

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018

Good Afternoon. Welcome to the 2018 Annual General Meeting of the PIB/NGIB/HQ/PIR Association.

BACKGROUND ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES 2017/2018

The years 2017 and 2018 have been particularly busy ones for ALL Committee members and their families, both throughout Queensland and interstate. I wish to thank them all sincerely. On Tuesday, 8 August 2017 we commemorated the 75th Anniversary of the Kokoda Campaign. Much effort in the planning, liaison and execution by all ensured that the Kokoda Day Commemoration Service conducted at the Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall, Cascade Gardens, Broadbeach, QLD., supported by our Association was an outstanding success.

This Kokoda Day Commemoration Service celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the defence of Kokoda, PNG, 8-10 August, 1942 by the 39th Australian Infantry Battalion and the Papuan Infantry Battalion.

It was significant that representatives from the 2/14th, 39th and 2/16th Battalions attended this Memorial Service with us.

Our Patron, Major General "Hori" Howard, AO, MC, ESM, delivered a most positive, honest and detailed address on this vital campaign to all who were fortunate enough to attend this historic Commemoration. As your President, I addressed the audience on the significant background planning and execution of the Kokoda Memorial Wall, which was undertaken by the sculptor David Yardley.

In recognition of his outstanding efforts in producing the Kokoda Memorial Wall in such great detail, I presented him with a framed Life Membership Certificate on behalf of our Association. Two new pavers were installed for two former AIF NCO's who served in PNG. The Commemoration Service was followed by a most enjoyable luncheon at the Surfer's Paradise RSL, during which our Secretary, Kev Horton, excelled as MC.

INTERSTATE REPRESENTATION 26th and 28th August, 2017 – MELBOURNE AND CANBERRA

On the 26th August, 2017 at the invitation of the Presidents of the 39th, 2/14th and 2/16th Battalions I, as your President, together with your Vice-President, Greg Ivey, represented our Association at a most impressive Kokoda Memorial Service. This was conducted at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, which was attended by the State Governor of Victoria, our former Patron, Major General the Honourable Michael Jeffery, AC, CVO, MC, Chief of Army LT General Angus Campbell CSC, (whose father was a Major who served with PIR in the 60's!) together with many other local dignitaries. Several of our interstate Members were also present at the Service, including veteran Sgt Don Collins of 2 NGIB.

On behalf of our Association I laid a beautiful fresh flower wreath in our Regimental colours of red and green at the Cenotaph. Our Association attendance was much appreciated by all local participants. This solemn Memorial Service was followed by the Official Lunch at the RACV Club, Bourke Street, which was addressed by Major General Jeffery on the significance and history of the Kokoda Campaign.

Greg Ivey arranged a most relaxed and enjoyable luncheon for our Association members at the famous "Chloe's" Restaurant in the historic Young and Jackson's Hotel in Flinders Street.

CANBERRA 28th August 2017

On behalf of our Association, Vice President, Greg Ivey attended a Memorial Service at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, in honour of Lt. A. A. Smith (PIB). A Wreath was laid for our Association.

VISIT TO THE SOUTHPORT SCHOOL (TSS), QLD. 18th October, 2017

As previously reported in detail, I represented the Association together with my wife, at The Southport School (TSS) annual cadet passing out parade and dinner after which we were able to meet PNG students.

PRESENTATION TO PROBUS CLUB MEMBERS, SANCTUARY COVE 23RD April, 2018

As your President and a Veteran, I was invited to address a PROBUS CLUB luncheon prior to ANZAC Day, 2018 to outline some military experiences 1953 – 1983, including PIR and PNG. Some 65 members

attended. Written aspects of my address were provided by the PROBUS CLUB Secretary, a copy of which has been passed to our editor, Ian Ogston for information.

ANZAC DAY, BRISBANE 2018

At 0930hrs, prior to our march I, Greg Ivey and Kev Horton together with our wives and members of our Association conducted the annual Wreath Laying ceremony at the PNG bronze memorial in ANZAC SQUARE. Christine Ivey again provided a beautiful wreath for our ceremony.

Before our ceremony I noted some eight PNG ladies were searching for this PNG memorial. I invited them in (1967 Pidgin) to participate with us and represent PNG – which they accepted gladly. See photos in *Armi Nius* edited by Ian Ogston. Of significance was their uplifting singing of the PNG National Anthem – very moving for all. It is hoped that they and other PNG Nationals will attend our future wreath laying ceremonies at the PNG Memorial.

At 1100hrs our Association members participated at No 52 in the ANZAC order of march, Brisbane, while Greg Ivey led the 2/14th Battalion Association. Our Association Banner was again proudly carried by our former Patron Sgt Frank Wust's sons, Ian and Noel.

THE OFFICIAL NAMING OF THE SGT. FRANK WUST BRIDGE, 21ST June 2018

This morning we were all privileged to attend the official naming ceremony of the Sgt Frank Wust Bridge at Caboolture, QLD. Frank was our former President and Veteran of the PIB and NGIB.

Our Association and the Wust family members are most grateful to Secretary Kev Horton for his personal persistence and efforts over two years dealing with bureaucracy to achieve this bridge naming ceremony.

WARNING ORDER – FORTHCOMING 8 August 2018 KOKODA DAY CELEBRATIONS AT CASCADE GARDENS

The Commemoration in 2018 will not be co-ordinated by the Surfers Paradise RSL. as confirmed to our Association by their new President, but by Southport RSL. We have lost a great supporter, Alan Whelan, who has departed the Gold Coast and now resides in Victoria. His loyalty, co-ordination and contacts with the execution of this commemoration will be missed.

FUTURE COMMEMORATIONS AT THE KOKODA MEMORIAL

It is anticipated that future Kokoda Commemorations at the Cascade Gardens Memorial will be co-ordinated with the support of the Southport RSL and Major George Friend (39th Batt. Assn.). George is presently overseas until 7 July 2018, but planning is being undertaken pending his return. It is hoped our Patron, Major General Hori Howard will again be able to attend.

THANKS TO OUR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

Thank you for your attendance at our 2018 AGM. I am grateful for your loyal and positive support throughout this extremely busy year. I wish to place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation for the outstanding efforts of all Committee Members especially Vice President Greg Ivey and Secretary/Treasurer Kev Horton.

Major Donald Graham
President