



**22nd BATTALION ASSOCIATION
ECHO**

No 73

ANZAC DAY PILGRIMAGE MARCH 25 APRIL 2016

There will be a Pilgrimage March of active WW1 Unit Associations, including the 22nd Battalion, behind their Unit Banners to “Cobbers” Statue on the corner of St Kilda and Domain Roads where a short commemorative ceremony will be held.

Assembly is at 7:45 AM for commencement at 8 AM from behind the flagpoles on the east side of the Shrine forecourt. Marchers (not young children) should be respectively attired and available veteran’s Medals worn on the right breast.

All members of the 22nd Battalion Association and their families are encouraged to commemorate the sacrifice of the men and women of WW1 by participating and having regard to the

“ORDERED TO RETREAT”

The decision of the Anzac Day Commemoration Council (ADCC), chaired by Maj. Gen. David McLachlan, to again this year relegate WW1 descendants, representing their forebears, to the rear of March en masse and not behind their respective Unit Association Banners is inexplicable.

It is inexplicable in 2016, as it was in 2015, when the Centenary of WW1 is being commemorated to honour the men and women of the AIF and supporting contingents, that by their deeds were the genesis of Australia’s nationhood.

*Before Anzac Day 2015 and since, the 22nd Battalion Association, on behalf of its members, comprising more than 200 families, has made submissions to the Kindred Organisations and Unit Organisation (KO&UA) and the ADCC. **It has been submitted that the long-standing “Order of the March” be re-established, namely the WW1 Descendants of active Associations march at the front behind their Battalion Association Banners as did their forebears in the past.***

In the 13 October 2015 Minutes of the KO&UA meeting, it was reported that the ADCC had discussed the “prominent position of the descendants of WW1 service men and women” and that, paraphrasing, ‘the Governor was particularly keen to address WW1 descendants at the Shrine Service at the conclusion of the March.’ To ensure this it was decided to have the descendants in the last portion of the March. In the event, the Governor at the Service, made no specific reference to the descendants!!

Battalion Association: “As a high profile event of the Centenary of WW1 and in particular the involvement of the first AIF, the genesis of “ANZAC”, it seems reasonable that the descendants of these men would take precedence at the head of the March. To meet the Governor’s wish I proposed WW1 descendants gather at Federation Square before the March. Maj. Gen. McLachlan’s response was “not possible because of another commitment he (the Governor) has that morning”. The Governor’s Office has been unable to confirm this “desire” and the reason for descendants being at the rear of the 2015 March? It certainly has no relevance to this or subsequent years’ Marches.

*Succeeding my father Fred Russell, Honorary Secretary of the 22nd Battalion Association from 1920 to his death in 1978, it has been my commitment to fulfil the stated wishes of the surviving 22nd men at that time, **the continuity of the Association and the March by their descendants participating in it behind the 22nd Battalion Banner.***

That this desire of the original 22nd men and consistent with that of other active WW1 Battalion Associations, has been denied by the ADCC chaired by Maj. Gen. David McLachlan, is an affront to these wishes and the memory of those in WW1 that sacrificed “life and limb” for the greater cause of a World free of the then German tyranny.

The significance of the “Spirit of Anzac” has grown exponentially over recent years as reflected by the community, numbering tens of thousands, attending the Shrine Dawn Service and the Anzac Day March. This day is indeed “Australia’s Day” and the men



A revised edition of Eugene Gorman's "With the Twenty-Second" was published in 2001.

It includes the campaigns at Gallipoli, France and Belgium over the four years of WWI.

It also includes the Nominal Roll of 5000

MILITARY RECORDS

Records of WWI members of the AIF & embarkation ships are accessible on:

National Archives site

www.naa.gov.au

Citations, Unit diaries and photographs:

www.awm.gov.au

"Let us now praise famous men...." (Ecclesiasticus.)-22nd Battalion 1 AIF

"SIGNALLERS"

An army is comprised of many components and similarly at the Battalion level of which the "Signallers" are a vital part of the communications. As for the men in the other roles of infantry, artillery, stretcher-bearers and food provisioning the exposure to injury and death was ever present.

And so it was for the "signallers" as recounted by my father Fred Russell regarding events on 23 June 1916 near Armentieres: "For about an hour and a half the shelling lasted and then gradually died down. The worst of it was during the last 10 minutes during which time one German gun kept pounding away at our position. We could hear the guns fire then the shell coming and then the crash of the burst somewhere about our lines. This was easily the worst sensation of all to hear the shell coming over and then to have it burst right overhead.

During the bombardment our telephone line had been cut, so as soon as we could get out, McCormack and I set out to find the break and repair it. We had only gone out about 50 yards along the line and were up to our knees in long wet grass which covered old shell holes and barbed-wire, when the Hun opened up another bombardment more furious than the last. As we were without any cover or protection where we were we had to make a wild rush for the dugout again which we safely reached much to the relief of the chaps therein who were wondering if we had been caught by a shell. We were not exactly pleased to find out when we did get back that our trouble had been fruitless as we were still out of communication which meant we would be called out again to venture out to find it, a job we did not particularly relish.

So when again the opportunity offered out we went along the wire to repair breaks. This time we traversed over 200 yards along it repairing breaks and making it useable again when once again a bombardment started. This time we were well away from any cover at all, out in the middle of a grass paddock and the nearest cover a dugout about 150 yards away so we made a sprint for that. We made it safely. We later found our labours and scares had been rewarded and that communications had been established."

Great nephew of Fred Russell, Peter Hemphill, has written an article about 22nd Battalion signallers McCartin and Le Maitre extracts of which follow.

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Broadmeadows Camp March 1915

*Back Centre-Fred Russell
Back Right Alex Le Maitre*

*Centre Left—Charles
Lusby,
Second Left -
Leo McCartin*

Front Right-R. Roddo

Alex and Leo's group of signallers included another 19-year-old, Fred Russell, 20-year-old Charles Lusby and the "father" of the group Jack Malcolm, who, at 37, was nearly twice the age of his new-found-mates.

The 22nd Battalion signallers landed at Gallipoli on August 30, 1915. All five signallers survived Gallipoli and went on to Europe.

Alex was promoted to Lance-Corporal on May 1, 1916, almost a year after embarking on the HMAT Ulysses on May 8, 1915, bound for Egypt. His luck ran out at Pozieres, one of the deadliest battles for Australian soldiers in France. On August 5, Alex was killed, but initially reported missing. But Leo McCartin knew the truth and it hit him very hard as well.

In a letter to Kitty Russell, Fred Russell's sister, at Rupanyup, he wrote on September 2, 1916, "I suppose Fred has given you the news of our doings lately. They take a lot of telling, especially our last move, 'big push'. I hardly like commenting of it at all. It was all so deadly. Fancy the first of our old tent pals gone. Alex Le Maitre, my best pal. Don't ask me to speak about it. I'm so sorry, as we all are. But we must cheer up and take what comes."

Alex was buried near where he fell at Pozieres.

Leo was promoted to Lieutenant on November 22, 1916, just after a particular incident of gallantry. During battle at Rue de Bois Salient in France on June 22, 1916, he was awarded the Military Cross for "conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty" for re-pairing telephone lines in a heavily bombarded area to enable communication between the front-line and battalion headquarters. On August 24, 1918, he was wounded twice near Villers-Bretonneux and despite ordered to withdraw tried to re-join his men and was killed.

Like his good mate Alex Le Maitre, Leo McCartin was buried near where he fell in the battlefields of France."

*Fred Russell on returning to the Battalion after hospitalisation in England for wounds stated:-
" Alex Le Maitre, I noticed was not to be seen and on asking of him was told he was killed....As Alex and I had been mates in civil life before we joined the AIF and to be suddenly told of his death was a severe shock to me"*

IFR

THE BATTALION'S BULLECOURT 1917

“The Battle of Bullecourt occupies an unique place in the Battalion’s annals. For no other struggle had the preparations been so complete, the rehearsals so thorough, or the general organisation so apparently perfect. Yet, within a few minutes of the commencement, the combat developed into a pell-mell of violent hand-to-hand struggles, where the 6th Australian Infantry Brigade met the “flower” of the German Army, and beat it into quiescence.”

As Capt. Eugene Gorman MC, author of “With The Twenty-Second” quoted above and paraphrasing said ‘It was in every sense, a Brigade and not a Battalion battle when men of all four Battalions (21,



Bullecourt Cemetery-3rd Division Memorial

The battle commenced at 3:45 AM on 3 May 1917 and counter attacks were numerous. The Kaiser himself had selected the opposing German troops, the “Cockchafers” and Prussian Guardsmen who found the Australian Brigade “ their match”.



Lt. Greig who died of wounds sustained in the Noruuil sunken road.

After intense fighting the 6th Brigade captured almost half of its objective in the Hindenburg line , the main German defence line.

Capt. Kennedy (22nd) with a fraction of his men that had survived the initial assault was met with German bombs and the ensuing fight resulted in further trench being won. He was reinforced by Lts. Thwaites and Braithwaite (22nd), Jennings (21st) and other men. The fighting was fierce and Braithwaite was wounded in both arms.

Jennings had the fingers of his left hand blown off but they both continued fighting. A related attack was lead by Sgt. Arblaster (21st) and Cpl. O'Neill (22nd).

In twenty-four hours the 22nd’s casualties numbered 16 Officers and 422 other ranks, of these 50 per cent were killed or missing. In the two battles of Bullecourt four Australian Divisions suffered 10,000 casualties, roughly 3000 in the first and 7000 in the second.



6th Brigade Staff

As C.W.E.Bean, author of WW1 official history recorded: “The Second Bullecourt was the most brilliant of these achievements, impressing enemy and friends alike; it was in someways, the stoutest achievement of the Australian soldier in France, carried through against the stubbornest enemy that ever faced him there.”

German Crown Prince Rupprecht in his diary entry 5 May 1917 records: “According to unanimous descriptions from the front, the English troops show themselves far less tough to repulse than formerly, with the exception of the Canadians and Australians, who are on all sides praised for their bravery and skill in making use of the ground”.

*Bullecourt, more than any other battle, shook the confidence of Australian soldiers in the capacity of the British command; the errors, especially on 10 April and 11th, were obvious to almost everyone...**Such success as they had achieved had been won by troops persisting, through the sheer quality of their mettle, in the face of errors.***

NEW WORLD WAR 1 GALLERIES



Parliament House from Australian War Memorial

The galleries at the Australian War Memorial Canberra depict the role of Australia from 1914-1918 in major theatres including Gallipoli; The Western Front ; Sinai and Palestine and the war at sea.

The exhibits are extensive and are equal to others in the world including the British War Museum London, visited recently.

Dioramas portray dramatically the battle scenes on the Western Front and integrate a wide variety of items including uniforms; medals as well as artillery pieces and firearms. There are numerous photographs; film and personal items such as letters and diaries.



Western Front battle field diorama

Member Badge

The Member Badge below can be cut-out and inserted in a plastic holder available from most Stationers

The badge can be worn at the Anzac Day March and other appropriate occasions.



There are 13 WW1 dioramas in the National Collection of which 10 are displayed. These include desert campaigns of "Semakh" and "Desert Patrol" the latter depicting a light horse patrol in the Sinai desert. "Semakh" shows the action of 25 September 1918 when the 11th Light Horse Regiment attacked the village of Semehk in Palestine.



Anzac Cove Gallipoli-aftermath

A feeling of *Deja Vu* is experienced when viewing this photo and the reality brought home by the nearby genuine landing boat, in which troops were towed in to shore by transport ships, to disembark for the historic landing, now pivotal to Australia's heritage.



Restored landing boat

In Flanders Fields

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 high.*

*If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow*



Australian War Memorial -wall of names of the fallen with commemorating poppies.