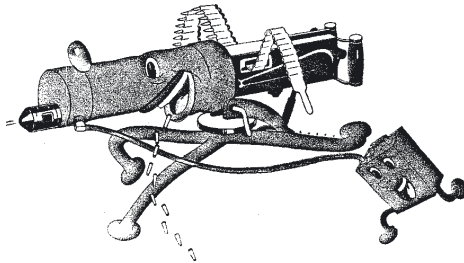




THE 2/2ND AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN BATTALION
ASSOCIATION

MUZZLE BLAST



MARCH-APRIL 2008

2/2ND AUST MG BN ASSOCIATION

President:	Adrian Simpson 201/153 Epping Road, Marsfield 2122	Ph: 9878 0525
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Minute Secretaries:	Sally Butcher Denise Herman	
Editor / Delegate		
9 Division Council:	Adrian Simpson	
Committee:	Neville Bargwanna, Michele Campbell, Bob Fitzsimmons, Ron Bruncker, Bill Harley, Frank Lade, Julie Owens	
Hon. Life Members:	Ron Bruncker, David Martin, Ron Myers, Mick Riley, Adrian Simpson	
Hon. Padre:	Canon Ray J. Bomford 19 Coomassie Avenue, Faulconbridge 2776	Ph: (02) 4751 6465
Hon. Member:	Ralph Short	
Deceased Hon. Life Members	Charles Armitage, John Boughton, Hugh Brown, John Cockram, Jim Cuddihy, Clyde Davy, Jim Dods, Gerry Ferguson, Charles Gould, Nev Green, Norm Ihlein, John Kenyon, Frank Lavan, Ian Mills, Les Reid, Bok Rowe, Keith Sloss, Reg Somerville, Lon Villiers, Wes Ward.	

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Another year has rolled past and it is time to get organised for Anzac Day. This is the most important day of the year for our Association and for all who served in the Services.

Your committee has already done the 'groundwork' to ensure that the occasion is memorable and enjoyable. It is on this day especially when we remember those of our comrades who did not come home or have passed on since.

The enclosed form is for completion by those who intend to attend our Anzac Day reunion. Needless to say, it is imperative that the form is returned as soon as possible to our Treasurer. He has a very onerous job and all members are asked to help him in this task.

Our committee always negotiates with Hotel Menzies for the best possible deal, which includes waiver of the usual Room Hire and Holiday Penalty Rates — a substantial saving. We are fortunate to have this facility for our reunions which have been held here since 1973!

This year the cost per person has been set at \$59.50 (last year \$55). As in past years, the committee has given close consideration to the amount of subsidy that the Association can afford to keep the cost per person as low as possible. It has been decided that a subsidy of \$14.50 will apply, so the cost per person will be \$45 — the same as for the previous two years. The application of a subsidy each year has been made possible by the careful management of our finances and the regular payment of the annual subscription of \$20 by members. In addition, donations have been a great help.

As always, our Associate Members continue to do a great job in 'keeping the wheels turning'. Without their enthusiastic support the Association could well 'wither on the vine'.

Later in the year you will be advised of other events — the 9 Division Church Service in September and the 9 Division Reunion in October. We hope as many as possible will be able to attend the reunion at Menzies. Relatives and friends of members will receive a warm welcome.

We trust that you and yours enjoy a fair measure of good health and happiness for the rest of this year and beyond. Our thoughts are with those who are ill and have lost loved ones.

The Committee.

A Reminder: Please complete the Anzac Day nomination form and return NOW.

VALE**RON ALLENDEN NX15849****02.01.1921 – 20.12.2007**

Ron was born in Sydney, the youngest child of seven. His mother and father came from Norfolk in the U.K. and were servants in the household of the Duke of Northumberland who visited Australia in 1900. They married here, settled and raised a family. After primary school Ron attended North Sydney Boys' High, and later the Hornsby Technical High School. After leaving school he did a wool classing course before accepting his first job as a clerk.

He later joined the local militia of the 1st Light Horse (Machine Gun Regt.) and with the outbreak of WWII the majority of the group enlisted in the 2/2nd Australian Machine Gun Battalion formed in May of 1940. Dad served in 'A' company and was 'the last man standing' of the originals in A2 Platoon. He served with the Battalion from May 1940 until November 1945. The Battalion, as part of the 9th Australian Division, fought gallantly in the Middle East and in particular in the battle of El Alamein, which was the turning point in the desert war, to push the Germans out of North Africa. From desert warfare they then fought in the campaigns in the jungles of New Guinea and Borneo against the Japanese.

Dad rarely spoke about his war experiences at home, other than to say war is a terrible thing. As I have grown older I gained a deeper understanding of the impact of those experiences on him as a young man and the person he became, and the close-knit bonds which were formed with his army mates. Anzac Day was always the most important day in the year for him.

After the war Ron returned to his clerical job and studied accountancy at night. He had met my mother, Marj, some years before, and they were married in December 1946. I was born in 1949.

Dad went on to work at Capitol Records and met many visiting recording artists who came out to Australia. He later established his own accountancy practice at Kings Cross and had some colourful people as clients. One was Johnny O'Keefe, some of you will remember as a rock and roll star. Finally, he became the Financial Manager for a waste disposal company. When Dad retired from work he continued his long association with the North Sydney Anzac Memorial Club as Treasurer/Director.

Ron's interests included fast cars and boats, but his real passion was flying. He had tried to enlist in the RAAF in WWII but was rejected due to colour blindness. He gained his civilian pilot's licence at age 51, and flew for pleasure and business until he was 71. The highlight of his flying career was the Benson & Hedges Australian Air Race in 1976 in which their group won a trophy for the best Beechcraft.

Dad was an avid reader and had a great gift with words. He also had a genuine interest in people from all walks of life and backgrounds. He related to people very well, and he was generous in helping others in a quiet way. He was most loyal to his family and friends. About eight years ago he was diagnosed with Alzheimers disease. Eventually, he needed to go into care in Sydney. Later we were able to move him to a facility in Canberra, closer to our home. Now he is at peace and it is a blessing that the struggle is over.

Whilst Ron is no longer with us, I know he has touched many people's lives and there are many memories to carry with us. He lived life to the full and he fought his illness to the end in the way that he lived his life. Rest in peace Dad.

Editor's note: *We thank Ron's daughter, Margaret Callaghan, for this lovely eulogy for her dad. Ron was a gallant soldier and a very popular member of the Battalion. He will be sadly missed by his old army mates and those who were fortunate to have known him. On behalf of the Association I extend to Margaret and her family our deepest sympathy in their sad loss. Our thanks are extended to Association and former member of the Battalion, Darcy McInnes, who is resident in Canberra, for his representation at the funeral service.*

VALE

HARRY WALPOLE GENDERS NX30976

16.01.1921 – 01.11.2007



Harry was born in Singleton NSW but spent most of his early life in Stockton near Newcastle. After leaving school he went to work with his father and brother who were bricklayers. On 7th June, 1940, although underage, he enlisted in the A.I.F., declaring his age as 21. He was posted to the 2/2nd Australian Machine Gun Battalion at Ingleburn and became a member of A3 Platoon. This was where I first met Harry 'Call me Oke' Genders. Where Harry got the nickname 'Oke' was never explained, however, the name stuck throughout his army career. He was a very popular member of the Platoon and saw service in the Middle East at Mersa Matruh and El Alamein in the Western Desert, as well as Palestine, Lebanon and Syria. After returning to Australia he took part in the amphibious landings and capture of Lae and Finschhafen.

Harry was a 'happy soul' and, in many respects, a 'lovable larrikin'. He always had a joke or a story to tell. I can recall an incident when our Platoon was stationed in Broumana, a small village above Beirut in the Lebanon. We were stationed there to guard the British 9th Army H.Q. As we were walking down through drizzly rain to the little village to partake of a couple of convivia, three high-ranking British Officers passed us. Suddenly, one of them swung around and in a most haughty voice exclaimed, 'I say, don't you Orstralians salute your Officers?'. Harry was quick to retort, "Not when we're on leave, mate, but if you want one,

well here you are". Harry brushed his hat with a most perfunctory salute. The Officer was stunned, turned on his heel, and strode off. Happily, there were no repercussions. I think the story was worth the telling, as that was our mate, 'Call me Oke'.

While in the Middle East Harry proposed to his sweetheart, Jean, by telegram, and was accepted. On returning to Australia they were married, and over the years they were blessed with two children, Douglas and Narelle, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Harry took an early discharge offer in February 1945, which was made because of a manpower shortage in many industries. He returned to his former trade of bricklaying and finally ceramic tiling. After retiring he decided to try his hand in opal mining at Lightning Ridge. While he didn't make a fortune it did cover expenses. To supplement his earnings from mining he also did some shearing on nearby sheep properties. On returning to Newcastle he became involved in breeding goldfish. It then became more than a hobby, and developed into an extremely large business, breeding fish for the local and export markets.

He was a man of many interests and had a penchant for poetry and the card game of Bridge, in which he was recognised as a champion player. A book of poems which he had collected during the war years was offered to and accepted by the War Museum in Canberra. His favourite poem was *Ali Baba Moreshead and His Twenty Thousand Thieves*, which will be remembered, I'm sure, by any member of the 9th Division who served at El Alamein. Harry also travelled extensively during his retirement and made the pilgrimage to the Middle East in October 1992 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Alamein.

Harry ('Call me Oke') was a good mate, a brave soldier, and a good family man. He will be sadly missed. On behalf of the members of the Battalion Association I extend deepest sympathy to Douglas and Narelle and their families in their sad loss. Farewell 'Oke', old mate.

Eulogy submitted by Mick Riley, former member of A3 Platoon.

VALE

JOHN F.A. MONKS NX178056

09.03.1925 – 24.10.2007



John was born in Sydney, the youngest of three children, and lived most of his early life in the Sydney suburb of Annandale. As one of the younger brigade he was called up for Army service at the age of 18 in 1943, and joined the 2/2nd Australian Machine Gun Battalion, which at that time was stationed on the Atherton Tablelands. John was posted to B3 Platoon and served with them in the New Guinea campaigns at Lae and Finschaffan and later in the landings at Labuan and Borneo. At war's end, on the way home their ship was redirected to Rabaul on the island of New Britain where the troops spent a further

six months on various guard duties.

After discharge from the Army in 1946, John was employed with Chesterfield Sports, a Sydney sporting company. Several years later he joined 'Westerns', a national company which dealt in 'steel strapping'. John quickly displayed his managerial potential and was promoted to manage their Victorian office. After moving to Melbourne he boarded with a family in East Kew. It was here that he met Helen, his wife to be. They were married in 1955 and settled in their home at North Balwyn where they have remained ever since. In 1960 Elise, the first of two daughters, arrived, followed by Carolyn.

John, after taking early retirement, was offered a temporary pre-Christmas position in the hardware section of Myer's store in Doncaster, close to home. The temporary job lasted a further seven years. It was a complete change of pressure from his previous managerial position and he thoroughly enjoyed the change of pace. In 1997 he developed a heart problem and had open heart surgery, from which he made a very good recovery.

As a keen and popular member of the local R.S.L. he devoted much of his time in various executive positions over the years, the most recent being that of Welfare Officer. During the past seven years, an annual event was the mini-reunion held with several of the 'Mug Gunners' and their wives at the Manningham Club in Doncaster. These luncheons were very successful, due entirely to John's natural organising ability.

He was a very good mate, a brave soldier, and will be sadly missed by all who had the good fortune to have known him. The Association extends heartfelt sympathy to his wife, Helen, daughters Elise, Carolyn and families in their grievous loss.

Ed: Harry May represented the Association at the funeral service. Unfortunately, Frank Jordan, also an Association member and John's very close mate, could not attend because of illness.

VALE

SGT. BILL WEBB NX52547

Blair Stevenson Webb was better known as Bill. He leaves a son, Blair, and a daughter-in-law, Fiona (he had a special name for her — 'Fuss'), a daughter, Julie, a son-in-law, Lee, and one grandchild called Charlie.

When Alison died he moved back to the old farm that was on a half acre of ground, so Bill built a lovely home for himself overlooking the valley, with no curtains on the windows. Fuss used to rouse on him about people passing by and that they would see everything.

He was still fit enough to help Blair and Fiona, too.



I used to often go down and stay after my wife, Theresa, died. We spent most of our time sitting on the verandah overlooking the valley where two miles of river ran through it. We'd be watching Blair ploughing in the distance. Everything was perfection.

We fed the wild birds on the front verandah. There were only three birds from the bush that did not venture down — they stayed up on the fence post a mile from the feed. They were the three kookaburras.

He had an invitation to meet all the cricketers at Government House, and even though he had a broken ankle at the time, he wore a slipper. It was a great moment for him as he had played cricket for New South Wales and loved the game.

Bill had no pension, even though they took out one of his lungs, and he had been bitten twice on the foot by a snake.

He wasn't a very big bloke, but pretty tough. A gentleman and a scholar. Good mate to all at B3.

***Ed:** Bill served in the 54th Infantry Battalion before joining our Battalion. He was a highly respected member of B3 Platoon and served in the Middle East, New Guinea and Borneo (including Alamein where he was wounded in action). He was very well known in the Bathurst/Orange area where he had a grazing property. His cousin, Paddy, was killed in Borneo close to the end of the war. Bill was very involved with the establishment of the Davistown R.S.L. with the late Jack Marsh (also a member of our Battalion). He often attended the reunion there that was held every couple of months as reported in Muzzle Blast from time to time.*

This eulogy was prepared by his friend of many years, Eric Nunn, also a member of B3 Platoon.

VALE

MRS. IRIS COCKRAM

We are sad to report that Iris passed away recently. She is well remembered as the wife of the late John Cockram. They both played a prominent role in organising the annual reunions we enjoyed with members of the Queensland Association. They resided in Port Macquarie, where our first reunion was held in 1975.

Iris was a gracious lady who, with John, was a great supporter of our Association, and the continued success of our 'coastal' reunions was mainly as a result of their efforts. She will be missed.

We extend to the family our deepest sympathy.

ANZAC DAY**Friday, 25 April, 2008**

- Wreath Laying** Form up in Barrack Street, outside the Combined Services Club.
- Time** **7.15am.** We will march to the Cenotaph with the 9th Division group at 7.30am sharp. Wreaths must be laid by 7.42am to fit in with all the other units.
- The Parade** Assemble in O'Connell Street. Look for our banner.
- Tickets** Will not be sold at the assembly point. All payments will be made at the hotel unless already paid direct.
- Cost** Each year we negotiate with the Executive of Menzies for the best possible deal. See Committee Report.
- Subsidy** This year a subsidy of \$14.50 per person will apply. The cost to you is **\$45 per person.** This is considered reasonable considering the excellence of the venue and catering.
- Payment** It will be of great assistance to Denis Riley if payment is made by cheque or money order in favour of the Association and forwarded direct to him.
- Accommodation** Menzies has offered our members a rate of \$157 per night (single, twin or double). Anyone interested should book early as there is great demand from the AWA who also have their reunion at Menzies.
- Parking** Available at the Hotel. Entry via the lane at rear. Access from Margaret Street.
- Note:** Concessional vouchers are available for delegates attending functions.
- Contact at Menzies** Reservations — phone (02) 9299 1000.
Quote event name — 2/2 MG Bn Luncheon.
In need, contact Leanne Wigmore
Conference & Catering Co-ordinator
Phone: (02) 8235 1751

REMINDER — PLEASE COMPLETE THE PROFORMA NOW

ANZAC DAY REUNION — FAMILY GROUPS

Last year a number of quite large family groups attended Anzac Day reunion. This was great and we would like to see similar support this year.

We do suggest that if a member is organising a family group, the fees for the group be collected prior to the reunion and sent direct to Denis Riley with a list of the attendees. This will be a great help to those who look after the finances.

This is important: It is essential that all attending the function should be seated by 12.15pm at the latest.

On both of the above issues your co-operation will be much appreciated.

Another reminder: Get your proforma to Denis Riley pronto! Thanks.

FROM A MEMORIAL ERECTED AT ANZAC COVE

“Those heroes that shed their blood on our land and lost their lives, you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace side by side with our Mehmetts here in this country of ours. The mothers who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. They will sleep in tranquillity. After having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well.”

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, 1934

Mustapha Kemel Ataturk was the Turkish commander who successfully halted the Allied advance towards the Dardenelles. He later became the first President of the Republic and brought his country into the modern world. He was first known as Mustapha Kemel, then as Kemal Pasha, then in 1934 took the surname of Ataturk — Father Turk. He died in 1938 aged 58.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

It is a pleasure to welcome Mrs Robyn Fulton and her daughter, Tammy, as Associate Members.

Robyn is the daughter of the late Tom Coles who was the Battalion RQMS. He sadly lost his life in Mersa Matruh. The ‘old hands’ will remember Tom with affection — he was a good soldier and gentleman.

Both Robyn and Tammy have been associated with the Association previously. The former was involved with the seating arrangements at the 50th Anniversary celebrating the formation of our Battalion 1940. Tammy was a banner bearer at the Anzac Day march a few years ago.

BORNEO 2007

Respect and honour: these are the values we came to associate with the people of Borneo towards the Australian 9th Division during a recent visit to the island.

Our first experience of these values occurred on our first day in Kota Kinabalu (formerly Jessleton) at the Sabah Museum. The museum focuses on traditional culture and the history of Sabah, but also features an entire section devoted to actions of the 9th Division in securing Borneo. The table on which the surrender documents were signed is housed in the museum, and the history is told in lengthy articles with photographs.

We then headed to Sandakan where we met Joe, our guide for the next four days. On one of our walks we got talking about WWII and I mentioned that my father was in the 9th Division. Joe suddenly stopped, his face became very serious, and he said, "It will be my honour to guide a son of the 9th Division. We will visit the Sandakan Memorial". With that, he gave a small bow to us and we began our planning.

Our visit to the Sandakan Memorial Park was most moving. The people of Sabah have created a peaceful and pleasant space to reflect on the horrors of the treatment of fellow humans by the Japanese. The Memorial Park honours those who lost their lives at that site and on the march from Sandakan to Ranau. Joe arranged for us to raise the Australian flag on the morning of our visit, which was a special honour for us.

Joe and others who care for the Memorial Park, told us about future plans to maintain the recognition of the Australian role in Borneo, including providing opportunities to retrace the Sandakan death march as is done for the Kokoda Track.

Our time with Joe ended at a jetty deep in the jungle of the Kinabatangan River. As our little river boat pulled away, Joe snapped us a very smart salute. It was more than imitation of military tradition; Joe was honouring the men of the 9th Division who had done so much to give him the life he now loves.

From Bruce Harley

Ed: Thank you, Bruce, for this very interesting account of your visit to Borneo. Our blokes certainly suffered terribly at Sandakan. A book by Don Wall "Kill the Prisoners", gives a very good account of the lot of P.O.W.'s — it is not pretty reading! Apart from Australians, a large number of British and R.A.F. personnel were in this camp.

Bruce is an Associate Member and the son of Bill & Phyllis Harley.

* * *

9 DIVISION COUNCIL advises the annual church service and reunion will be held on 28th September and 24th October, respectively. These days it is not so easy to have good representation at these events, but we trust that those who can attend will do so.

OUR NATION IN DIRE PERIL

A Sydney Invasion Study

by Lt. Col. A.A. Brackpool, Admin. 31 Inf. Bde. on 23 February, 1942

- Object:** To defend the Centre Sector of the Sydney–Port Kembla area.
- Relative Strength:** **Own Troops:** (1) Fixed Defence Command. (2) V.P. Detachments. (3) 31 Inf. Bde HQ. (4) 45 Bn. (5) 1 Bn. (6) B.Gun P.Tps. (7) 45 Bty. 111 A/Tk Regt. (incomplete). (8) Two 3 pdr Guns. (9) 9 & 10 V.D.C. Bns. Possible arty support. (10) 12 Army Fd Regt. Corps. (11) 2 Med. Bty Reserve. (12) Some A/A and aircraft support.
- Enemy:** Powerful Naval Units including capital ships, aircraft carrier with tp. carrying seaplanes and fighter and bomber aircraft, and probably at least one Inf. Div. and one Armd. Div. with ancillary troops.
- Therefore (1) We may be hopelessly outnumbered at landing point/s. (2) We may not have air superiority. (3) Many separate landings may be made. (4) Our fixed coast defences may be out of action by enemy air action.
- Topography:** Following the above, the report covers comprehensively the area subject to the report (it is too long to quote here).
- Further titles are:
- Time & Space:** (1) The enemy has the initiative and may attack anywhere at any time. (2) We may have little warning of an impending attack.
- Enemy Morale:** The morale of enemy troops is high. They are flushed with success and possessed with fanatical zeal.
- Our troops:** Have no conception of what they may have to face. Therefore (1) the enemy will have undoubted superiority of dash and initiative. (2) The first shock of battle may demoralise our troops.
- Efficiency:** **Enemy:** First class, well trained and well armed troops.
Our troops: Badly trained and partially equipped.

Then follows a long evaluation under the heading **Courses open — The enemy and our own defence.**

The final plan was to: 1 Bn to hold foreshores to Cooks River. 45 Bn to hold foreshores from Cooks River to Salt Pan Creek. All Coys. forward. No reserves.

Note: This is an extract from the journal of the 2/17th Bn. Association (in part). It is worth noting that in May 1942 the Battle of the Coral Sea resulted in a stunning victory — mainly American Naval Forces. We could speculate that this victory saved our country from invasion with horrific consequences. It is no wonder that our Prime Minister at the time insisted on the return of our Divisions serving overseas.

UNIT HISTORY

Our Association has obtained some extra copies of the Unit History which will be available now or on Anzac Day.

Perhaps you will recall that there was a reprint of the History recently. It is an exact copy of the first edition 'hard cover'. Once the stock we have is sold, there will be no more and, as happened with the original, become impossible to obtain. It will become a 'collectors' object'.

The cost is \$30 per copy (including postage). Should you require a copy/copies, please contact Ron Myers, 38a Station Street, Pymble NSW 2073 – Ph: (02) 9983 1919; or Adrian Simpson, 201/153 Epping Road, Marsfield NSW 2122 – Ph: (02) 9878 0525.

If you intend to attend the Anzac Day Luncheon and would prefer to have your copy at that time, let us know and one will be allocated to you.

Of interest is the fact that we are aware of some bookshops selling our Unit History for \$60 per copy!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on 26th November. The following attended:

Neville Bargwanna
Sally Butcher
Bob Fitzsimmons

In terms of the rules and regulations by which the Association conducts its business, election of office bearers is bi-annual. This year the meeting declared that all existing office bearers retain their titles and duties. They will now be in office until November 2010!

Following the meeting all members attended a luncheon at the Occidental Hotel in York Street. The setting and cuisine was first-class, and it was enjoyed by all. In the circumstances, the attendance was considered satisfactory. We realise that many cannot attend due to ill health or the tyranny of distance. Gone are the days when 40 or so would attend!

Apologies were received from: Ray & Verna Bomford, Lyle & Elva Brown, Ron & Lil White, David Martin, Beth Mackay, Helen Wallace and Lyndall Boucher.

INVITATION TO ALL ASSOCIATES AND MEMBERS

Associates Meeting at Davistown R.S.L., Saturday, 2nd August, 11.30am, followed by lunch at the Bistro.

Expressions of interest to: Di Symon, Ph: (02) 9488 9778
Email: symonfamily@optusnet.com.au

WHERE HAVE THE YEARS GONE?

Our 'Family of Machine Gunners' extend to the following best wishes and congratulations for their birthdays, as follows:

Bob Fitzsimmons	90	on 25th August, 2008
Terry Geany	90	on 23 April, 2008
Bert Ridyard	91	on 4 August, 2007
Russ Sutherland	91	on 8 March, 2008

There is another event for our hearty congratulations and best wishes: Bill and Phyllis Harley celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary. They were married on St. Patrick's Day, 17th March, 1948. We wish them many more happy years together. Phyllis has had a bad time healthwise for some time but it is pleasing to report that she is well again now.

* * *

We had a very welcome Christmas card from Tom Rostron in the U.K. His wife, Mary, writes: "Tom does not have much of a life, but I'm OK we can look after him."

Many Machine Gunners visited Tom and Mary on their farm. They were most hospitable. Tom has been a regular financial member since the end of the war and this is appreciated. No doubt Tom would be thrilled to hear from any member who knew him. His address is: 2 Woodville Myerscough, Hall Drive, Billsborough, Preston U.K. PR3 OR3.

DO YOU TRASH OR TREASURE MUZZLE BLAST?

Thank you to the members who have replied and advised us that you would like to receive *Muzzle Blast* by mail and by email.

As a follow-up to this page in the last issue of *Muzzle Blast*, we would like all members, young and old, to continue to receive a copy of *Muzzle Blast*. Our intention is only to offer options for those members on our mailing list to have a choice:

1. Receive your copy of *Muzzle Blast* by email.
2. Continue to receive your copy of *Muzzle Blast* by mail.

If you haven't done so already, please let us know by email, phone or post to the following:

Email: symonfamily@optusnet.com.au

Phone: Di Symon, (02) 9488 9778 (or leave a message on answer machine)

Post: Di Symon, 12 Spurwood Road, Turramurra NSW 2074

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD (1872-1918), Canadian Army

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

McCrae's *In Flanders Fields* remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. It is a lasting legacy of the terrible battle in the Ypres salient in the spring of 1915. Here is the story of the making of that poem:

Although he had been a doctor for years and had served in the South African War, it was impossible to get used to the suffering, the screams, and the blood here, and Major John McCrae had seen and heard enough in his dressing station to last him a lifetime.

As a surgeon attached to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, Major McCrae, who had joined the McGill faculty in 1900 after graduating from the University of Toronto, had spent 17 days treating injured men — Canadians, British, Indians, French and Germans — in the Ypres salient.

It had been an ordeal that he had hardly thought possible. McCrae later wrote of it.

A REMINDER — ANZAC DAY

We seek your assistance by returning the enclosed proforma to our Treasurer, Denis Riley, or any member of the Committee as soon as possible. There is a tremendous amount of work involved in this important event, so your co-operation is vital to its successful organisation.

LAST POST

It is with sincere regret that we report the passing of former comrades:

RON ALLENDEN

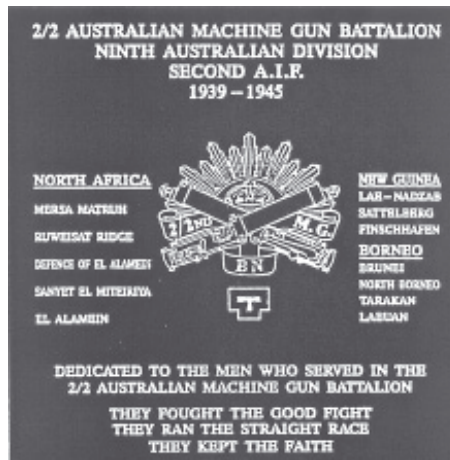
BILL WEBB

CHARLIE BIRRELL

Also: MRS. IRIS COCKRAM

To their families and friends, members of the Association extend deepest sympathy.

“They fought the good fight
They ran the straight race
They kept the Faith.”



LEST WE FORGET

ODE

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

The Ode is part of a very famous poem, *For the Fallen*, written by Laurance Binyon who served in France in WWI. He was born in England in 1869 and died in 1943.