

70 YEARS AGO

SEVENTY YEARS COMMEMORATION SERVICE

3 NOVEMBER 2009

AT THE SHRINE TREE

Il Silenzio{play}/sound_files/stories/LastPost.mp3{/play} approx 3min45sec.

Brodie just remembers Grandad (Osie Pa) Sgt. O.H. Stafford and waits beneath the tree.

Resplendent with fresh spring foliage dressed for the occasion.

Poem by Rachel Decker

Secretary of the Regiment, Susan McLaughlin, daughter of Oswald and Winifred Stafford, opens the proceedings and introduces John "Shorty" Corbett President of the Victorian branch of the 2/6 Cavalry Commando Regiment Association.

With the Shrine Guard at ease and with the help of the President's Honorary Page, A/Tpr. Brodie, Shorty welcomes the gentlemen from 2nd. Cavalry Regiment,

Corporals Johnson, Billen, Packer and Evans, bearers of a dispatch from their Commanding Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Malone.

A special welcome to John Decker, President of the Caulfield sub-branch of the R.S.L. and son of Sergeant James Paul Decker who served with the Regiment in the Middle East and New Guinea. A welcome to Cpl. Trevor Limb, registrar and oldest veteran present, and to friends members and family.

After giving a brief account of the Regiment's wartime activities, the President called on Padre Charles Green, Chaplain to Presbyterian Ladies College (who, under a Shrine initiative have adopted the Regiment), to pay a memorial tribute to the Regiment's first Commanding Officer, Lt. Colonel (later Brigadier), Fergusson affectionately known by the troops as "Ruthless"

Padre Charles Green Chaplain P.L.C.

The President then called on Padre Ron Townsend, son of Late Tpr. Ronald Joseph Townsend of 2/9 Commando Squadron, to pay a memorial tribute to the last Commanding Officer of the Regiment, Lt. Colonel Eric Hennessy affectionately known to the troops as the "Bull Tosser"

Padre Ron Townsend.

After thanking the two padres who were accorded healthy applause for their well studied presentations, the President called on our Registrar and Past President Trevor Limb to read the names of our fallen since last we met beneath this tree.

Trevor flanked by son Michael and grandson Blake

The wreaths are laid, John Decker on the left and Regiment right

The President then called on Corporal Clint Johnson,

The Commanding Officer's Emissary

representing the very active 2nd Cavalry Regiment, to deliver the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Malone's, "Dispatch"

Vice President John Westhorp responded, charging Clint with delivering to the C.O. the original map used by Lt. Perkins M.C. in the Aitape - Wewak campaign New Guinea 1945. Now it is done and a time to reflect. After thanking all concerned especially Shrine Governor Peter Whitelaw and his staff who make this event possible, all were invited to adjourn to the Observatory for lunch and social interaction.

Middle East Veteran Jim Muir and Asst.Sec/Treas./Editor Heather

Corey, Declan and Brodie, the grandsons of the late much loved Osie Stafford added a welcome new dimension to the event.