

# Thumbs Up 2022

The Annual Newsletter of the  
2/20th Battalion Association

[www.secondtwentieth.org.au](http://www.secondtwentieth.org.au)



[2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion](#)

## 2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association President's Report 2022

On the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the Last Post Ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial Canberra honoured Private James Gardner Ceely NX876 and Private Kenneth Mathers Ceely NX879, brothers and members of the 2/20<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, both Killed in Action on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 1942. At that ceremony our Association was represented by Bev Cockle and Marlene James, the daughters of the above men, as well as Peter and Kathy Salter, Stewart and Jane Thompson and son James Thompson, Suzanne Tranter, my wife Wendy and myself. In all there were eight wreaths laid, one each by Bev and Marlene, one each by family members of Bev and Marlene, one by Suzanne and her daughter Fiona Daw, one by Peter and Kathy and one by Wendy and I, and one by a young woman (Anna) who I spoke to after the service.

I asked her what her connection was to the Ceely brothers. Anna said she was visiting the Australian War Memorial to pay her respects to a relative and to view his medal. I asked who that was, her reply was Edward "Teddy" Sheean, the 101<sup>st</sup> Victoria Cross recipient. Anna is his great niece and came up from Tasmania. Anna was invited to lay a wreath at this ceremony to honour him also. I felt this was an amazing coincidence as I mentioned in last year's report of a family member of Cameron Baird Victoria Cross and Medal for Gallantry, the 100<sup>th</sup> recipient of the Victoria Cross who attended last years last Post Ceremony and laid a wreath. The lady was also from Tasmania.



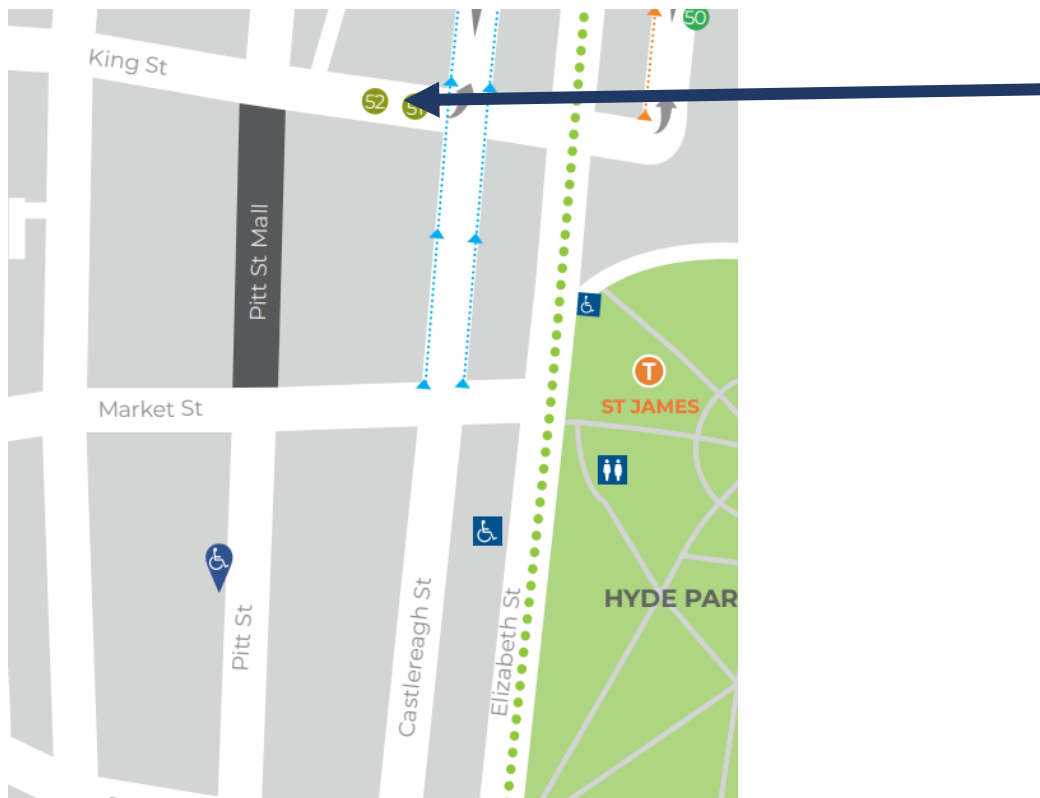
Prior to attending the Last Post Ceremony Wendy and I visited the Royal Military College, Duntroon. We drove around the streets for a look at the college and its grounds. We then came across Changi Chapel located in the northern section of the college. It is sited on a grass clearing with large established eucalyptus trees. It is open to the public. This is the original Roman Catholic Chapel that was located at Changi POW Camp in Singapore. Within their first week of the camp, Catholic soldiers agitated for a Chapel. Lieutenant Hugh Simon-Thwaites and a team of volunteer POWs constructed the chapel. Over 15 months, the chapel evolved to its final form using materials pinched from local buildings. A garden was also laid out around the chapel. Following the Japanese surrender in 1945, Corporal Max Lee of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, gained permission to save the Chapel. Corporal Lee took photographs and prepared drawings and sketches of the Chapel before it was dismantled. It was shipped to Australia in 1947.

Changi Chapel was reconstructed at the Royal Military College at Duntroon by the Royal Australian Engineers Corps in 1988, the anniversary of prisoners being informed that World War 2 had ended. Sir Edward (Weary) Dunlop dedicated the chapel as a National Memorial to over 35,000 Australian POWs from the Boer War, World War 1, World War 2 and the Korean War. This is worth a visit.



## ANZAC DAY 2022

As there are no surviving original members of the 2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion, RSL NSW has advised that descendants of veterans are permitted to march in the “Descendant” section. Descendants that wish to march should meet at the area designated shown in the map on the following page (Pitt St, between Martin Place and Hunter Street). We will group close to the intersection of King and Castlereagh Streets at 10.00am.



**The post march lunch will be held at the Tattersalls Club, 181 Elizabeth St, Sydney. Pre lunch drinks will be available from 12.30pm.**

**For those attending the Anzac Day 2022 Lunch, please complete and return the attached form with your payment **NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022.****

## 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore at the Sydney Cenotaph

The RSL NSW held a commemoration service at the Sydney Cenotaph at Martin Place, Sydney for the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore. This service was well attended by representatives of Various 8<sup>th</sup> Division Units. There were fourteen 2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association members in attendance. I laid a wreath on behalf of our Association. Bev Cockle, Marlene James, Peter Salter, Phil Ward, Janet Rowlands, Ron Ferguson, Suzanne Tranter, the Tweedie Brothers, Geoff, Graham and John, John Fisk, myself and my wife Wendy had lunch at the Barracks on Barrack Street RSL Club following the service.

Dennis Baker

President

2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association



## Item of Interest No. 1

### Singapore General Hospital.

At the Kranji War Memorial, a small monument is discretely located at the eastern end of the Singapore Memorial. The Singapore Civil Hospital Grave Memorial lists the names of 107 allied soldiers buried in a grave at the Singapore General Hospital.

In the final hours of the Battle of Singapore, wounded soldiers and civilians were brought to the hospital. The number of fatalities were such that an emergency water tank built before the war, was used as a grave.

After the war, the graves from military cemeteries from around Singapore were removed and the remains reburied at the Kranji War Cemetery. However, in the case of the hospital grave site, it was felt that individual identification of the 400 plus dead buried there, would be impossible and consequently, the grave was left undisturbed. The ground was consecrated as a cemetery and a large cross (photo below) was erected on this site.

Today, amongst the hospital buildings and car parks, the cross remains as a solemn and lonely salute to those buried there.

The 2/20<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion has a serviceman buried there who died of wounds on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 1942, Private Wilkie Noel Phillips NX73665, aged 27 years.



## Item of Interest No. 2

The following are extracts from the Second Two Nought Weekly Bulletin of the 2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion A.I.F. Malaya. Authorised by Colonel W. D. Jeater C.O. Sponsored by the 2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Social Activities Committee. Passed by Censor Officer H.Q. A.I.F. Malaya for transmission through the Post to Australia. Editor and Manager Private F. ("Joe") Wilson NX53925. Dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 1941.

### Latest News from Aussie

(Culled from H.Q. Bulletins)

#### Half Australia hears Menzies.

It is estimated that 3,500,000 Australians listened to Mr. Menzies broadcast last Wednesday night, including theatre audiences. Road and telephone traffic diminished during the time he spoke.

#### Extension of enlistment ages.

There are now 1,207,230 men in Australia of military age between the ages of 19 and 40. Air Minister McEwen said age limits for enlistment in certain branches of R.A.A.F. ground staff would soon be increased.

#### Farm labour shortage

The shortage of labour is becoming more serious on farms and stations in NSW as recruiting in country districts increases. The question is raised of how far female labour can be used in some rural occupations.

#### Every little helps

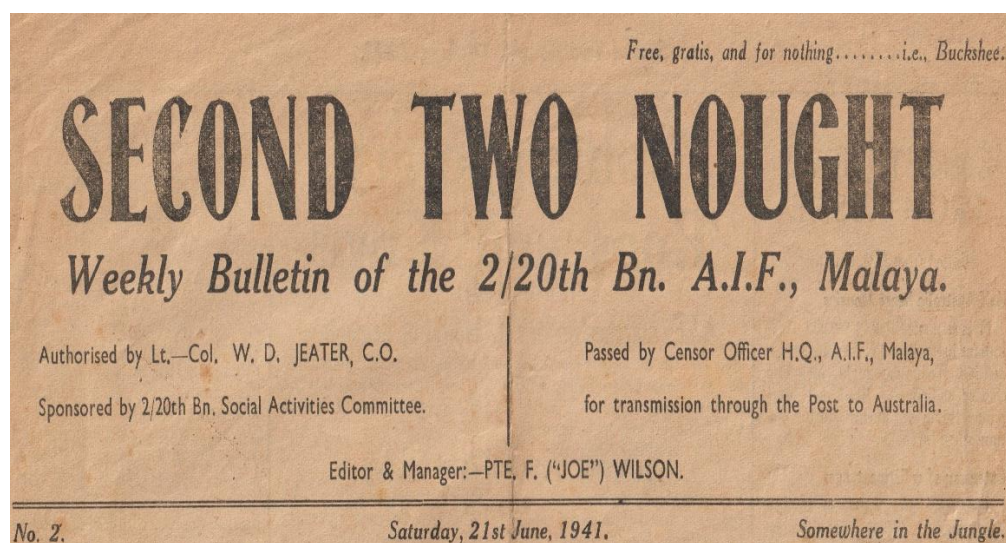
In Victoria the Comforts Fund are planning to enroll one million penny weekly contributors.

#### Munitioneers work through holiday

The King's Birthday was the quietest holiday yet. Munition workers did not knock off.

#### Home folk short of smokes

Despite promises of a further supply of tobacco, Melbourne went cigarette-less last Tuesday.



The following prayer was composed by Private John Nichols NX29590 of the 2/20<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, a Prisoner of War in Changi Gaol and in C Force at Naoetsu 04-B Camp. Private Nichols did not return home.

### My Prayer

I pray that I be spared to see,  
The things that life holds dear to me.  
That when this living death is o'er  
I may return to me native shore.

To hear a mother's sweet and loving voice  
Of wife's embrace, o'er children dear rejoice  
The joys of home, so long denied to me  
As through a mist, a hope I see

I see again the hills, the plains  
The quiet streams  
The country lane  
The homestead nestled in a valley of air

This is My prayer,  
I hope that God will grant my pleas  
That all I ask be given to me  
That in itself will make this duration vile  
A lesson that been worthwhile.

## ANZAC DAY 2022

Please complete this form and return with your payment. Details below.

Member's name			
Member's address			
Member's e-mail address			
Member's phone number			
Invited Family / Friends Guests			
Dietary requirements			
<b>Anzac Day Lunch 2022</b>			
2 course lunch (including select beverages)	\$75.00	<i>Per head</i>	\$
Association Membership	\$10.00		\$
Donations (thankfully received)			\$
Singapore & Beyond (incl postage)	\$27.50	<i>2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion history</i>	\$
Battalion Badge (incl postage)	\$10.00		\$
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$</b>

**RSVP NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

Payment can be made to the Treasurer by either cheque or electronic bank transfer. When making electronic payments, please show as reference your surname and number of people attending, for example "LUNCH BAKER 2".

**Cheque Payments**

Mail to:  
The Treasurer  
2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association  
PO Box 299  
COWRA NSW 2794

**Electronic payments**

2/20<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association  
BSB: 032 820 (Westpac, Cowra)  
Account number: 132670

e-mail [jameskeady@keady.com.au](mailto:jameskeady@keady.com.au)

Mobile 0427 312 402

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ANZAC DAY LUNCH, PLEASE CONTACT ANNETTE BUGITTI (LYNCH) AT [abugitti@gmail.com](mailto:abugitti@gmail.com) OR DENNIS BAKER AT [dennis.wendy@bigpond.com](mailto:dennis.wendy@bigpond.com)**