

*DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
FALLEN COMRADES*

*"They gave their lives. For that public  
gift they received a praise which  
never ages and a tomb most glorious  
— not so much the tomb in which  
they lie, but that in which their fame  
survives, to be remembered for ever  
when occasion comes for word or  
deed . . . "*

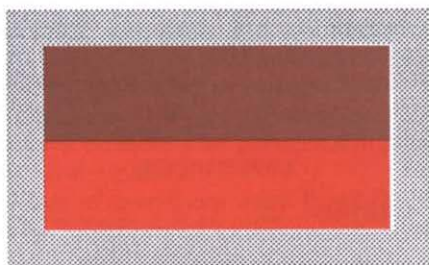
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The  
**Seventh  
Battalion**



**7th BATTALION (1939-45)  
ASSOCIATION**

**MELBOURNE  
1989**

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# INTRODUCTION

Now that military history in Australia is an area of considerable significance, and ready to take its place in the overall historical agenda, this is an attempt to tell the story of the 7th Australian Infantry Battalion (AIF).

Forty-four years after the event could be considered by some as being too late to commit these events to paper; others could say that the subject is one that should be forgotten, but the more one considers the matter, the more obvious it is that some record should be made for the sake of future generations. It was therefore decided that this brief history of the battalion be compiled.

It is a great pity the work was not completed many years ago when memories were fresher and participants more numerous, and compiled by somebody more capable. However, this is an attempt by one who does not profess to be an historian nor a writer, but considers the facts should be recorded before there is nobody left, who served with this battalion, to compile it.

The story does not have the sustained drama, nor glamour, so richly deserved by many other more battle-worn battalions of the Australian Army, but it is a story based on the lives of men who served their country in peace and war.

As history goes, it is but an insignificant drop in the ocean of all unit histories ever written, but nevertheless, is of great significance to those who served therein.

Originally the battalion was wholly a Militia unit, but by the middle of 1943, most of the members had volunteered for service in the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). There always was, however, a percentage of personnel of Militia status. These men were an integral part of the unit, and the fact that they did not or could not volunteer for service outside the prescribed area, did not detract from their ability and loyalty.

The war-time lives of members were lived largely under strange and uncomfortable conditions of extreme heat, dust, torrential rain, violent storms and jungle swamps, coupled with malaria and other tropical diseases, with ultimately, the mental and physical strain of battle and contact with the enemy.

Of all the personnel who passed through the battalion over the years, it is obvious that not all could be mentioned, and it is hoped that those who are mentioned and whatever happened to them, could have, or might have happened to any other.

It is hoped that all who read these pages will glean some idea on what service life was like with the 7th Australian Infantry Battalion (AIF).

# FOREWORD



TO ALL WHO SERVED  
IN THE  
7TH AUSTRALIAN  
INFANTRY BATTALION (AIF)

It is a privilege to write the foreword to this concise history of our Battalion. This book, with its facts, illustrations and recollections by the men who took part in the events, will refresh our memories of those years which, with the passage of time, has grown dim.

The book is about young men, some of whom left young families behind when they volunteered to give up their freedom for those who had been deprived of it.

It is also about young men who, with inadequate training and inadequate equipment, were given tasks which placed their lives, unnecessarily, in jeopardy.

Nobody glorifies war. It is wasteful and destructive. The only thing that comes beneficially out of it is the creation of comradeship, the development of initiative in all and a mateship that develops and lasts for ever.

This book is written in memory of those who lost their lives, or who were maimed physically or mentally, and those who mourned them and remembers all those who loved and cared for the men of the battalion.

I am appreciative of the opportunity I had to be with the unit, even if it was far too short a time from my point of view. I feel that I was able, in a small way, to contribute to its build up to what proved itself to be a good battalion that did everything that was asked of it and did it well.

I was and am proud of the Battalion.

John Wilmoth,  
Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret)

# ABBREVIATIONS

- AASC — Australian Army Service Corps  
Ack Ack — Anti Aircraft  
Adj — Adjutant  
AIC — Australian Instructional Corps  
AIB — Australian Intelligence Bureau  
AIF — Australian Imperial Force  
AMF — Australian Military Force  
ANGAU — Australian & New Guinea Administrative Unit  
Aust Inf Bn — Australian Infantry Battalion  
AWL — Absent Without Leave  
Bde — Brigade  
BHQ — Battalion Headquarters  
Bn — Battalion  
Cav — Cavalry  
CGS — Chief of the General Staff  
C in C — Commander In Chief  
CMF — Commonwealth Military Force  
CO — Commanding Officer  
Coy/s — Company/Companies  
Dent Unit — Dental Unit  
Det — Detachment  
DID — Distribution, Issue Point  
Div — Division  
DSO — Distinguished Service Order  
DZ — Drop Zone  
ED — Efficiency Decoration  
Engrs — Engineers  
Fd Amb — Field Ambulance  
Fd Coy — Field Company  
Fd Bty — Field Battery  
Fd Regt — Field Regiment  
FOO — Forward Observation Officer  
GOC — General Officer Commanding  
HMG — Heavy Machine Gun  
Hvy Mortars — Heavy Mortars  
IO — Intelligence Officer  
KIA — Killed In Action  
LMG — Light Machine Gun  
L of C — Lines Of Communication  
MC — Military Cross  
MMG — Medium Machine Gun  
MO — Medical Officer  
Mtn Bty — Mountain Battery

# ABBREVIATIONS

*NCO* — Non Commissioned Officer  
*NEI* — Netherland East Indies  
*OC* — Officer Commanding  
*OCTU* — Officer Cadet Training Unit  
*OR/s* — Other Rank/s  
*PIB* — Papua Infantry Battalion  
*PITA* — Projectile Infantry Tank Attack  
*Pl/s* — Platoon/Platoons  
*Pl Comdr* — Platoon Commander  
*"Q" Store* — Quartermaster Store  
*QM* — Quartermaster  
*RAP* — Regimental Aid Post  
*RMO* — Regimental Medical Officer  
*Regt* — Regiment  
*RSM* — Regimental Sergeant Major  
*SMG* — Sub Machine Gun  
*SO* — Signals Officer  
*S & T* — Supply And Transport  
*2 i/c* — Second In Commnd  
*Sigs* — Signals  
*Sect* — Section  
*TEWT* — Training Exercise Without Troops  
*USAAF* — United States Army Air Force  
*VD* — Volunteer Decoration  
*YMCA* — Young Men's Christian Association

## ARMY RANKS

*Pte* — Private  
*L/Cpl* — Lance Corporal  
*Cpl* — Corporal  
*L/Sgt* — Lance Sergeant  
*Sgt* — Sergeant  
*S/Sgt* — Staff Sergeant  
*WO2* — Warrant Officer Second Class  
*WO1* — Warrant Officer First Class  
*2nd Lt* — Second Lieutenant  
*Lt* — Lieutenant  
*Capt* — Captain  
*Maj* — Major  
*Lt Col* — Lieutenant Colonel  
*Col* — Colonel  
*Brig* — Brigadier  
*Maj Gen* — Major General  
*Lt Gen* — Lieutenant General