an Indian Motorbike and later he became the unit dispatch rider at 7 mile strip. Later in 1943 Lionel, flew Keith as rear gunner in a B76 Bomber to Townsville for a weekend RAR.



Hanuabada, Port Moresby: Eric Whiston & Keith Campbell with some locals circa 1943.



55th Battalion WWI Flag



55/53 Battalion WWII Small Banner



**Incorporating the 55/53 Battalion National Support Group
Annual Commemoration & Reunion Luncheon**

Dear Friends,

Please complete the form below and send with monies to the Treasurer Mr Bryan Matthew at 7 Horne Place Blackett 2770: or deposit into the Bank Account No as listed below. (please use your name as a reference)

The deadline for lunch at the Great Southern Hotel is Saturday 18th November 2017.

This form is required for catering purposes and to plan seating arrangements. This will enable families to sit together. By booking ahead seating will allocated to you and your family. Even if you may be late in arriving for any reason you will not miss out on a seat. If you need a Taxi please contact Rob Denny on 04 3781 8834.

Kind Regards,

Peter Dowling Secretary

Tel: 02 4945 0927 or Mob: 04 1963 1953

55/53 Battalion Association & National Support Group
75th Anniversary of the Battles of Sanananda

**Commemoration Service Sydney Cenotaph, Martin Place Sydney - 1100Hrs
&**

**Annual Reunion Luncheon: The Great Southern Hotel, George
Street Sydney- at 1230Hrs**

Name:..... (Please Print)

Phone No:

I will be attending the luncheon together withvisitors.

My Payment \$35 of per person total \$ _____

My donation (not compulsory) \$ _____

Total Payment \$ _____

I will be / or will not be attending the Cenotaph Service (strike out not applicable)

Yes/No: Wheel Chair Required. Yes / No Taxi Required

Signed

Direct Payments to BSB 062-606 A/c No 2801 9947

Please return to Bryan Mathew; (Treasurer) by 18th November 2017