

**55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion Association—
Support Group
ORDERLY ROOM REPORT
MARCH 2018 (1-2018)**



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

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Reg Chard : Sanananda Day Commemoration 2 December 2017

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1/2018

Welcome to the First Orderly Room Report for 2018.

It was a great privilege to take over as President at last week's AGM in Granville. I wish Arthur well in his health and travels to Japan and am pleased that he will be staying on with us as a committee Member. I'd like to congratulate all of those who turned up and took positions in our historic association

Our committee is working hard to make Anzac Day as perfect as possible. I have had recent communication with State President James Brown who has informed me our diggers will travel this year in dedicated Golf Buggies. I congratulate James and his team on their efforts to keep the RSL Moving along, although they are still suffering in some organisational functionality they are working to fix it.

We will inform all of you as to the meet up point for Anzac Day. We will be in need of Volunteers to carry our banners and hold ropes. If those of you could register your interest with myself or Peter miceofmoresby@live.com.au or inbox us on Facebook. Looking for approximately 10-12 people to assist.

We are in need of cutting off Lunch registration and payment this year by April 15. If you are planning on attending please return your form ([see the form attached to the newsletter](#)); to us along with numbers as early as possible. Our Lunch Convenor Margaret Perry does a fantastic job coordinating places and food and we need to make it as easy as possible for her.

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you on Anzac Day for what will be a wonderful day with our diggers and Families.

Rob Denny
President
55/53 Mice of Moresby
0437 818 834

The End of the CENTENARY of ANZAC

Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway will be commemorating the end of the First World War with a Dawn Service on **Sunday 22 April 2018 at 5.30 am.** All members of the Battalion Assoc. and support group are invited to attend. Parking in Lovegrove Place (Killoola St). Concord. RSVP 16.4.2018 02 9767 5256 or email melva.lindley@health.nsw.gov.au Dress Lounge Suite/Medals. For more info call Melva Lindley or Peter Dowling. Please see above contact numbers.

AGM 17 February 2018

The Battalion Association held its annual meeting on Saturday 17th February at Granville R.S.L. Club. Our President Arthur Perry has stepped down as President due to health concerns. Thank you Arthur for your contribution. Nominations were received 14 days prior to the meeting date. An election of office bearers and committee was not necessary.

Those nominated were; Rob Denny: President; Peter Dowling : Secretary Treasurer; Bryan Matthew; Historian: Mark Edwell.

Committee: Margaret Perry, Carole Mathew, Ross Berghoffer, Arthur & Maureen Perry and Beverley Dawson.

There being no further nominations received the positions were filled as above. The executive and committee are appointed for a term of three years. There is insufficient space for a full copy of the minutes. If you require a full report please contact Peter Dowling, Secretary.

Peter Dowling: Secretaries report (see next page)

Bryan Matthew: Treasurer, tabled the following finance report; -

Opening Balance 1.10.2017		\$11,171.35
	Plus Income:	
For Luncheon \$1685.00 cheques/direct deposit and		
\$1734 cash includes \$472 lunch donations. Other donations & income \$303.80		
Re-banking remaining Float \$ 565.00		\$ 4,287.80
	Less Expenses:	
Cash Float \$800.00: Bn History booklet \$796.98		
Photographer \$480.00: Photo frames etc \$530.40		
Wreaths \$220: Mini Banners \$620.00		
Postage: \$100.00 Refunds: \$105.00		
Secretarial Expenses: \$\$217.65 & \$470.00		
Luncheon—Great Southern Hotel \$ 2,183.00		
Bugler \$100.00		\$ 6,624.07
Trading Deficit		\$ 2,336.27
Total Funds on Hand		\$ 8,835.08
	Represented by	
Cash on hand (secretary)		\$ 35.00
Balance of Cheque account		\$ 8,800.08

Other Issues

1. Review of the Constitution - Rules to take place over the next 12 months.
2. Anzac Day 2018 Commemorations. The March will follow the same route as last year. The Bn will meet in Phillip St., Sydney. We encourage everyone to attend as we still have five Veterans who will march. Rob is arranging for Golf Carts so if mobility is a problem for you that can be taken care of. Taxies will be booked to get you from the march fall out point to the Great Southern Hotel. Family members of the veterans: This may be the last year they march so get involved and come along. Bring all your family. I am grateful to Frank Rogers family last year were amazing in their support there were at least 10 members of his family came along to support him. So bring your children and grandchildren. Watch the Facebook Page for updates.
3. ANZAC DAY lunch will be served at the Great Southern Hotel at 1200 hrs. See your attendance form attached.
4. New members. Over the past 6 months we have three new members, Mark Townsend, Karen and Steve Gamage.
5. A concerted effort will be made this year to establish a Web site. The website will include a massive picture gallery as well as a personal page for every digger we know of who served. Get involved to ensure the memory of the Diggers is not forgotten.

Mice of Moresby - Secretaries Report

A special thank you to everyone who was able to attend the 75th Anniversary of Sanananda on 2 December last year. There were in excess of 100 people at the cenotaph. Reg Chard and Fred Denny attended. Our Master of Ceremonies was Mark Edwell who did a great job. Thank you Mark. Holly Haden was our trumpet player, our usual bugler Holly has cancer. The Camden Cadet group provided the Catapult Party and Honour Guard. In attendance were David Howell representing the 39th Battalion Association the sister battalion of the 53rd. Mary Steenson laid a wreath on behalf of the 2/33 Bn.

Over 15 wreaths and floral tributes were laid by members of the battalion, widows and families including the support group. One of the deputy guardians of the cenotaph remarked that it was the best attended unit commemoration held there in many years. It was a solemn affair. Thank you for your attendance.

The Sanananda Day Reunion was held again at the Great Southern Hotel. 106 people in attendance. We are grateful for the support the management and staff provided us again this year. Attendance was again the best that we have had in over 10 years. Sadly we have lost so many of the diggers and many of these men are now very frail. Since Anzac Day we have lost Peter Hayman, Frank Crotty, Peter Williams and Frank Rogers. Peter Hayman was one of the original 53 Battalion members. He and a group of soldiers were isolated from the battalion during the battle of Isurava. With outstanding leadership of their officer they managed to return to Port Moresby about a month later. Arthur Perry and I attended Frank Rogers Funeral at Marsfield. A word of thanks to Francis Rogers who with his family a few days after Frank's funeral attended the Sanananda Day lunch. His father Frank was badly wounded at Sanananda. It was the late Jack Stephens who carried Frank back to the RAP 7.12.1942. That is what it means to look after your mate!!!! (see Silks photos in this issue).

Invited guests were James Brown NSW RSL President; David Howell Secretary of the 39th Battalion Association; Greg Smallwood representing the 30th Battalion Association; Mary Steenson Representing the 2/33 Battalion Association. James Brown attended the lunch along with his father Lex Brown and uncle Giff Brown. James Brown presented the Sanananda day address. There were a number of last minute apologies. Our President Arthur Perry stood to thank James on behalf of the members of the battalion and support group.

We had apologies; Clyde Parsons, previous Battalion Assoc President; Dick Payten; 7th Division, Lloyd Birdsall and Roy Dockerey; 14th Field Regiment. There were many apologies received from members of the Bn association including veterans, widows and close family members. I thank you all for responding in such a positive way. Christine Green and family were unable to attend. Christine's granddaughter having a medical emergency and now is on the mend which is very good news indeed.

There were significant representations from the Rogers Family, Thorburn Family; McKinnon Family; Gallard Family; Bilson Family; Dawson and Berghoffer Families. Thank you to all who were able to attend.

Have a look at the Facebook page Rob Denny's partner has uploaded number of excellent photos. If you would like copies of the official photos (Capture That Photography) please contact me on 02 4945 0927 or at miceofmoresby@live.com.au. A sample of the photos can be found later in this newsletter.



Secretaries Report (Continued) Veterans

Len Turner has been in respite; Charlie Jenkins is having a few problems and has some mobility problems. Albert Burling is still at home at Bluehaven (Central Coast) is mobile but forgetting a few things these days. On my list I have Adrian Nall, Leo Inglis, Doug Longhurst, Frank McNamara, John Gumbleton, Charles Harris, Len Hitchens, Bill Franks, Joe Collett, Fred Denny, Ray Gentles, Reg Chard, Les Rennie, Keith Shepherd, Peter Murphy. To each of you our best wishes on behalf of the battalion and support group. Even though if you may not have been able to attend the December reunion you were all in our thoughts and prayers.

I must thank particularly those committee members who made the Sanananda Day commemoration the remarkable success it was. Firstly to Margaret Perry for her understanding and outstanding contribution in organising the wonderful lunch we enjoyed and the many hours in making sure the seating was as families would like. Ross Berghoffer prepared a history of the battalion going back to WWII (53 Bn & 55 Bn) printing/laminating the placemats and printing the Commemoration Certificate. Thank you Ross for this massive job well done. Rob Denny organised a new commemorative mini banner there were presented to the participants at the lunch and facilitated the booking of the Hotel. The remaining mini banners and Bn Histories were posted to the veterans and widows who were not able to attend. I have received a number of phone calls from thanking the committee for posting the history booklet and mini banner. 100 mini banners and 100 Battalion histories were printed. These are no longer any available. We are hoping to print an additional supply. So if you are interested on having a copy of the history, please let me know by contacting me on [02 4945 0927](tel:0249450927) or at miceofmoresby@live.com.au

Veteran Photos: a photographer (*Capture That*), was commissioned to take photographs at the Cenotaph and Great Southern Hotel. The intention was to have as many veterans present so that their photo could be taken, printed at the photographers lab then returned to the Great Southern Hotel. Some weeks prior to 2nd December commemorative Frames were produced by "Frame Today" at Warners Bay. Frames were prepared for Charlie Jenkins, Reg Chard, Ray Gentles, Lou Collett, Albert Burling, Fred Denny and Frank Rogers. Charlie, Lou and Albert could not make it, on the day for health reasons, Frank sadly passed away a week earlier. Family members sent me photo for Lou, Albert and Frank. Beverly sent me a photo of Charlie. These photos have been presented to the veterans since 2nd December. Fred, Ray and Reg received their photos on the day. Rob made sure that Charlie Jennings and Lou Collett received their commemoration photo. Peter presented Albert Burling with his and will arrange for Frank Rogers photo to be delivered to his son Francis Rogers.

This edition of the Orderly Room Gossip includes excerpts from the 1943 edition of 50/50 newsletter as well as a page from the 55 Bn War Diary (supplied by Adrian Nall). Adrian has been able to correct the caption/documentation of a number of George Silk's photos at Sanananda on 7 December 1942. The War Memorial is in the process correcting this error. The photographs were originally recorded as being taken at Gona and includes incorrect battalion references. They were part of a sequence of photos taken within a very short period at the 55/53 Bn RAP. Adrian has identified soldiers in these photo as being from the 55/53 Bn. Unfortunately these incorrect captions have been published in a number of important books by Peter Bruin and others.

On behalf of the Association—Support Group I trust that you had a very enjoyable festive season and look forward to seeing many of you on ANZAC Day. "STAND FAST"

Peter Dowling, Secretary 11th February, 2018



From Sanananda Day Commemoration at Sydney Cenotaph.



James Brown & Arthur Perry



Mark Edwell: standing to say grace.



Invited Guests: David Howell & Greg Smallwood



Group of people attending Lunch



Continuing from the last edition here are some excerpts from various Orderly Room Reports and Fifty-Fifty Editions. The following is from the December 1943 Edition of Fifty-Fifty, Page 23.

“A” Coy NOTES FEATURING SOME WELL KNOWN IDENTITIES

Lieutenant B.S. Ford is now holding the horse for the Brigadier at Milne Bay. We have a hunch that B.S.F. will sell him the old “A” Coy. Chev.

Does Cpl/. “Billy” Carlin know that W.O. Il Clarke is waiting for his sample of Tillock’s groceries.

Winston Churchill Judd is back with us again but “Killer” Kane, now an “R” not a “B” mind you, is no doubt by now carrying out tactical exercises with, mermaids on the beach at Burleigh Heads.

Captain Richards, the Coy. O.C. during the early days of New Guinea, who was evacuated with malaria, is now Area Officer Kogarah Area.

Congratulations to “Bottler” Ryan who received his Commission during the year.

The Coy. Is represented on Rehabilitation in good old Sydney town—looks like some good jobs after the show. Eh! Sgt. Ridley. *(Ed. Sergeant Alan Ridley NX90845 was an international Rugby League Player and toured with the Kangaroos to England in 1929 and scored 11 tries in seven games. In a Test Match against England at Castleford he scored five tries in the 53-2 point win).*

OUR TENT IN “A” COY. (By S.E. Johnson, “A” Coy)

It is a crowded tent just after the evening meal. Pts., “Possum” Dooley and “Lucky” Lelane are about to start yet another game of draughts. The lamp between them is very conveniently placed to obtain full benefit of the light. The usual argument begins; beat two out of three; no hovering; don’t take your hands off before you finish your move; now no noise, this game is “Fair Dinkum”.

Pte., “Givells’ Holt is about to start a letter. “Dear Bett”, then sits with pencil poised, a deep furrow on his brow. “Give us a smoke, I can’t think,” followed by several unkind remarks from the occupants of the tent. “Lancy” Wright breaks into song I’ve got a girl ...” - a surly rejoinder from ex-cook Maish as he delved amongst a pile of old books and papers. A tin whistle blown with more gusto than rhythm by Pte. “I Say” Bourne pieces your eardrums and the din begins. “I’ve got a girl”, “How can I think with all this noise,” Do you blokes want the lamp in all night” piercing, whistling,. Enter Pte., “Bingo” Barlow “I’ve got a tin her; if you blokes get the hot water , coco and milk, we’ll make a cup cocoa.” “Get out you’re shaking the box, get your feet off my gear.””Dear Bett. Received your most welcome.” “Get the cocoa.” “Not your move and don’t hover,” “in Kalamazoo,” “give us a , “Get the water,” “Look at the dust on my rifle,” and so it goes on with great heart,” “Bingo makes the cocoa and places it amongst several feet where someone manages to knock it over. This noise continues until sleep calls it a halt and another “peaceful” night is ended.

“C” Coy. In Lighter Mood

O.C. “C” Coy., Lieut Geoff Valentin has a fine reputation for, amongst other things ... you see you were wrong about the “Bull,” being an A1 crocodile swimmer ... should we mention here his nickname “The Jungle Princess.” After declaring himself off the fragrant weed all ranks are warned to keep a good watch on their weed, the nips are in. (*ed. Lieut. Valentin was killed in action on Mothers day , [Victory in Europe Day] 9th May 1945 on the island of Bougainville aged 24 years and is buried at Bomana Cemetery Port Moresby.*)

Lieut Ivan Horne ... ‘nuf said about our “foreign” friend (a Q’lander from Maryborough) friendly alien, not a bad bloke when you get to know him. Don’t we all know his nickname, ‘tis censorable in this issue.

Lieut. Keith Chatterton is keen on the job, known to the lads as “Smoko” wonder how ge got the name? You work it out.

Cpl. Pat Mahoney, the belligerent neutral hailing from Eire has taken south on leave his good old Irish brogue, ask him to pronounce ‘Thumb.’ Padre Walsh has discontinued the usual issue of discomforts ... Jack Vincent has been given a new instrument play in the band, no one can guess. Cpl. Bill McLeod wishes to make it known that he is NOT an information bureau, suggests that all personnel send their queries to the Quiz Kids ... “Keenie” Len Cheriton, “Chopper to the boys missed out on Lieut. “Punchy” Davis’ Battalion drill team, better luck next time “Chop” ... A certain tent in the lines has a division between the Boob inmates and the good boys, the “crims” all sleep on the south side... Who is the luscious lass Billy Watchir sees in town, reports have it that a lot of boot leather has been worn out by said “Chimes” ... “Chirper” Barnes will give his usual happy session whenever approached ... Without the regular arrival of those many enveloped from the south, we’ll lay odds that “Poppa Day has the longest face and greatest moans in the Company ... Also isn’t he keen since the third came through? Barron von Kribb (English version Cribb) is awaiting the declaration of unconditional surrender of Hitler’s gang so that he may return to the Fatherland. Doc please note he is after a “D” since Joe Conley left the cookhouse ... Jeff Shaw managed after a lot of tongue bashing to crack it for Manhattan Island ...

Question was raised the other day by a certain Don Coy Lieutenant “What is this Barthers Back?” All enquiries will be answered by Cpl., Spence. Barter of this coy., Cure is unknown to medical science ...

Certain safety precautions taken recently may now be relaxed, may now be relaxed, Paratrooper Aub Paul wishes this to be known. Happy landings Aub ... “Curry Day” Ted Fazldad is trying to oust ‘Padre in the Q store ... dark work ... Staff Sergeant Dave (the Drip) Swaney wants to know who bashes the spine on his bed during his absence, the bloke must weigh heavy for the supports are well dug in. ‘Tis of no use Dave writing to Dorothy Dix asking for a reply. We all know that the CQMS still pays for all clothing, etc., issued. And who the hell wants his clothes anyway?

DOINGS IN “DON” COY.

(By “Scoop”)

Kevin Bourke was married on his recent leave, the morning after his return the C.M.S. woke the company in his usual manner by roaring “Get out of bed!” just outside the newlywed’s tent. Bourkey sat up, murmured “Yes, dear,” and crawled put.

Dave McDonald applied for a transfer to “C” Company. “Why do you desire the transfer? Asked his O.C. “well, sir, “ replied Dave , “O heard a rumour we were going back to New Guinea, and I’m scared of crocodiles; but I wouldn’t be scared if I had Mr. Valentin to protect me.”

D Company continued

Bill Ashton was very annoyed the other night. He got into “Possum: Miles’ bed by mistake, and spent half an hour trying to straighten out the crease in the blanket , before he discovered that ‘Possum” was in bed.

It’s just as well as Bill McLean—the Orderly Room Corporal doesn’t have to go on Admin. Parade. The only way Bill can fit on his stretcher is to sleep with his knees under his chin and it takes him half an hour to straighten out each morning. Lieut Warwick Davis was very indignant the other day. He was proceeding along the road on a motor bike just as “B” Coy was returning from a route march. The “B” Coy boys recognised the rider, halted in their tracks, made one wild dash off the road, and sat on the bank until he passed. Sgt. Ron Callaghan, who was riding pillion, complained bitterly when they returned. “We hit three trees, fell off four times, and turned over two somersaults , and when we get back he cheerfully tells me—”That’s the first time I’ve ever taken anyone on the track.”

Sgt. Ollie Hardy has ambitions of becoming the battalion caterer. The boys of “D” Coy, remember the occasion however, when he went into Moresby to collect the meat for the P1 (1 Platoon). Ollie did relish the task of carrying it back to Ela Beach, so asked for a truck driver would he mind giving him a lift. The truck driver replied that he would be for some time, but good-natured suggested that Ollie should walk on and wait for him on the corner where the P1 was billeted. After waiting two days Ollie finally gave up hope, and reluctantly returned to face a hungry and angry P1.

‘Coogan’ Deadman is trying to teach the boys how to tell the time by the stars. “I learnt it at Tiger School,’ he declares. Cpl Tommy King however, remained unimpressed. “How the heck can he tell the time by the stars, when he can’t tell it by a watch”, he said.

There will be more we hope in future issues.

Lance Corporal Colin Deadman was killed in action on Bougainville on 14 May 1945. His photo courtesy of the Aust War Memorial.



Adrian Nall has been able to correct the locality descriptions concerning a number of profound photographs taken by the famous war photographer George Silk. You may be familiar with a number of photos published by highly reputable modern authors. The following two photos previously identified as been taken at Gona have now been positively confirmed to have been taken at Sanananda on 7th December 1942.

The soldiers in both these photographs are men of the 55/53 Bn from A.B. & C Coy. Casualties on that day were 130 killed and wounded.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

01 3921



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

01 3921

Adrian remembers this Aid Post very well. The soldier holding the mug is Lt., Graham of H.Q. Coy. 55/53 Bn. The photograph on the following page shows the same three soldiers as you can see in the photo to the right supporting each other with their backs turned to the camera.



Three wounded soldiers of the 55/53rd Battalion making their way out of the front line to a First Aid Station. Left to Right Pte. William Henry Walker (N212796), Pte. Keith Edward Beckman (NX153939) and Pte. Bruce Robert Chadwick (all from N.S.W. (Negative by George Silk.) The men were wounded during the battalions attack on Japanese positions along the Sanananda Track on 7 December 1942.

This photo was also incorrectly identified as being taken at Gona. The War Memorial has also corrected the captions to this photograph. Thank you Adrian.

A number of the soldiers in the above photo and on the previous page were very badly wounded. We remember and thank the men of the 7th Field Ambulance for their dedication care of these badly wounded and dying men. Often under enemy attack unarmed stretcher bearers risked their own lives to save the life of a wounded soldier.

11 Q 14 INF BDL
RECEIVED
30 JAN 1942
No. 42, SIC

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.
2ND DIVISION.

H.Q. 2 DIV,
"Gowan Brae"
DARRAVILLE,
27 Jan. 1942.

TRAINING OF SIGNAL PERSONNEL.

- To co-ordinate Signal Training throughout 2 Div, the following will become effective in co-operation with C.O., Sigs. 2 Div.
- Training of Bde. and Pd. Regt. Sig. Reg.**
Training Syllabus to be prepared to meet the requirements of Bde. Comd. in each area, making provision for H.Q. and communication exercises, in accordance with material and personnel available.
- Training of Unit. Sig. Reg.**
Syllabus to be prepared in consultation with Officer in Command Bde. Regt. Sig. Regs. to enable all Unit Sig. Regs. to receive training on Standardised Scale, such training to include Bde. and Pa. communication exercises.
C.O., Sigs. will arrange standard procedure of all Sig. Training in consultation with Bde. Cpt. Comd. so that if necessary Sig. Regs. could be changed and function without delay.
- Training of Sig. Orderlies.**
C.O., Sigs. will visit Bde. Cps. and arrange with Bde. Cpt. Comd. special Syllabus for Unit and Bde. Sig. Orderlies.
- Camp Duties.**
As is fully realised so much depends on Communication, Sig. personnel will not in future be detailed for Camp Duties other than own domestic details and provision of Signal and Communication Services.

(S.M. GIBBARD) Lieutenant-Colonel,
General Staff, 2nd Division.

L. Nall
To write an

DISTRIBUTION.	
2 Inf. Bde.	(6)
8 Inf. Bde.	(4)
14 Inf. Bde.	(4)
C.O., Sigs.	(2)
H.Q. 2 Div.	(1)
S.M.G.T.	(1)

Battalion War Diary

Unfortunately the War Diary for the 55 Bn concerning the period December 1941 to October 1942 is incomplete. When authorities decided to combine the 55th & 53 Bn on 15 October 1942 a significant portion of the War Diary records from the 55 Bn were lost. However the 53rd Battalion War Diary are very comprehensive and contains the names of hundreds of soldiers serving in that battalion. Unfortunately portions of the War Diary for the sister Bn 55th Bn have been destroyed. A snippet from the Bn War Diary has been provided by Arian Nall.

Anyone interested in these important records should consult the Aust. War Memorial and view the remaining War Diaries under collections. Find War Diaries, then Infantry and then Bn. The AMW have done an extraordinary job in making records like this available.

Why not make a trip to Canberra this Autumn and see the colour and spend some time in the War Memorial in particular the pool of Remembrance.

The information contained in this document is NOT to be communicated either directly or indirectly to the Press, or to any person NOT holding an official position in HIS MAJESTY'S Service.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.
2ND DIVISION.
II
14. Col. R. J. G. JONES, CMB. 24/23 Aust. Inf. Bn.

PART I. 22 Oct. 42.

- CHANGE OF UNIT DESIGNATION.**
As from 20 Oct. 42, this unit will be known as 25/23 Aust. Inf. Bn.
- G.I.C.'S IMPRESSION - 24 Oct. 42.**
Submitted below is a message received from 14 Aust. Inf. Bde.
* Please convey to all ranks the Bde. Comd's appreciation of their steadiness and general bearing throughout the G.I.C.'s inspection.
- COMFORTS FUND.**
It is desired to acknowledge receipt of comforts from Australian Comforts Fund on 23 Oct. 42.

(S.M. GIBBARD) Cpt.
Adj. 25/23 Aust. Inf. Bn.