

55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion Association—  
Support Group  
ORDERLY ROOM REPORT  
March 2019 (1-2019)  
Website: 5553battalion.com



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

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**Lou Collett: ANZAC Day 25 April 2018**

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## Presidents Report

Thank you for everyone who attended our meeting last week including Lex Brown. A Great day was had by all.

Plans are well underway with the NSW RSL for the Anzac Day march and we have been lucky enough to find out that the jeeps will take their place back in the march for this year. This being the case we may have a slightly amended form up area but we will advise when we hear back from the RSL events planning team on the meeting place.

Lunch spots are now available please fill out the lunch form and return as early as possible to our Secretary Peter.

Our Website is nearly complete. Thank you to our Secretary Peter Dowling and our Web Developer Phil for their hard work. Please visit [www.5553battalion.com](http://www.5553battalion.com) to check it out!

It's just over 2 Months until our Battalion departs for Papua New Guinea. Thank you to David Howell from Kokoda Historical for his hard work behind the scenes in making this happen.

We will be unveiling a plaque in PNG in conjunction with the PNG High Commissioner to Australia on May 16 and endeavour to broadcast this live on Facebook if phone coverage permits along with other parts of the trip.

1 or 2 spots still remain on this trip. Please contact me if you are interested in attending by the end of the March 2019.

I have now finalised banner carrying allocations for Anzac Day. Thank you to all who applied. Cheryl Chiddy will lead the Parade with Nephew William with the Australian Flag carrying duties.

See you all Anzac Day!

As always please feel free to contact me or any of our hardworking Committee for information on your family member who may have served in the Mice. We do have a wealth of knowledge on a lot of our Battalion.

Rob Denny  
National President  
Mice of Moresby  
55/53 Battalion Association & National Support Group  
0437 818 834



### SR RUTH CAMPBELL QX35390 (1909-1984)

This is a photograph of Sister Ruth Campbell supplied by Reg Chard. This is what Reg said about Ruth in his photo album.

*" Sr Ruth Campbell 2/9 Australian General Hospital – One of the many Heroes of World War 2. When things were really bad in 1942 all sisters and any other white women were ordered to leave New Guinea. She and two other sisters refused to go and were the only free white women in New Guinea till 1943. Ruth Campbell who saved my life in Moresby Hospital January 1943. They tell me I was unconscious for 2 weeks and there were too many sick and wounded and she always came back to me instead of resting herself. From Moresby I was sent home on hospital ship 'Katoomba' arrived at 113 Australian General Hospital Concord 1943. Ruth Campbell passed away April 1984 in Queensland".*

### **Secretaries Report**

We have a great responsibility as being members of this association to maintain the 'Remembrance' or "commemoration" of the lives of the men who were in many cases just boys who went to war in 1942 for the security of this country. Every single man had a particular reason for enlisting. Some were part of the pre-war militia, some sort adventure, some were conscripted, some were too young or too old and changed their birthdates. Soldiers who signed up (or conscripted) into the 55 & 53 Bn or came from every conceivable national, racial religious or language group who had come to Australia in the previous 160 years. If you had a particular prewar occupation or class you were chosen to be a leader even though you were not able to lead. There were some who though not promoted in service made extraordinary contributions to this country during their working life. Just to name a few, one soldier from Queensland became the Australian Consul General to France, another was a judge on the Supreme Court of NSW, A man of Aboriginal/Chinese descent became the general manager of a large primary produce distributing cooperative. Another became the president of the Shire of Camden. These men were not the exception.

In the main these men went back into their communities all damaged by their experiences. Some handled it better than others. They married their sweethearts and had loving families and were examples to the rest of the community for hard work and dedication to family; some shared their stories others could not. Every soldier had lost so many comrades that they stood beside in the face of determined enemies. Many struggled with the idea why did I survive and not my mate? Some had short lives others have lived long lives. During WWII being members of the Militia (AMF) they suffered the ignominy from some parts of the press, politicians and members of the regular army (AIF), who told lies about them.

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Members of the Association will be visiting Sanananda in a few months to remember and stand near the place where countless soldiers still lie buried in the mud. They will be dedicating a plaque to all the members of the battalion who served and died, but in particular those whose graves are not known. Below you will find a list of men who died in PNG without a known grave.

The Constitution of the association is in urgent need of upgrading. At the recent Annual General Meeting it was decided to pursue this. It is a complex task. The veterans at the A.G.M. were of the view that we should not incorporate the association under NSW Law, but continue on an unincorporated association. A special meeting will be convened in June this year to take the revision another step forward. The committee will be putting a proposed version to members to vote on. Your contribution is sought in this process.

The accumulation of 10 years work is now being rewarded in the development of a Web site. It can be viewed on [5553battalion.com](http://5553battalion.com). The service records of about 1500 soldiers who served are now available. Contact me for the password. A feature included is that on the death of a particular soldier his name appears on that particular day. There may be errors as we do not have all the details so please let me know if you have correct information.

The **Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway**, Concord will have another 3 years funding, from 1 July 2019. After 1 July 2022 they will be on their own. Have any of you or your families been to the Concord Memorial? 23 years ago the Association donated about \$8,000 to construction of the Sanananda Station. The guides need your support, so why not go to your local RSL sub-branch or school and get them motivated to organise school groups to attend and learn about the sacrifices of those who saved Australia from invasion in 1942.

For the past years we have relied on donations from veterans to help maintain the continuing operation of the Association. The funds in the bank account have slowly decreased. To keep the association the committee has approved a \$20.00 annual membership fee.

### Mice of Moresby - Secretaries Report (cont)

If you are not a member please consider doing so. Only \$20.00 per year.

Membership forms are available on the Face Book page or by contacting me. It costs about \$560 each year to print and distribute the Orderly Room Report. There are about 100 members who receive a paper copy. Donations and new membership are not meeting these expenses.

Details of ANZAC Day March & Lunch follow in the next section.

Kind regards Peter Dowling, Secretary.

### **SYDNEY ANZAC DAY 2019 MARCH ARRANGEMENTS**

The Anzac Day March in Sydney commences in Pitt Street at 0900 hrs. The route is the same as last year proceeding along Elizabeth Street to fall out in William St.,

We will be falling in at the corner of Martin Place and Philip St. The location is diagonally opposite the Lyndt Café. Meeting time is 0900 hrs. As usual it is not possible to know what time we will march off. We are fortunate that the RSL is again supplying Land Rovers /Jeeps for the Veterans. (see Robs comments above).



**March Coordinator:** Peter Dowling

#### **Banner Bearers:**

Flag bearer: Cheryl Chiddy

Main Banner (bearers): Ross Berghoffer, Carole Matthew, (supporters); Marco Riotto

Honour Roll bearers: Sandra Holmes & Damian Dawson

#### **IMPORTANT MARCHING RULES**

The March is a solemn event and all participants should be aware of the R.S.L. requirements : In summary No colourful clothing, no carrying photos, No casual conversations during the march, as there are 1000 eyes on us at any time. It is a March not a stroll; keep within your line (six rows across) at all times. Follow the directions of our March Coordinator and RSL Martials. The R.S.L. has made particular allowances for us in not having descendants march at the rear. So please follow these requirements otherwise in future we may be relegated to the rear of the March.

Phone Rob or Peter if you have any questions. (see page 1 for details)

#### **ANZAC DAY LUNCH**

Everyone including children are encouraged to attend the Anzac Day Lunch at the Great Southern Hotel. The room we book each year has a capacity of over 80 so there is plenty of space should you like to come. Attached is a form which you can use to book your seat or seats for your family. Adults \$35.00 Children \$10.00. Please put your name down early to assist with catering arrangements.



Continuing from the last edition here are some excerpts from various Orderly Room Reports and Fifty-Fifty Editions. This from Volume 1 1997.

One of the ways in which Europeans communicated with native Papuan people was by the use of Pigin English. Early settlers in Papua taught the native people Pigin English as it helped in communication between different tribal groups as well as government officials, religious orders and European and Chinese settlers. Yes there were many hundreds of people of Chinese descent living in PNG. Sir Julius Chan was the Prime Minister of PNG. The term is considered derogatory today. The following is the Lords Prayer as published in the Vol 1 1997.

From Vol 1 1997 1 Teaching Assignment  
**The Lord's Prayer (Pidgin English)**

Our Father which art in heaven

pappa belonga me pfella, he stop on top side

Hallowed be thy name

Same belonga you, 'e good fells to me

Thy Kingdom come

You catchum place belonga you

Thy will be done on earth

S'pose you like me fella can do somethin

' as fella can do irn down below

As it is heaven

Alasame on top side

Give us this day our daily bread

You give ' im fella kia kia alonga day

And forgive us our trespasses

And s' pose me fella makirn somethin no good makim you cross

As we forgive those that trespass against us

Alasame me fella no cross alegeder e done somethin no good  
 along a me fella

And lead us not into temptation

S pose me fella makim somethin no good you frita me

But deliver us from evil

Bit loosum alesarna thing ' e no good

For Thine is the Kingdom

Cos alegeder number one place belonga you

The Power and the Glory

You strong fella to me, you savvy olas (Clas - chuch)

Forever and ever - Amen

Allatime finsh

## A CONTRIBUTION BY SERGEANT LEWIS SCOTT

The following was originally printed in the Orderly Room Report Vol 2 1996. Those who attended the Sanananda Day Lunch last year and listened to Dr David Turner talking about his great uncle Lt.-Colonel Kenneth Harry Ward (Commanding Officer 53rd Battalion who was killed in action), will appreciate Lew Scott's sentiments.

### Memorable Incidents with a memorable Man.

Name- Lt. Colonel Ward  
Unit- 53rd Btn (Militia) Port Moresby N.G.  
Period Early February 1942 to approximately May 1942  
Present - Lt Colonel Ward, Major Spring, Private Lew Scott, Private Thompson (interloper).

To me the Colonel was an outstanding officer. Very much a disciplinarian firmly in control. A believer in what he was doing, he did that and most things effectively, quickly and well. He was a fearless man of strong character who cared for the welfare of his troops above all else. Enemy bombing raids held no terror for him.

The battalion H.Q.'s were in a government house, overlooking the harbour. On notice of a Japanese bombing raid, as best as he could, he advised most areas of possible activity. (At that time there were few communication installations). That done, in an old car that could be seen or heard, sat the Colonel heading toward where his most exposed troops were or where bombs may fall or had already fallen.

#### Incident 1.

In Moresby on this February day I was in charge of the huge fuel tank used by the navy.

In an open and exposed shed, wind in the face, head down, writing, a voice behind me said, "who is in charge here". Without looking up I said, "I am" "who is". On glancing around, the Colonel (it was he) got, "I am". Quick as a flash, "you were- Major (his aide) take his name and number and reduce him to the ranks.". There was not a glimmer on the C. O.'s face when I answered to rank "Private". The fact is I knew not why I was to remain a private.

Cause- Main gate guard, shut off, hat same, pants rolled up, rifle on the ground, and he sitting on an upturned 44 gallon drum, pruning his toe nails. The Colonel's was the only raid for the day. The other (not announced) turned up the next day. To his credit, so did the Colonel. Most of the bombs hit the water or the hill behind the tank.

#### Incident 2.

Battalion gathering. Field Practice.

Exercise - subdue a machine gun post.

Area - Moresby.

Period - before Mid Year 1942. Start Time - 10.0 am.

Somehow from 10.00 am start time someone changed it to 11.00 am. Not everyone got the message, thus causing confusion. Result was some unknowns confiscated the 'whippie' and the machine gun which was brought back to the assembly area.

Enter the Colonel.

From the Major to lowly Lieutenant every officer was called into line in front of most of the Battalion the Colonel in dead silence slowly and clearly asked each officer.

"Order, Counter Order, what comes next. Each replied "don't know sir". Calmly he stood them to attention. Clear as a bell he stated "Order, counter order, what comes next?" - Lengthy pause. - "TOTAL BLOODY DIS-ORDER." - Pause again of some lengthy seconds. - "DISMISS".

Belittling, though it was, it is doubtful of any of the officers would ever again join in an Army games without full knowledge of how to play to the rules.

#### Incident 3

Plan and prepare defence posts in the event of Jap invasion from the harbour. Our lot - to build a defence facing the harbour behind the native village of Hanuabada Period - April or May 1942.

Present at defence inspection; the Colonel, Major Spring, Private Lew Scott (for interrogation). Later an intruder - Private Thompson.



