

The Secretary (J.G. DALFOUR)

22nd Sept 1990

7th Field Regt RAA. Assn
Warrane Road
Willoughby NSW.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your invitation to the Assn. Reunion 1990 but I will not be attending as it is not very easy for me, living in the Newcastle district.

However, I was most interested to receive the little "YANDOO" books. I remember pre. WWII we had laying in a bookcase in our home in Chateauwood an original copy of the Yandoo published at the end of the Great War (1914-18) Blue & Gold cover. It laid around for years. Nobody was interested in it and has gone to oblivion now. No doubt, it was originally acquired by my brother, Norman, who was a member of the 7th Field Brigade (1936-37 approx), horse, limber and 18 pdr. gun days blue uniforms, red piping and leggings. He is still around, lives at Woolwich Point. He, and a few others transferred to A.I.F during the March 1941 (Ingleburn) camp. He was posted to 2/15 Fd. Regt. 8th DIVN. and consequently spent over 3 years as a P.O.W. on the Burma Railway. He and his mate, Bob Haydon (also ex 7th Fd Bde) were lucky to survive it.

As for myself, I was called up in what may have been the first intake of compulsory trainees for the 7th in Sept 1940 and spent 10 weeks in Largs camp. (NEAR MADDLAND) What a motley lot we were. All sorts of uniforms of various eras. - no M.T, NO guns. no rifles. We were eventually issued with 3rd vintage .303's and they all had "KICKS" like

The proverbial mule. Eventually we were issued with 18 pdr guns and 4.5 howitzers but in the meantime did our initial gun training using 2 cart wheels and a log up the middle representing a gun. The C.O. was Major Osborne. I was posted to 107 Howitzer battery. Lt Florence and Lt Stuckey, our 1 and 2 1/2, both compassionate gentlemen (Great War reserve RAA officers) and remained with the regiment until its disbanding in Nov. 1943 at Wallgrove. Major Florence became Reg. 2 1/2 under Lt. Col Jim Kelso and Major Stuckey was in command of 27th Battery. I saw both their names in R.S.L. "Last Post". The disbanding of the 7th Aust Fd Regt. was a very sad time for us all. We were reputed to be, at that time, the finest trained R.A.A. unit in Australia that had not fired a shot in anger.

It was in Dec 1941 that we were called up full time (also at Wallgrove) and after spending some months deployed between French's Forest and Mt Keira, were assembled again at Sreta camp and then sent by train to West Australia. Camps at Chidlow, Gin Gin, Naangulu (Perth) Bellevue (Perth) Dandavagin (Moora) Pt Walter (Perth) and finally Mingemee, where we left all our gear (guns & mt) except personal effects behind and were shipped back east, via Melbourne on the Dutch troop ship 45,000 tons NIEUW AMSTERDAM. The whole 8th Brigade (4th, 18th, 35th Battalions) which eventually went into New Guinea campaigns. The 7th Aust Fd Regt was broken up. Signallers went to 6th & 7th Divn. R.A.A. units, the few militia men who

had not transferred to A.I.F.N. numbers went to goodness knows where, and the rest, gunners and N.C.O.'s went to 16th, 17th and 18th Brigade re-inforcement Training Battalions at Tenterfield. And so, the 7th disappeared for the rest of the war. until it was resurrected again after the war ended.

My youngest brother, Alan Jefferson joined the unit then and, I understand, became a gun sergeant, and no doubt, is responsible for my name being on your mailing list.

I hope my letter has not proved boring. Much of the WWII history you must have already been told by the men of the original 7th. I, too, know much, much more of incidents and events too numerous to write about. I ~~had~~ have many 620 size photos (yes, I had a camera) mainly of personnel, which I treasure. Of the names of association members on the back of "Yandoo", I do not recognise one name of the time I was serving. The closest I got was Horton (James) but, of course, I did not know the whole regiment.

With that I will leave you with my best wishes,

Regards from
Ted Jefferson.

N90161

NX110658 EDWARD CHARLES JEFFERSON BDR.

"EDDY" TROOP. 7th AUSTRALIAN FIELD REGT.

27th BATTERY