



President John Denman, Secretary Rob Crossing, Editor Ed Willis

OCTOBER 2018

69TH ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE



Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, 3pm, Sunday 18 November 2018

Association members, their families, friends and other supporters are reminded and encouraged to attend this year's commemoration ceremony.

The ceremony will again be live streamed online for those that cannot attend and for later viewing. Save the link and make sure you subscribe to our YouTube channel while you're there: <u>https://live.doublereds.org.au/</u>

Association Vice-President, Ed Willis will give the address at the service.

AFTER THE COMMEMORATION SERVICE ...

The committee of the 2/2 Commando Association also invites you for a drink, a bite to eat and a chat at the Captain Stirling Hotel.

We expect the ceremony to finish at around 4pm. Drinks will be from 4.15pm.

Hope you can join us.

Venue: Captain Stirling Hotel, 80 Stirling Highway, Nedlands in the alcove section of the bar.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Association was held at Rob Crossing's offices in Nedlands at 6pm on Wednesday 10 October. In the election of officers, John Denman was elected President, replacing Peter Epps and Ed Willis was elected Vice-President. Rob Crossing continues as Secretary as does Colleen Thornton-Ward as Treasurer. Geoff Payne, Noel Strickland, John Burridge, Louis Crossing and Murray Thornton were joined on the committee by new members Sharon Paul, Martin Morris and John Cramb.

Resolutions of thanks was passed recognising Peter's outstanding service as President over the last three years and to David Pass for his long term 'pro bono' auditing of the Association accounts.

NEW ASSOCIATION PATRON – Hon. Alannah MacTiernan MLC



Outgoing President Peter Epps also announced at the AGM that the Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC had accepted the Association's invitation to become its Patron. Ms MacTiernan replaces Malcolm James McCusker AC, CVO, QC former Governor of WA in that capacity.

Alannah has been involved with the 2/2 since becoming inspired by the unit's exploits in the



1970's. She joined the Friends of East Timor in 1994 and has been a volunteer in East Timor on several occasions. Alannah has also been involved with the East Timor Guest Worker Program in Broome and continues to be a keen supporter of our association and of the people of Timor-Leste.

VALE - Frederick (Fred) Alfred OTWAY, (1920-2018) - WX12171





Members and supporters of 2/2 Commando Association of Australia were saddened to learn that one of the last three surviving members of the 2/2, Fred Otway, passed away in Brisbane on the 3 April 2018 aged 97 years.

Born in Pingelly, W.A., Fred was an original member of the unit and served in No. 1 Section, A Platoon throughout the campaign in Portuguese Timor. He was promoted to Corporal before the end of the campaign. Deployed to New Guinea with the 2/2 in 1943, Fred left in June 1944 along with several other men to serve with the Z Special Unit, and after training, was based in Darwin. As a Sergeant, Fred participated in three Z Special operations to Portuguese Timor in mid-1945.

Post-war Fred undertook a government sponsored training course and qualified as a painter and decorator and worked in that trade for the Queensland Government until he retired. He was an active member of the Queensland branch of the Association, from the beginning to the end, and he and his wife Ellen participated in all the safaris and reunions, including the special trip back to Portuguese Timor for the opening of the Dare Memorial Pool and Resting Place in 1969. He was a regular correspondent to the 'Courier' and contributed several interesting articles related to his personal life, family history and wartime experiences. In August 2012 Fred along with Keith Hayes was invited by the Department of Veterans Affairs to be a member of the Commemorative Mission Timor-Leste for the 70th Anniversary of the Timor Campaign.

The Committee extends its condolences to Fred Otway's family, salutes his service to the nation during WWII and recognises his supportive involvement with the old Association from its beginning to the end.

A fuller account of Fred Otway's life can be found on the Doublereds website: <u>https://doublereds.org.au/forums/topic/149-vale-frederick-fred-alfred-otway-1920-1998-wx12171/?tab=comments#comment-245</u>

LEST WE FORGET

VALE - Keith Mortimer HAYES, OAM (1921-2018) - WX12317



Following news of the passing of Fred Otway, members and supporters of the 2/2 Commando Association of Australia were further saddened by the passing of Keith Mortimer Hayes OAM on 23 August. Keith was also an original member of the 2/2 and a stalwart of the old Association of which he was made a life member in 1988; he was 97 years of age.

Details of Keith's war service and awards, including his remarkable survival of the Ration Truck Massacre, can be found the Doublereds website:

https://doublereds.org.au/history/men-ofthe-22/wx/keith-mortimer-hayes-r335/



In 2007, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community of Timor-Leste through the Independent Trust of the 2/2nd Commando Association, and to veterans and their families.

There was a large turnout at Keith's funeral at Karrakatta Cemetery on 30 August. Proceedings at the service were opened by His Excellency Abel Guterres, Timor-Leste's Ambassador to Australia, who paid his personal tribute and then read a message of condolence from his government: <u>http://timor-leste.gov.tl?lang=en&p=20331</u>

Association President Peter Epps noted on his passing that: 'Keith spent many years helping to raise and send goods, school equipment, seeds and money to Timor and that is the main reason for his Life Membership of the Association. He did not like the lime light especially about his war service and injuries he was one of the last gentlemen of that era'.

LEST WE FORGET

John (Jack) Trelease HANSON (1921-) -WX12804 - THE 'LAST MAN STANDING'



With the passing of these two men, only one member of the 2/2 remains alive; 'the last man standing' is John (Jack) Hanson who now resides in Hervey Bay, Queensland. Jack, also an 'original', served on Timor and celebrated his 97th birthday on the 9th August. He is in reasonably good health and still vividly recalls events that occurred on Timor during the 1942 campaign against the Japanese.

Members of Jack's family published a memoir of his life and wartime experiences in 2014 titled 'The White Ghost' (see https://doublereds.org.au/files/JackHanson-TheWhiteGhost.pdf). The following extract shows how his nick name came about:

"Our method of fighting was watching and waiting for the Japs to come out and wind their way through the hills. They'd get nice and exhausted, we are watching them quietly, very quietly and they're going back down the hills and then suddenly some rotten Aussie bastard jumps out and goes bang, bang, bang, bang and about six of them are dead just like that.

They'd go on a bit further and another group gets the next lot of them. They just couldn't see us. We were called the White Ghosts by the locals. My wife Val always says when I'm in the house she can't hear me. I still walk quietly. It never leaves you".

New Association committee member, Martin Morris, is Jack's nephew.

DARE MEMORIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Concern was expressed to Peter Roberts, the Australian Ambassador to Timor-Leste about the deteriorating state of the Dare memorial site by the Association after members of the Timor 1942 Commando Campaign tour when they visited there in late April. Recently completed road works have made the memorial plinth and associated plaques on the upper level even more vulnerable to damage by vehicles.



Many thanks to Peter and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel for the 'spruceup' of the site in time for the wreath laying ceremony there during former Foreign Minister Julie Bishop's visit to Dili on 31 July. Peter has also arranged for informal working bees by



Embassy and ADF staff to do occasional cleanups there in future.

The long term future of the memorial site is being considered by the Timor-Leste government in consultation with our Ambassador in the context of planning for the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary next year of the landing of INTERFET. On 20 September 1999, INTERFET, the Australian army-led, UN-sanctioned military force, landed in East Timor to counter the activities of the armed militias and attempt to restore peace after the independence referendum.

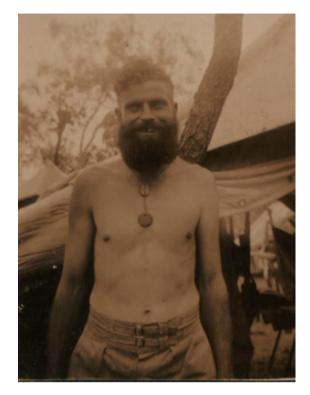
VIQUEQUE MEMORIAL INAUGURATION

On 24 August, Brigadier Falur Rate Laek, a key Timorese resistance fighter and now Chief of Staff of the Timor Defence Force inaugurated a memorial on a hill top in Viqueque in the Loihuno area located between Viqueque and Ossu. The new memorial includes plaques honouring both the local Timorese veterans who campaigned against the Indonesians and the Australian and Timorese members of 'H' Force and Z Force who also operated in the area during WW2.



Australian War Memorial historian Brad Manera wrote the following brief history of H Force:

"As a precaution against Japanese retaliation for their guerrilla activities, Sparrow Force created a small reconnaissance unit, codenamed "H", to operate in the eastern end of the island. This detachment of 10 men was initially commanded by Lieutenant Gerry McKenzie, with Lieutenant Col Doig as his second-in-command. During the August fighting McKenzie was reassigned, leaving Doig to lead H force to Viqueque.



Lieutenant Col Doig during the Timor campaign

From Viqueque, members of H force explored the villages, roads and paths of the eastern provinces. They also gathered foodstuffs (paid for with promissory notes) to supplement the dwindling supplies held by Sparrow Force. An urgent call from Darwin led to them recruiting 1,000 locals to gather sisal to make rope, and shortly afterwards 100 pony loads of rope were despatched to headquarters, and thence to Australia.

One of H force's most famous exploits was the rescue of a downed and badly burned RAAF pilot, Flying Officer S. G. Wadey, who had parachuted from his damaged Hudson bomber into an area between the Australians and Japanese. The Timorese had taken him to a town east of Dili. In order to collect Wadey, Doig and a couple of his team undertook an epic journey, along near impassable tracks, battling uncooperative Portuguese administrators and disaffected Dutch troops. They survived an equally hazardous return trip, during which they had to negotiate a river crossing after a vital bridge north of Viqueque was blown up by the Dutch. Wadey survived and was later evacuated to Australia".

Between 1943-45 several Z Force parties (Lizard, Portolizard, Lagarto, Sunlag and Suncob) also



conducted clandestine intelligence gathering operations against the Japanese in that region of south east Timor.

There is overlap in many sites where significant events occurred relating to the 1942 commando campaign, the Timorese resistance to the Indonesian occupation and Australian peacekeeping operations. The Viqueque installation could be the forerunner of similar memorials at other significant sites

MEN OF THE 2/2 – You Can Add Further Information

https://doublereds.org.au/history/men-of-the-22/

'Men of the 2/2' is a searchable database on the Doublereds website that contains individual records for all the men who served with the unit. Peter Epps has recently completed adding the final records to the database; we thank Peter for his dedication to this task.

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In many cases, however, only brief information has been recorded. Members and supporters are invited to submit additional material that they may have regarding individual soldiers such as stories (particularly of their wartime experiences), photos and other documentation; a key objective is to get a photo of every unit member. The photos of Fred Otway, Keith Hayes and Jack Hanson featured above were all derived from this source.

We strongly encourage anyone with extra information or contributions to add to this database to get in touch with us via the Men of the 2/2 forum (https://doublereds.org.au/forums/forum/21<u>men-of-the-22/</u>) or add a comment to the relevant item, if a comments section is available.

HISTORY OF THE LOVEKIN DRIVE MEMORIAL AND THE ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE

With the Association's 69th Annual Commemoration Service approaching on November 18, 2018 it's timely to recall the history of the Commemoration Service and how the Unit's dedicated memorial area on Lovekin Drive in Kings Park was established.

The first Commemoration Service was held on 26 February 1950. The earlier services were held in late February as it was on the 19 February 1942 the Unit first saw action and suffered its first casualties. This changed when the hot February weather began to affect attendances. The old Association finally settled for the third Sunday in November.

Col Doig, doyen and historian of the old Association recalled:

"Shortly after the formation of the Unit Association, memorial trees became available in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, on which plaques honouring the dead of Units in the War of 1939-45 could be attached. The 2/2nd Association applied for and was granted 47 trees in a solid block in Lovekin Drive, although the war dead of the Unit was 50.

The Public Service Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. were wardens of the whole of the Memorial Drive in Kings Park. It was through the good offices of this great R.S.L. Branch that the Association was able to obtain a block and it is understood this is the only block of its type in Kings Park.

The Lovekin Drive area was dedicated with a ceremony on the 5th December 1948 by Bishop Malone in the presence of



many dignitaries, including the then Governor, the late Sir James Mitchell. Our Association was represented by 50 members and the plaques were laid by the then President, the late Jack Denman.

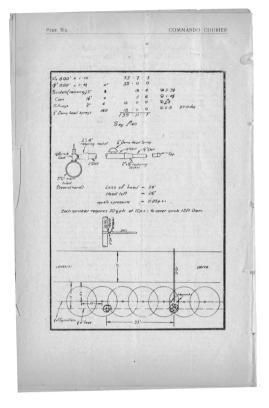
West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), Monday 6 December 1948, page 10



From that time the Unit Association has worked diligently to make a truly great memorial of this special hallowed area. Over the years the area has been lifted to its present pristine outlook. Grass has been grown after much effort and the whole area reticulated and properly kerbed.

Tremendous effort by members of the Association has been required to bring about this remarkable effect. For many years the whole of the maintenance, watering, mowing, fertilising was carried out by Association members until Anno Domini crept up and the Kings Park Board kindly took over the full maintenance of the area.

Our own memorial was erected in 1966. A large granite stone was obtained and one of our special bronze Honour Rolls was attached, making an ideal, but not too conspicuous memorial. It is at this spot each year that our Commemoration Service is held".



Original sprinkler diagram for Lovekin Drive from the Courier February 1954

If any members or supporters have photos or film of the early commemoration services or working bees at the memorial site, they would make welcome additions to the Doublereds Gallery

(<u>https://doublereds.org.au/gallery/catego</u> <u>ry/2-association/</u>).

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS AND PRODUCTS FOR SALE

Remember, new Association memberships and renewals, digital books and memorabilia are available for purchase from the Doublereds Store: <u>https://doublereds.org.au/store/</u>



Doublereds pin available from the Store (\$20 + \$5 postage)

Association memberships and Doublereds pins will also be available for purchase at the Commemoration Service.

