

## DOBBIN'S DAUGHTER REMEMBERS

Assistant Secretary Heather Stone's report to Captain Colin Bartholomew on November 3 Shrine of Remembrance Commemoration ceremony. I'm not sure how an ex-moratorium peace marcher got conned into writing something "stirring" for a Regimental Journal. I still remember clocking off early at Victoria Barracks at lunch time to sneak into the vanguard of the demonstrators. I can only say in exculpation, (as everyone says) "Blame Shorty!" My dad was a farmer, a Light Horseman, a Thirty Niner, a Cavalry man and a Commando. Dobbin they nick-named him. He left behind a small farm in Tassie to fight the enemy, see the world, have adventures, defend his heritage (for us), and to do the things that brave and honourable young men have done from time immemorial. He was one of the lucky ones. He left a brother in New Guinea but he and another brother returned to the farm. Without doubt he returned a different person from the lad who set off on the road to Ingleburn and beyond, but, growing up we knew little of this and appreciated less. Dad's "war stories", old army mates, re-unions and Anzac Day marches were just another accepted part of our routines. Only after he had gone did we even begin to realize how little we knew of those days and those times, and it was a serendipitous accident that saw a family member stumble across the 2/6 Division Cavalry Association's website and a sticky "web" proved indeed as we all somehow ended up becoming stuck! eer, "army volunteered" into its growth. And that is also the reason I attended, for the very first time, the annual Remembrance Service, gathered beneath the "Unit Tree" in Melbourne's beautiful Domain beside the forecourt of The Shrine.

The gathering is to celebrate the formation of the Regiment at Ingleburn on 3 November 1939. It is not to celebrate War; in fact I have met very few former warriors who have good words to say about war. It celebrates instead the intensity of the comradeship and the bonding of these more than 2000 young men who went away and faced the fire just as members of Second Cavalry Regiment are doing to this very day. It remembers the fallen and reaffirms the pride in having done something few Australians actually do...serving our country. In memories those events are still only a yesterday away. I wish I had known about it years earlier. So few brave old men left now with a growing sprinkling of relatives and friends keeping the numbers from appearing pitiful. Putting faces to names. They were magnificent. I felt so proud of them, and when the wreaths were laid

and the Vale was read, followed by the Ode, unaccustomed tears filled my eyes. 25 more names in the past year of diggers who will not attend that service again.

The service was simple, short and very moving, the speeches all succinct and even the young members of 2 Cav who lifted the ceremony so much by their presence, appeared to have enjoyed every moment.

It was another proud moment for 2/6 Div Cav Assoc members to be able to hand over another Regimental memento to the care of our daughter regiment, 2 Cav. This was the personal map of Peter Perkins M.C., the hero of the PNG Milak saga which is well described in Regimental military histories.

2 Cav has a good advocate in Cpl Clint Johnson, who accepted the map on your behalf and gave a great speech welcoming the succession.

After the Anthem, the old soldiers and the young soldiers and the grandchildren who may one day become soldiers, all retired to the nearby restaurant and indeed, for the remainder of that marvelous day, a great time was had by all. I hope we see you there next year.

Brodie thinks about Grandad who was the cavalryman he knew. "Shorty says someday I'll be a Cavalryman too."

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