

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB



CLUB CHRONOLOGY 1915-1920

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Introduction

"On Wednesday the 3rd February 1915, in response to a public announcement, a well attended public meeting was held in the Mosman Town Hall. The Empire was in the throes of the Great War of 1914-18 and the residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay wanted a Rifle Club and Training Corps wherein the rudiments of drill and military discipline might be learned and from which recruits for service abroad might be enlisted and recruiting influence derived".

C.H. Cromack - Club President 1951-52

This was the beginning of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club that exists today, a Club now dedicated to the sport of Target Rifle Shooting at the highest level. Over the years the Club itself and its individual members have distinguished themselves in competition and in the perpetuation of the sport through their involvement in the Club, and as office bearers to the various Rifle Associations that control rifle shooting in New South Wales and Australia.



Club Members circa 1927 at the Club Hut – ANZAC Liverpool (MNBRC Collection)

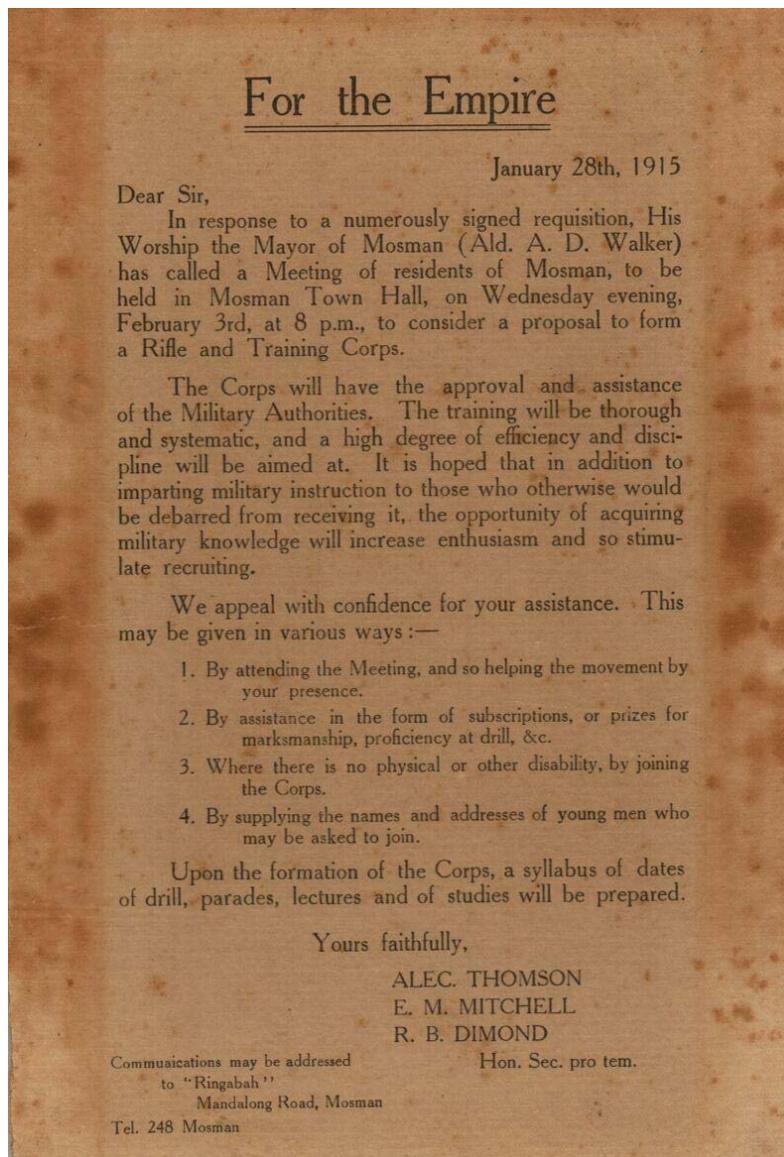
This document serves to record the beginning of nearly 90 years of Club History as fully as possible from the limited resources still available. It uses existing Club records along with the reminiscences of long term members. Unfortunately, no Club foundation members remain to assist with filling in all the details but enough material was available to tell the basic story of how the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club came into being and the activities that our predecessors engaged in to create what we enjoy today - the highly competitive sport of Rifle Shooting.

Club Chronology

1915 to 1920 - The Beginnings of the Club

1915 - As described in the Introduction, the Rifle Club was officially formed in the early months of 1915 by the residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay to provide a Training Corps for those who might be enlisted into the Australian Military Forces for service overseas in World War 1.

It appears that a petition signed by many residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay was presented to council and as a result the Mayor of Mosman, Alderman A.D. Walker called for a meeting of residents to be held on the 3rd February 1915 at the Town Hall.



A "flyer" distributed to residents announcing the meeting for the 3rd February 1915 that formed the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club. (from the MNBRC Collection)

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C.H. Cromack later wrote that he well remembered the high level of enthusiasm at the meeting and the interest in the formation of a Rifle Club for the area by all those who attended.

The Club was formed under the then Australian Rifle Club Regulations which were embodied in the Defence Act, and at its peak during the First World War, some 707 men were enrolled as members of the Club with 243 of those enlisting for active service.

The Initial General Meeting of the new Rifle Club was held at the Town Hall on the 27th March 1915. A.D. (Arthur Douglas) Walker was elected as the first Club Captain, and R.B. Dimond as the first Honorary Secretary along with the election of a Committee and other office bearers. The Annual Subscription was determined to be 5 shillings and it was resolved that the rules and by-laws would be the Standard Rules for Rifle Clubs with such By-laws as the General Committee decided. At this meeting promises of cash for "Special Trophies" were made by various members (A.D. Walker, Major Curtis, P.B. Colquhoun and John Gray) for Musketry. The Mosman-Neutral Rifle Club then existed as an entity and the work began to put in place the means to meet its objectives of training the members to go to war.



Arthur Douglas Walker, the First Captain of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club 1915
(Photo courtesy of Mosman Library)

The first Committee Meeting was held on the 16th April 1915 at the Town Hall and it set to in organising the Club and its activities.

The first Rules and By-laws adopted by the Club were those of the Edgecliffe Rifle Club with some alterations and additions that had been approved by the Committee. At this same meeting, Lt Alcock offered 150 rifles on loan (the type was not specified). The Committee duly accepted these and it was decided that they were to be stored in the Pavilion at Mosman Oval.

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Committee Meetings were being held each fortnight, and from the beginning, the meetings dealt with issues of major importance such as locating sites to shoot miniature rifle and the carrying out of musketry practice on their agenda, as well as the general housekeeping involved in the setting up of the 3 Divisions that were required to cope with the large number of men who had joined the Club. Divisional Commanders were appointed along with their support staff, as were Section Sub-Committees. A Syllabus of Instruction for the men was another issue of high priority at the time but the initial syllabus was not finally approved by the Committee until November.

Shooting itself appeared to commence for the first time on the 6th and 7th June 1915 with a Musketry Course held at Long Bay Rifle Range. A credit balance for this venture was reported of £1/18/6 but it is uncertain if the Club paid for the course from its funds and this was a left over amount, or whether the members were charged a fee to participate. The Minutes appear to show that members attending these Musketry Courses were limited in number and later notes showed that members could shoot a practice after completing their Musketry Course by paying a fee proportional to the cost of targets and markers. A printed Syllabus mentions that participants would be required to make a payment towards the cost of markers, etc. A fee of 1 shilling was minuted as being forfeit if they did not attend.

Around this time the first signs that the initial fervour for the initiation of a Rifle Club was waning with the query being made to the Rawson Park Division to consider the question of the large falling off in attendance of its members at drills.

One of the first Club "outings" was their participation in the "Rifleman's Patriotic Carnival" held on the 28th June 1915. The Carnival was held at Randwick Rifle Range in aid of the National Belgian Relief Fund and raised around £600. The Club members attending were amongst 5000 Riflemen participants and the spectacle attracted a crowd estimated between 12,000 and 15,000. The Club was one of 64 that participated in the Review and March Past although a number of shooting competitions were held as well.

The Club's First Annual General Meeting was held on the 5th July 1915 at the Town Hall where A.D. Walker was re-elected as Captain and H.W. Ramsey-Sharp took over as Honorary Secretary. Arthur Walker was an Alderman and had completed a term in the position of Mayor of Mosman just prior to the formation of the Club in early 1915.

The Club resolved to join the Metropolitan District Rifle Clubs Union in August of 1915 with G.J. Williamson and H.W. Ramsey-Sharp being the appointed Club delegates. By this time, the Club Divisions had located 3 suitable sites for Miniature Ranges and were seeking quotations for their construction. Also, in August 1915, the Committee acknowledged a letter received from member, C.A. (Claude Arthur) Boone who had enlisted, donating £1-1-0 towards the cost of the Miniature Range at Neutral Bay. Second Lieutenant Boone served with the 54th Battalion, Australian Infantry and was killed in action in July 1916 in France, aged 31.

The first mention of a winner of a Club prize for shooting competition was declared in October. The "Major Curtis Prize" for the Highest Musketry Score was awarded to A.J. Dodson of the Neutral Bay Section, the prize, a sum of £3-3-0. Musketry Courses were being run constantly for the members and it appears all members were required to qualify by a certain number of shoots. Special Musketry Courses were held with the 17th Infantry Battalion with whom the Club was requested to drill. The 17th Infantry Battalion had their Headquarters at North Sydney and were part of the 8th Infantry Brigade that had its

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Headquarters in Mosman. The 17th Infantry Battalion left Australia for Gallipoli in May 1915 under the command of then Brigadier General Henry Goddard. The brigade served at Gallipoli, Suez Canal and in France.

The Committee continued to busy itself during the remainder of 1915 with the normal running of the Club and in defining an identity. The Club's Committee Meeting Minutes show that it was a busy time where a wide variety of issues were dealt with. The issues of uniforms, badges, and appointing instructors for the men were all dealt with over this period, along with more mundane operational matters. Certainly, a core of older members unable to enlist kept the Club functioning, particularly with the movement of men out of the Club as they enlisted led to a fairly regular series of replacements for those who held official Club positions in the Divisions.

In early December, two of the three Miniature Ranges were ready for use having been inspected by the military authority with only some minor modifications to the Brady Street Range at Spit Junction needed for it to be completed. Rifle training on the Miniature Ranges was ready to begin at last. Ammunition was purchased for the rifles that they had, this being .23" calibre used in rifles fitted with Morris Tubes.

In the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting for 1915 held on the 3rd December, it was reported then that 105 Club Members had enlisted for active service.

At the end of 1915 and in less than a full year of existence, the Club's reason for being, providing men for service overseas, seems to have been a success.

1916 - From 1916, the Club continued on much as it had in its initial year of 1915, with the work of organising the training of its members and now with the additional focus of providing support of those already serving overseas.

In April 1916 it was proposed that the Club expand its facilities and build a shed (or armoury) at Reid Park to house equipment for the Reid Park Division that drilled there. Eventually, the shed was built under the direction of H.R. (Harold) Rabone who had been appointed to see to its construction. This building was later to be donated to the Volunteer Worker Association to be used for materials for their work building homes for returned servicemen and/or war widows.

In May of 1916 the Club began to look to providing for its members overseas and the first mention of the raising of "Comforts", in this instance, by an Invitation Concert (attendees to bring an article) was arranged. The Concert is reported to have raised over 1000 articles which were packed into parcels and sent on to the troops overseas. These concerts continued throughout the war years and by all reports were popular "entertainments" of the time and successful in the raising of funds for Comforts and later for other Club Fund raising purposes.

May also saw the Club Committee begin to draw up details of the first competition rules for shooting for the Club Trophies, in particular for the Captain's Cup (for Miniature Shooting), Divisional Miniature Championships, and a Club Championship. The Club Championship was shot for on the 12th August 1916 at the Long Bay Range. The Championship was decided between the 5 highest scoring members from each division in the Musketry Course. Later in the year, October saw the Club entering 3 teams in the Metropolitan District Rifle Union D Grade Competition so beginning the Club's entry into the field of team shooting,

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one would think not quite knowing that this would develop before too long into the Club's greatest strength over the years.

For the members, drill training continued with one of the potential rewards for those who excelled being the possibility of becoming commissioned officers. An examination could be sat and in June 1916 it was reported in the Club Minutes that the 8 members with the highest passes for the exam were commissioned as Lieutenants on the advice of the Supervisor of Rifle Clubs. Positions were then sought for these newly commissioned officers with other Rifle Clubs and with the Senior Cadet Units.



The Senior Cadets themselves were boys aged from 14 to 18, carrying on with their military training with their School Cadet Units with the ultimate goal of following the path through to enlistment in the volunteer militia or military service. The image to the left shows the tallest and the shortest cadets from the 1911 Australian Coronation Contingent (George V) on their way to England on board SS Themistocles. Club member George Somerville was a part of this group of cadets. Photo from the Australian War Memorial.

Even though the number of Club members was quite substantial at the time, numbering near to 700, the attendances at drills were being reported at around 25-30 men per division on average. The Club also thought to hold combined drills, the first being in December at Mosman Oval but by February 1917 the idea of combined drills was dropped in favour of additional Miniature Shooting practice because of poor attendance.

Enlistments continued and by August 1916 the number of Club members signing up had reached 173, with the Mosman Oval Division providing 33, Neutral Bay Division 65 and Reid Park Division 75.

The Club did not only practice military drills and attend lectures but also attended military camps for particular training. One such instance saw the Club attend a Camp at Liverpool over the 1916 August Bank Holiday Weekend. The Club in thanks for the support of the military personnel at Liverpool were to put on a concert during their time there, a copy of the Programme for this Concert still exists amongst the Club's mementos.

During the First World War Conscription was an emotional issue, and caused much controversy with the politicians and the population of the day. Prime Minister Hughes held a referendum in late 1916 with the result being the rejection of Conscription 51% to 49%. A later referendum held in 1917 achieved the same result. The Club, never ones to stand by, passed the following resolution during the Second Annual General Meeting in August 1916 to be sent to the Universal Services League and the Local Papers, *"that this meeting of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club consider the time has now arrived when conscription should be brought into force in Australia to assist in bringing this terrible war to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion"*.

Following on the Club's attention to rifle competition, came the formation of a Rifle Committee to recommend a uniform pattern of rifle for use by all sections in Miniature

Shooting. This was to ensure that the members all shot for the prizes on an equal footing. In November the Club approved the purchase of 3 Winchester Miniature Rifles (.22 calibre) at £5-10-0 each. Meanwhile, Service rifles for instruction seem to continually be in short supply with the Supervisor of Rifle Clubs advising that it was impossible to locate more Drill Rifles for the club members.

The Club also looked to maintaining and improving their facilities to a high standard. In November, Reid Park saw the electrification of the Range lights permitting continued use of the Range itself into the evenings.

1917 - saw the Club continue on steadily with its activities, which seem from the existing records, to be more settled into a pattern of drilling, musketry practice and the raising of funds. The Committee had now reduced their meetings to monthly events rather than the frantic fortnightly regime required when setting up the Club in 1915 and 1916. Along with the physical training, a series of lectures on various subjects or additional training in topics such as signalling (June) continued and were held throughout the war years.

Lamps were purchased for the Reservoir Range in January and appear to be of the acetylene type rather than the electric light recently installed at Reid Park. Later references to the electric light at the Reservoir Range show that improvements to the facilities continued as the opportunities arose.

The Club's interest in following military training principles was high, but realistic in response to member reactions. An example was the report of low attendance at the combined drills that had begun in 1916. As mentioned previously, this led to Combined Drills being dropped in favour of Miniature Shooting practice.

The Club resolved to cooperate with the Northern Suburbs Rifle Clubs in February 1917, and in March, a set of Rules were supplied by the Northern Suburbs Rifle Clubs Association and the Club's affiliation with this group was finalised. In April, the Club was invited to participate in a match with the NSRCA at Chatswood to be held on the 5th May. The Club also received a syllabus from the Northern Suburbs Rifle Association in July for their Grade Match programme.

The Club continued with raising funds in support of its members, and another Invitation Concert was to be arranged with the stated purpose of providing comforts to Rifle Club Members overseas. This particular concert was held on the 14th May.

The Club also began a series of "Spoon" shoots for both .303 and miniature rifle competitions in May 1917. A popular token prize in many clubs, continued to the present day, silver plated spoons bearing the Club's badge.

An obvious pride in the enlisted members led to the suggestion of a Roll of Honour to be posted in each divisional orderly room displaying the names of those on active service. It is not known what form these Rolls of Honour took, but 2 printed versions still survive in the Club's mementos as an attachment to the 1919 Annual Report and on a Entertainments Programme from October of 1918.

At the Third Annual General Meeting, A.D. Walker was re-elected as the Club Captain. This particular meeting was "bare bones" with only the election of office bearers minuted and no

apparent discussions taking place.

The Club saw a great need to keep the equipment being used for training up to the "state of the art". August saw a further request for 50 MLE rifles to be supplied to the Club in place of 20 MEs. A few months later, some old Henry Rifles were returned, so it can be safely assumed that the members drilled with a variety of arms in line with the shortages being caused by Australia's requirement to supply equipment to the front line soldiers.

The Club carried on with its Miniature Shooting, and in this year, joined the Metropolitan District Miniature Rifle Clubs Union.

It is noted in draft minutes, that in November 1917, it was resolved that "in the future there will only be two divisions to be called the Mosman Division and Neutral Bay Division". It was further resolved that "all members of the Club shall have the option of joining either of these divisions". These particular resolutions of the Sub-Committee Meeting have not been transferred to the actual Minute Book.

At various times during these early years the Club recorded that funds were short. Late in 1917, the poor state of finances caused the cancellation of a Smoke Concert. One venue mentioned for these "Smoko's" was the "Small Town Hall". This particular cash flow situation appears to have been carried on into 1918.

1918 - again saw a well settled club carrying on its war effort but at the same time some serious shooting competition began.

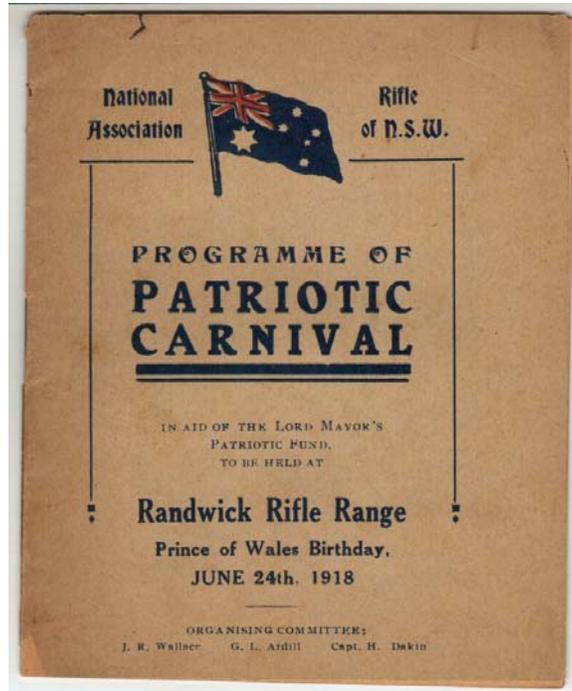
A group that had existed for some time, the Volunteer Workers Association, had a relationship with the Club or with some club members. In January it was noted that a request for financial support for the "Hendy-Pooley Cottage" was received. No donation was able to be made by the Club due to the poor state of finances, but members were encouraged to assist in the erection of the cottage. Work with the VWA continued and progress was reported on a Cheer-Oh Girls Concert to raise funds for a "Rifle Club Cottage" with so heavy a booking for the entertainment, that it required a second show to be organised. These shows were held on the 13th and 14th February. The Club had fixed the Cheer-Ohs expenses for these concerts not to exceed £10 for both evenings.

In other activities, the Club donated a sum, as prize money in response to an announcement of a No2 Military District War Chest Carnival to be held at the Sports Ground 4th May.

During this year, the Club, for the first time appears to have affiliated with the National Rifle Association

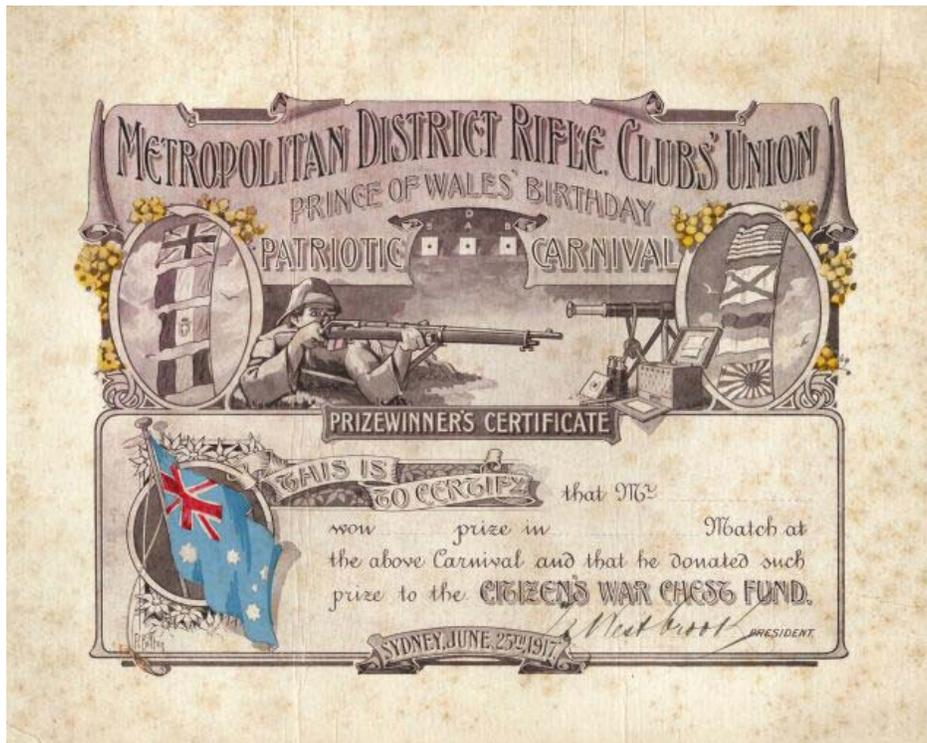
There were other community groups for who shooting was of interest, and requests were received from both the Boy Scouts and the Senior Cadets to use the Club's Miniature Range facilities. The Boy Scouts, under a Mr Glenfield were given permission to use Reservoir Range on Saturday afternoons, and the Senior Cadets were to use the facilities on Tuesday afternoons.

Even after Federation, the "Empire" was to retain an influence on many local activities, with celebrations to be held by Rifle Clubs for the Prince of Wales Birthday.



(from the MNBRC Collection)

On the 24th June 1918, a Patriotic Carnival was held by the Metropolitan District Rifle Clubs' Union. A similar Carnival was held in the previous year in aid of the Citizen's War Chest Fund. The Prize Certificate from the 1917 Carnival shown below, indicates that winners could elect to "Donate" their prize to the Fund and in return receive the pictured certificate.



(from the MNBRC Collection)

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In another supporting effort by the Club, the Committee resolved to guarantee the insurance for a recruit for an amount up to £200 during the war (it was noted that the District had agreed to guarantee insurance for 5 men). Names were to be forwarded to the Town Clerk for consideration. It was noted in later Minutes, that an insurance premium of £20 was paid in favour of a receipt for a "Victory Policy" that had been received from the Public Trustee in June. There is no minuted note of who was selected to be the beneficiary of this policy.

Whilst the Club was still producing men ready for enlistment, it was interesting to note that the North Sydney Recruiting Officer, a Lieutenant Nichols, was corresponding with the Club with a letter received in April and details passed on to the members. Certainly, at this stage of the War, the Club's enlistment numbers were not as high as in earlier years. It was previously noted that at the end of 1915, there were 105 enlistments, and by August 1916 a further 68, giving a total of 173 out of the 243 reported as the final number enlisted.

May of 1918 saw the appointment of C.H. Cromack as the Honorary General Secretary of the Club, a position that he was to hold for the next 31 years. It should be pointed out that it is largely thanks to Cromack's records, documents and mementos, that this Chronology has been able to be prepared.

A request for a donation to the North Sydney "Battleplane Fund" was received. The purpose of this fund is not explained in Minutes (possibly to help pay for an aeroplane?), but the Club mentions again that the state of finances made any donation difficult at that time but it was resolved to try and donate later in the year following a fund raising concert to be held in August.

The Supervisor of Rifle Clubs was the Military's representative who oversaw the running of the Rifle Club movement, and many references are made in the Minutes to correspondence and circulars issued by the SRC. One such circular was in regard to the voluntary enlistment of rifle club members in the militia for home defence.

Some Club successes between June and August were; a prize of £1 for the Club coming 4th and winning a Handicap Grade Match from the MDRCU 1917-18, S.J. Jackson to shoot in the DRCU Champion of Champions, and further sums of £2-2-0, £2-0-0, 15 shillings for its A and B teams in the Metropolitan Miniature Rifle Clubs Association. An indication of an entry fee to the NSDRCA Team Shoot was £2-10-0.

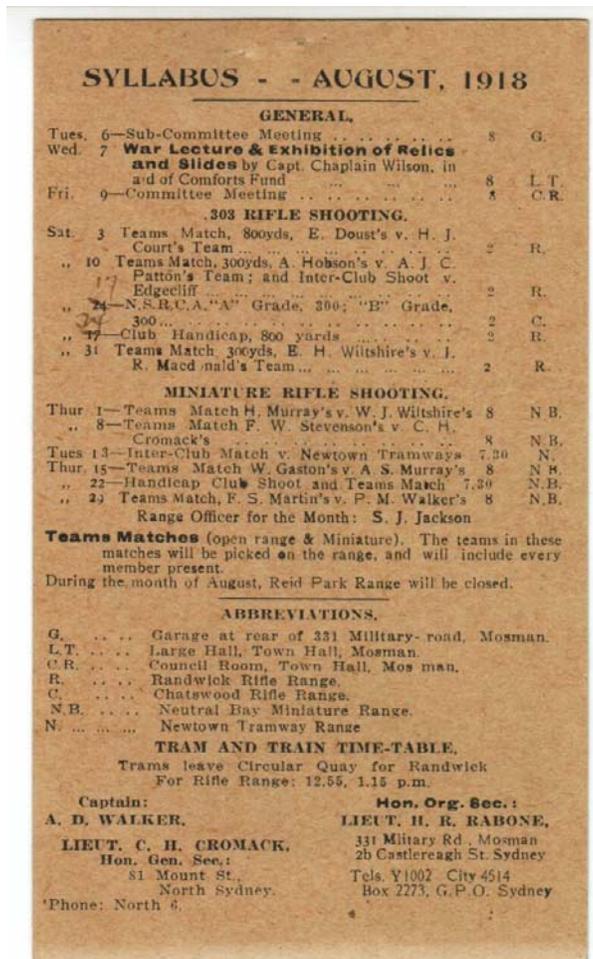
During WW1, an Amusement Tax was payable on "entertainments". The Club had a series of correspondences with the Taxation Department (the Minutes mention both Taxation Department and the Repatriation Department) over a request that the Club be exempted from the tax in connection with lecture given by Chaplain Captain Wilson. In this case it was mentioned that the Repatriation Department refused permission to withhold the tax even if the lecture was in aid of the Comforts Fund. The Club decided instead to use the lecture to raise money for general club funds and so pay the tax. This was not the end of the issue, with a later letter in November to the Taxation Department requesting exemptions from the tax for Comforts Fund concerts. Another letter sent to the Tax Department in December requesting exemption from tax for the October and November entertainments held in aid of the Club's war work. It seems that the Taxation Department were not very amenable with the Minutes mentioning that an interview between A.D. Walker and members, Farr and Killeen with the department proving "fruitless". Obviously the Taxation Department's personnel were as difficult then as they are today.

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The Club does appear to have held concerts and other fund raising entertainments quite regularly and it did not in all cases note them in the Minutes. The Club did appear to have something happening on a monthly basis. A flexibility of planning in this area was shown by the cancellation of the September concert in order to hold a bigger one in October.

Electric light systems were fairly rudimentary in these years, and it was reported on several occasions at the various parade grounds, that repairs were necessary to keep them safe for use. In September, it was reported that the Electric Light at Neutral Bay drill ground needed repairs such that if not carried out they would otherwise need to be dismantled. The repairs were quoted at £2 and were given the go ahead by the Committee.

As always, the members serving overseas were in the minds of those at home. From time to time word came through of the death of a Club member. In September, the Minutes record the Club forwarding a letter to Mrs Allen expressing condolences on the death of her son, C.F. Allen. The following month saw similar letters to the families of A.W. Macdonald, E.H Moors, W.H Stewart. It should be noted that A.W. (Alexander) Macdonald was the son of the Club's oldest member J.R. (John) Macdonald and his wife Anna who lived in Ben Boyd Road, Neutral Bay. Alexander's name does not appear on the Club's Roll of Honour so is unlikely to have been a club member.



(from the MNBRC Collection)

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Another payment that appears often in the Minutes was the costs for the hire of the Town Hall. In an instance in October, a payment of £2/17/- was approved with various other payments of similar amounts also being approved for specific purposes such as concerts. The Club's Committee often met at the Town Hall and most of the Annual General Meeting were being held there. It is unknown if these particular meetings required a payment for the hire of rooms.

A Comforts Fund concert was held in October (or possibly November) 1918 with this particular concert noted as having been advertised on the Sydney Harbour Ferries. This concert featured entertainment by the Sunshine Girls and Merrymakers with their expenses coming to a total of £18-5-0. The receipts that had been accounted for in November were £40-19-4 with an amount still to be called in from ticket sales made by members.

Some shooting success was recorded for the Club in November after a win in the North Shore Rifle Club Association A Grade match for 1918. In another success, the Club minuted the receipt in December 1918 of the National Rifle Association Medal for 1916 won by member D.S. Macdonald.

The supply of electricity for the Club appears to have come from several sources, Railway's and/or Tramways. Repairs to the wiring were requested of the Railway Department for the lighting system installed at Reid Park. Throughout these early years, numerous references were made in the Minutes in regards to payments to the "Railway Commissioners Electric Lighting" and to "Tramway Lighting".

It does appear strange for a group, whose main purpose was to assist in the successful conclusion to the War, but the Committee Meeting for November 1918, which was held on the 15th, some 4 days after the Armistice was signed, made no mention of the end of the War. Some action had soon begun to be taken in that the Club provided some cigars and cigarettes to a Welcome Home for Returned Soldiers that was being organised by the Mosman Parents and Citizens Association in conjunction with the Mosman Recreation Club and the Warringah Bowling Club to be held on the 28th November 1918. The Club provided 100 cigars and 250 cigarettes to this cause. This matter was placed before the Committee in early December in a letter tabled from member W.L Macdonald requesting the Club endorse the decision to contribute made by him as Acting Hon. General Secretary. An expense of £2 for "smokes for ANZACs" was endorsed.

Miniature shooting and shooting in general continued to be of great interest to the Club and its members with the Club entering 4 teams in the Metropolitan Miniature Rifle Clubs Union Grade matches for the year.

The Club appeared to enjoy a high level of respect in the community, and in return being part of the community, it responded often to requests from other community groups. In an instance of this, the Club assisted by granting a request for the use of the Club's Electric Light to Neutral Bay School head teacher, Mr Cousins for a school fete. In another community effort, the Club offered its acetylene lights to the Mosman Venetian Carnival Committee for a celebration on Anniversary Day (Australia Day).

An interesting note was made in regard to other activities, not necessarily Club related, but nonetheless supporting the War Effort. C.H. Cromack mentioned in some notes that Club Members left Australia for the purpose of making munitions in the U.K. This would not be considered unusual and probably a contribution more appropriate to older men, or men

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unable for whatever reason, to serve in the armed forces. All were volunteers and Australian War Memorial records state that 6000 Australians volunteered for this work between 1916 and 1918. A mention is made of one Club member, Mr Llewellyn travelling to the U.K. for this purpose but it is not known for certain if any others joined him in this activity.



Above: Left - A group of Australian Munitions Workers – Right – The Vickers Workshop where some Australian volunteer workers were employed.

Following the end of the war, the Military Authorities inspected the Clubs rifles and "pronounced them to be in A1 condition". With the business of supplying trained men for the front-line now over, the club resolved to return all rifles belonging to the Ordnance Department with the exception of 20 MLE's and 12 MEs that were being used in regular shooting and musketry practice.

To round out the year of 1918, and with the continuation of the return of servicemen to Australia, the Club again donated 100 cigars and 250 cigarettes to the celebrations. In this case the "smokes" were given to the Blue Gum Girls for distribution to those returned at an entertainment organised at (St) Georges Heights.

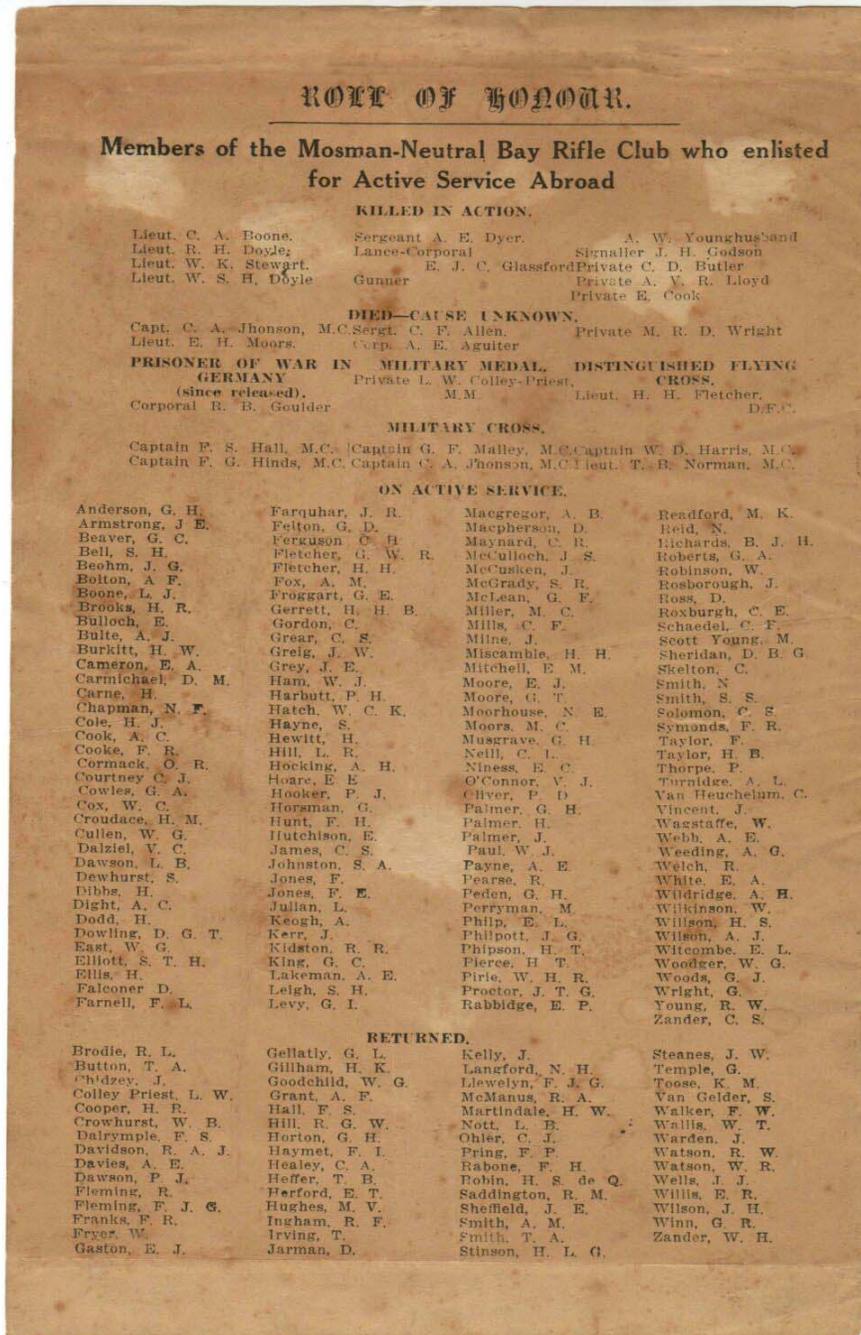
1919 - With the end of the war only a few months passed, the beginning of 1919 saw the Club winding down its War effort and begin concentrating on shooting as a sport by entering 3 teams in NSDRCU competitions for the year.

Again, with the war over, and the sending of Comforts to Club Members on Active Service apparently difficult because of the quickly moving location of those men as they prepared to come home, it was decided to hold the remaining balance of the Comforts Fund aside. It was determined to keep this money until it could be best spent on a suitable welcome home for the Club Members when a sufficient number had returned. A total of around £37 was held for this purpose. In the meantime the Club did donate another round of cigars and cigarettes to the value £2 to the Mosman Bowling Club to be distributed by Blue Gum Girls to returned soldiers.

With no more need to continue drill practice, one of the first consequences of the end of the war on the Club was the need for early consideration given to the question of the continued use of the Reid Park Range. In March, the choice was made to cease shooting at the Reid Park Range. An offer was extended for the Council to purchase the facility there with the exception of the target lights. A few months later in June, the Club decided to present the Reid Park Armoury to the Volunteer Workers Association. Some 12 months later in July 1920, the Club was prompted to forward a query to the VWA to confirm that they had delivered materials from Reid Park (the electric light fittings) to the Tramway Authority. It

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seems that the building at Reid Park had been demolished to provide materials for other VWA projects.



1919 Roll of Honour (from the MNBR Collection)

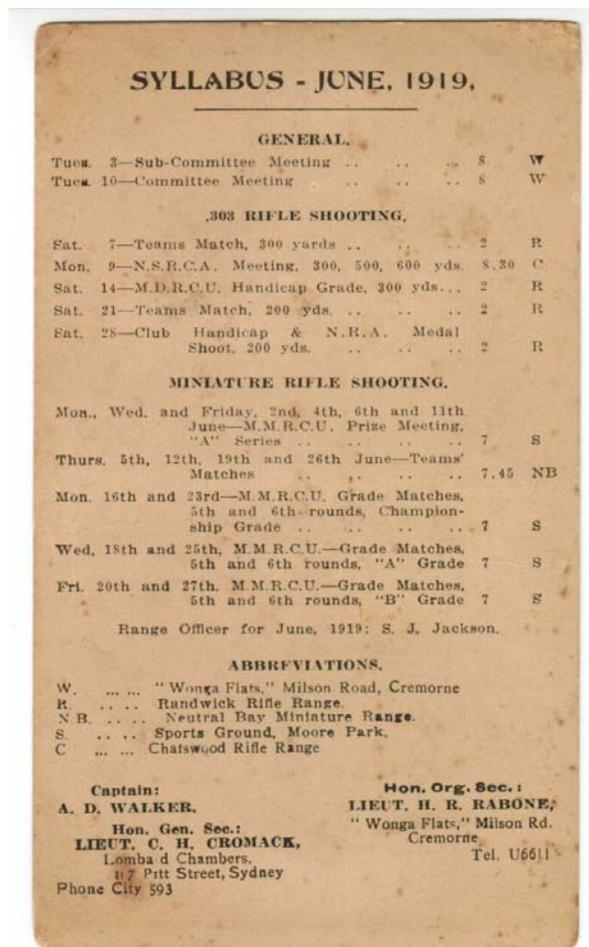
It was about this time that the world-wide epidemic of influenza hit Australia and several of the Club's members were noted as having been ill. As public spirited as ever, the Club made an offer to the Ministry of Public Health of its services "in any capacity to combat the epidemic of pneumonic influenza". In the closing stages of the war this disease caused great

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distress and the number of people dying world-wide was thought to be more than those killed in the 1914-18 conflict, some sources quoting >30 million people. Certainly, in the latter half of 1918, influenza was becoming a problem for the Light Horse fighting the closing battles in the Middle East and it is thought that the returning servicemen of the combating countries spread this disease amongst the general population. In the 1919 Annual Report it was noted that for a Team Competition held for the King's Birthday "*On account of the influenza epidemic, almost the entire 'A' team were unavailable*".

The Club's interest in Miniature Shooting was growing, and it had sent out a challenge to other clubs to foster inter-club competition. One such challenge match was accepted by the Adelaide Electric Tramways Rifle Club.

By May the community was beginning to think of ways of honouring its men who had served and particularly those who had died. The Club received a letter from a J.W. Bishop on the matter of a Soldiers Memorial to be erected in Mosman. More information was sought and the following month the Club appointed its member, J.A. Brodie as the Club delegate to the Soldier's Memorial Project. Later in the year C.H. Cromack stood in for J.A. Brodie as the delegate whilst he was absent for several months.



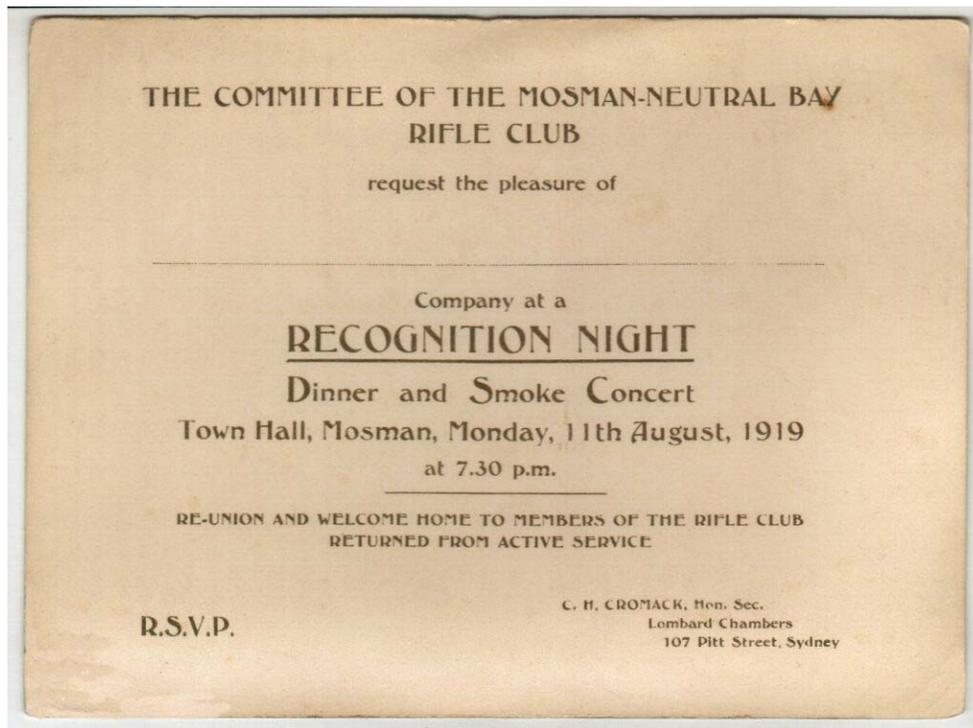
(from the MNBRC Collection)

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB Inc
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At the 5th AGM held in July, the Minutes recall that a welcome was given to attending members who had returned home from the war and that these men had related anecdotes of their time served in later discussion following the meeting proper.

Shooting results noted in the Minutes of the AGM mention The "Dodson" Rifle won by W. Gaston and that he had also won the Open Range Championship of the Club. The Miniature Range Shooting Champion for the year was F.W. Stevenson. These are the first Club Champion names to appear on the Club Champion Honour Boards now on display in the current Club Hut.

By July, the Club Committee had resolved to hold a Dinner and Smoke Concert as a "Recognition Night" to welcome home all the returned members. Final arrangements for the Recognition Night carried through the August Committee Meeting with the date for the "big night", the 11th August 1919. It seems that not all went to plan and the next mention of this Welcome Home was in October where the Hon. Organising Secretary was asked by the Committee to prepare a "report on the state of funds following the Recognition Night and to use all efforts to recoup funds from tickets still outstanding". It was determined that the remaining liabilities incurred should be discharged immediately and that it may be necessary to incur an overdraft at the Commonwealth Bank. It should be remembered that the Club had retained £37 from the Comforts Fund to pay for this evening. In Cromack's later notes he recalls that *"they were welcomed at one of the largest banquets ever held in Mosman, every available foot of the Town Hall being used in the Bumper Welcome Home"*.



(from the MNBRC Collection)

In November the Minutes note some controversy in shooting with the allowing of a shoot by Mr J.H. Smiths after a protest raised during a Grade Match shoot at Chatswood. The action on this matter was taken by the NSRCU but it is not known whether Mr Smiths was a member of the Club or if the Club had raised the protest. Another issue in a similar vain was

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a letter received by the Committee from the NRA stating that " the club was charged with callousness in entering a team as tyros in recent NRA meeting and allowing Capt Hammond to shoot with us". The Committee decided that the Secretary would write a letter in response setting forth the correct facts and repudiating the charge. The matter seems to have attracted no more attention.

In finishing the year, in December of 1919, the Committee forwarded its congratulations to Major-General Sir Granville Ryrie on his elevation to Knighthood. General Ryrie was the local federal member and soon to be elected the first Club Patron.

1920 - began slowly and the first Committee meeting is noted as being in March. With the war now over for more than a year the Club's activities were firmly centred around being a competitive shooting club.

In a poor start to the year, the Club's finances were again raised as an issue with an approach to be made to the Commonwealth Bank with the purpose of taking out an overdraft against the Club's War Loan.

Club membership was still quite high following the war although numbers were well down from its "heydays" of 1916. In July it was reported that the Club membership was 581. This number included the 243 who had enlisted during WW1. The "active" membership of the Club was put at 203.

The 6th Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in August of 1920. At this Annual General meeting the Club Subscription was raised from 5 to 10 shillings and the Club's oldest member, J.R. Macdonald was elected as the Club's first Life Member. As a Life Member he was granted free entry to all the Club's competitions. At the Committee meeting prior to the AGM, Atlee-Hunt, Rabone and Cromack were charged with writing a club history that was to be presented at the meeting.



Along with the election of the usual Club Executives the Club decided to create some new office bearers, these positions being Patron, President and Vice President . The Club's first Patron was General Sir Granville de Laune Ryrie. General Ryrie was a Member of the House of Representatives (Lib/Nat) 1911-22 (North Sydney) and 1922-27 (Warringah). Assistant Minister for Defence and honorary Minister (4th February 1920 -21 December 1921) in the Hughes government, High Commissioner in London 1927-32, member of Australian delegation to League of Nations 1927, 1928 and 1929. Ryrie had been a NSW Parliamentarian 1906-10. General Ryrie was Commander of the 2nd Light Horse Brigade (1914) serving in Gallipoli and North Africa during WW1.

Left: General Sir Granville de Laune Ryrie, The Club's First Patron (Picture Australia – source National Archives)

Alderman A.D. Walker (again Mayor of Mosman) stepped down as Club Captain and was elected the Club's first President with G.J. Williamson elected as Captain in his place. Club Vice-Presidents were J.T Ralston and Alec Thompson.

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB Inc
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September saw the competitiveness of the Club again with the entry of 3 teams in the Metropolitan District Rifle Club Union Grade Matches for A, B and D Grades.

The end of 1920 saw very little Club activity in general with the sale of the Acetylene Lamps from the Reservoir Range, (this range had had electric light for some time) and the sale of other "superfluous materials" from the Reid Park and Neutral Bay Ranges

Arrangements were beginning to be made for another Cheer-Oh Girls concert. This concert was to raise funds for an Honour Board and for Club Funds and was held in early 1921.

Club Divisions

The number of Club members joining during WW1 was such that they were divided into 3 divisions to be able to cope. The 3 divisions were identified by the location of their training grounds.

The Club Divisions were:

- the Rawson Park Division (later named the Mosman Oval Division), paraded at the Oval, Myahgah Road, Mosman and Miniature Shooting at The Reservoir Range, Brady Street, Mosman. It appears certain that the Rawson Park Division never paraded at the present Rawson Park as all references for this group's activities are for Mosman Oval.



Above: Mosman Oval August 2003 (photo G.Somerville)

- the Reid Park Division, paraded at Reid Park, Avenue Road, Mosman Bay, and Miniature Shooting at Reid Park Range.



Above & Below: Reid Park, August 2003 (photos G.Somerville)



- the Neutral Bay Division, paraded at the Neutral Bay Public School, Ben Boyd Road, Neutral Bay and Miniature Shooting also at the Neutral Bay Public School.



Above: Neutral Bay Public School, August 2003 (photo G.Somerville)

Each division had its own Divisional Commander appointed along with their supporting ranks. A Committee with Hon Secretary to maintain their own records and reports were also in place.

Each division were required to report monthly to the Club Committee on membership, attendances and the results of their activities following the Syllabus of Instruction that had been published and was carried out in common to all 3 divisions.

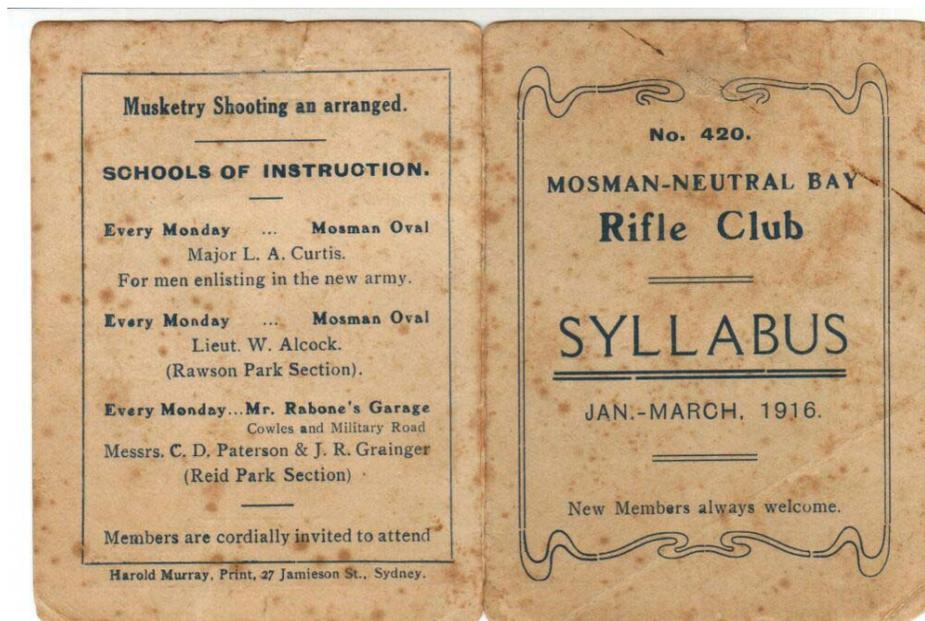
Drills

For all three divisions, the purpose of their being was to provide training to the members in preparation for their enlistment in the Australian Military Forces.

A syllabus of training was prepared by the Divisional Committees designed to give as rounded an education as possible in those matters military.

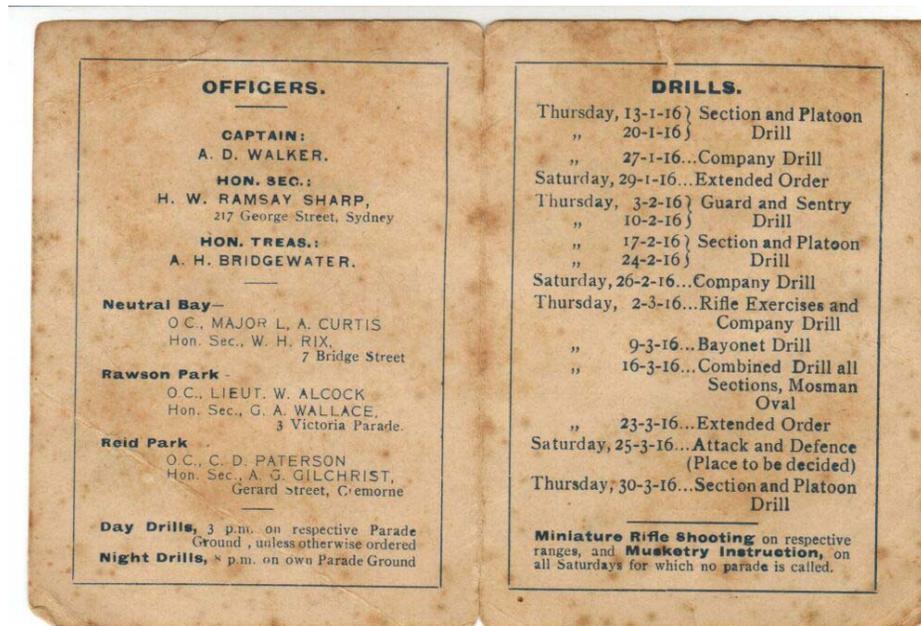
Some of the activities listed in the Drill Syllabus were:

- Miniature Rifle Shooting
- Section, Platoon and Company Drills
- Combined Club Drills
- Musketry Practice (at Long Bay and other Ranges)
- Rifle and Bayonet Exercises
- Extended Order and Fire Control Drills
- Guard and Sentry Drill
- Attack and Defence Exercises
- Schools of Instruction (for men enlisting in the new army)
- Practice for Drill Competition



(from the MNBRC Collection)

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB Inc
CLUB CHRONOLOGY 1915 TO 1920



(from the MNBRC Collection)

In June of 1915 the Club appointed Sgt-Major Wilkinson as Physical Drill Instructor at a stipend of 5/- per week and shortly after a Musketry Instructor in the person of Mr E Falk.

The Supervisor of Rifle Clubs ordered the Mosman-Neutral Bay Club to drill with the 17th Infantry Regiment (Headquarters in North Sydney) who were part of the 8th Infantry Brigade (Headquarters in Mosman). The types of drills being carried out are not defined but one mention in the later minutes involved Special Musketry Training for which members were selected to attend.

Drills were generally held on Thursday nights and Saturday afternoons and as early as August 1915 the Club paraded (without arms) at Government House with the Northern Suburbs Rifle Clubs.

The Club used the Tramways Band for one parade in March of 1916 but it is unknown if this was continued. There was a proposal for a Drill Competition between the Divisions and a further proposal for combined drills every second Thursday. This combined drill was later scrapped in favour of Miniature shooting because of "unsatisfactory attendance".

The Activities of the Mosman-Neutral –Bay Rifle Club during the 1914 – 1918 Conflict

Reference: The Defence Act of the Commonwealth Australia 1903- Australian Rifle Club Regulations and the Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC)

The Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club as formed in 1915 was duly constituted and accepted as a rifle club under the Rifle Club Regulations of the Defence Act. As Australia was gearing up for World War 1 at the time, and only one month away from the Gallipoli landings, the members participated in Volunteer Defence Duties and Training as part of their club activities. As you will read in other parts of this collection of information, many members went on to serve overseas with the 1st AIF.

Training:

Major Curtis wrote the Volunteer Defence Corps Training Manual of the day, very hurriedly in 1914. It was done to take into account the limited time that the VDC/Rifle Club members had away from the normal jobs or studies.

Being predominantly rifle clubs, a large part of the training revolved around shooting. These practices were:

Miniature cartridge applications – (using the .23 & .22 cal LR Morris tubes)

These shoots were shot over 25 and 50 yards on round targets. In the beginning the Club used Morris tube fitted .303's to ease new members into shooting prior too moving up to the .303 calibre. Later the Club acquired some .22 rifles. The club used the Neutral Bay Public School yard and its two other ranges several nights a week, the main quadrangle of the school could accommodate both 25 and 50 yards ranges.

.303 Range Practice – (using a variety of .303 cal rifles)

This was conducted at the Chatswood, Randwick and Long Bay Ranges (now the ANZAC Rifle Range); these practices were a bit different to the Saturday afternoon shooting, which we enjoy today.

The ranges were shot from 100, 200, 300, 400,500, 600, 700, 800, 900 and 1000 yards. Members shot both snap and rapid on the military application targets of the day. Snap and Rapid being restricted to 100, 200 & 300 yards.

Bayonet and Rifle Drills

War at the turn of the century was a very close contact ordeal, members would have been trained in the use of the 1907 version bayonet (This is an 18-inch knife that secures to the end of the rifle and is used for stabbing the enemy). It was noted that some of the "older" members were excused from this part of the training.

Members were taught the traditional rifle drills – At ease, Attention, Slope Arms (Shoulder Arms), Present Arms and Port Arms (used for inspecting the rifle).

Regular Army Instructors were brought in under the Volunteer Defence Corps system to train the members in some of the more detailed types of activities used by a rifleman in war at the time. A very brief outline is set out below.

Extended Order and Fire Control.

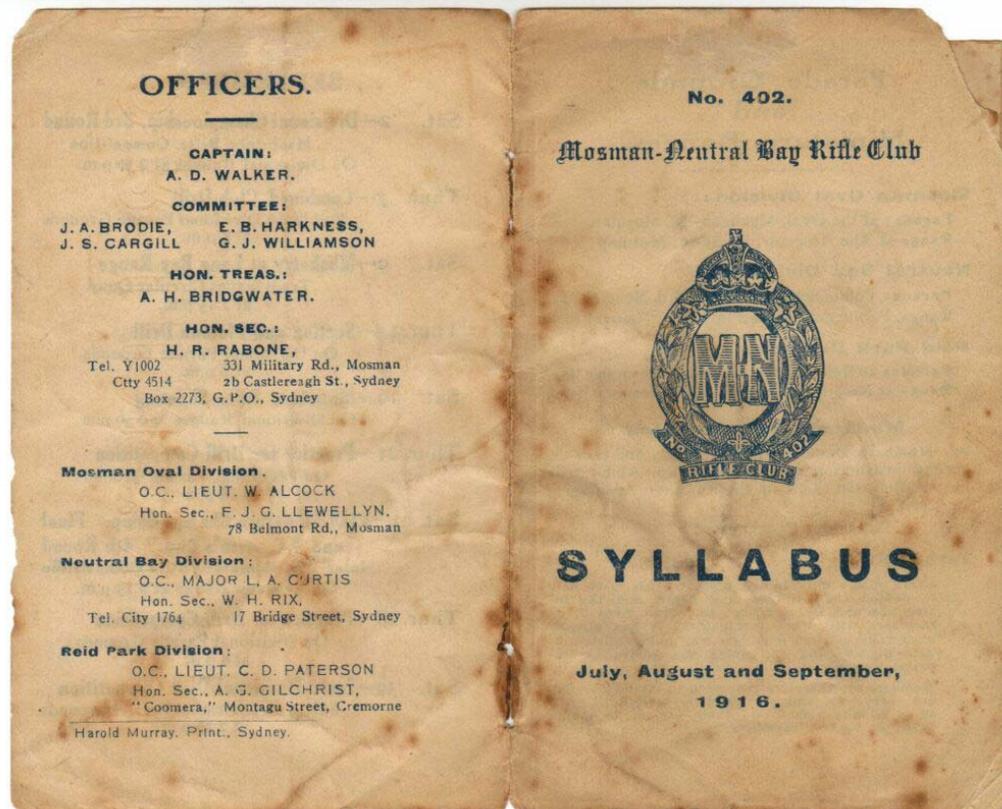
Wars were still fought at the time by troops lining up in ranks and shooting at each other, thankfully by 1915 this idea was losing its appeal. Members were taught how to effectively deploy under cover (Extended Order) and how to effectively direct the rifle fire of others onto a target. They were also instructed in the basics of Attack and Defence in Sections of 12 to 15 men, Platoons of 40 men and Company's of 120 men. You will need to remember that the club had over 700 members (800 men form a full infantry Battalion) at this point in history.

Guard and Sentry Duties

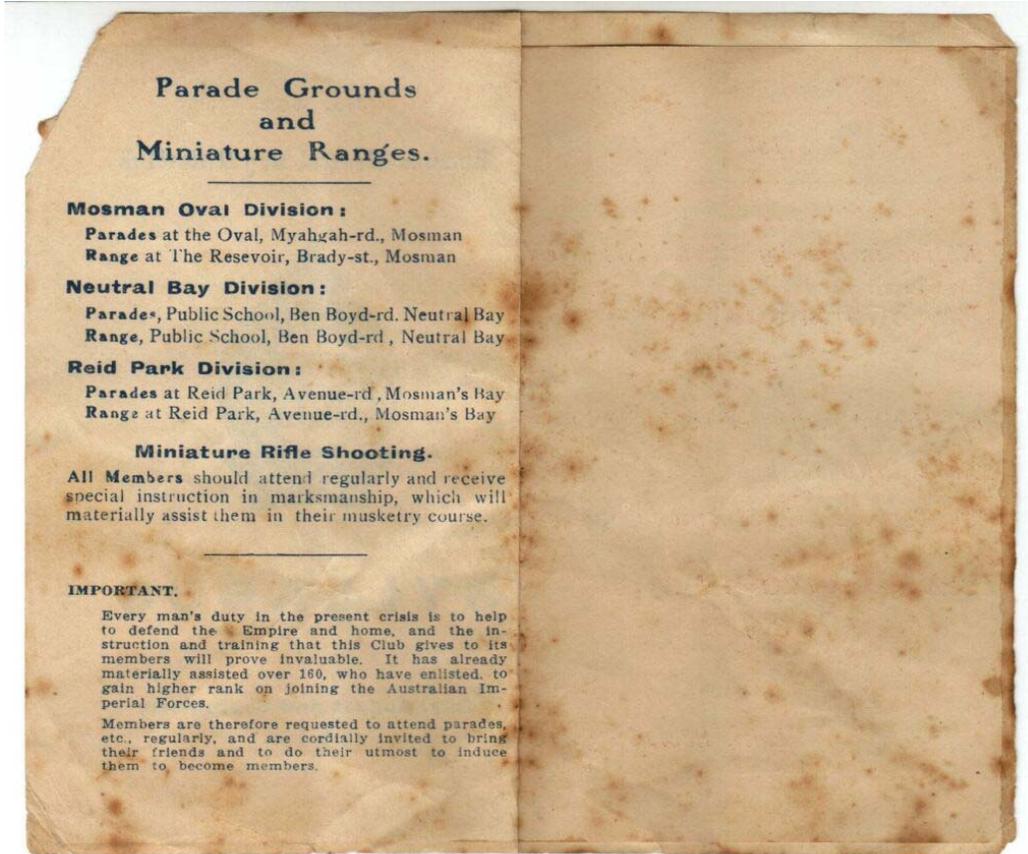
At various times, the members provided guards and sentries for important buildings or areas. This requirement quickly passed once the initial war fever settled down. The main Guard or Sentry duties after the end of 1915 were done at Long Bay range where there was a requirement to ensure that members found their way back to their tents on the Saturday night after a hard days training and some refreshments.

This briefly covers the WW1 activities of the club members on the home front. The travels of those went to war are detailed elsewhere.

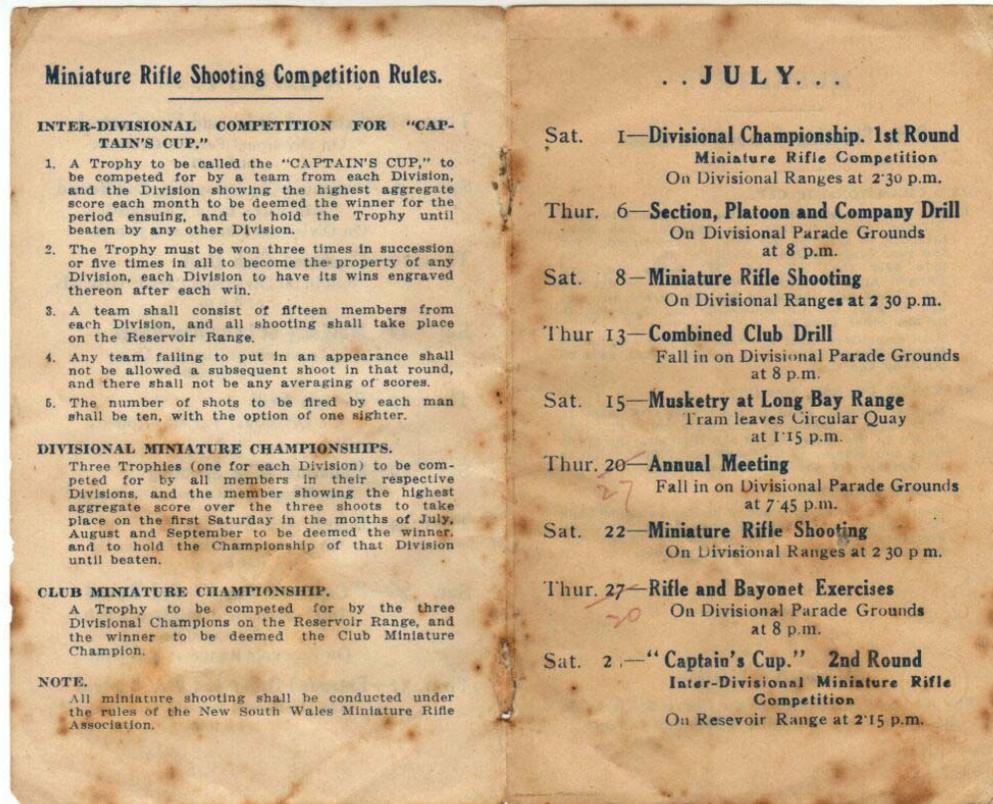
Images of a 1916 Rifle Club Syllabus - July, August & September



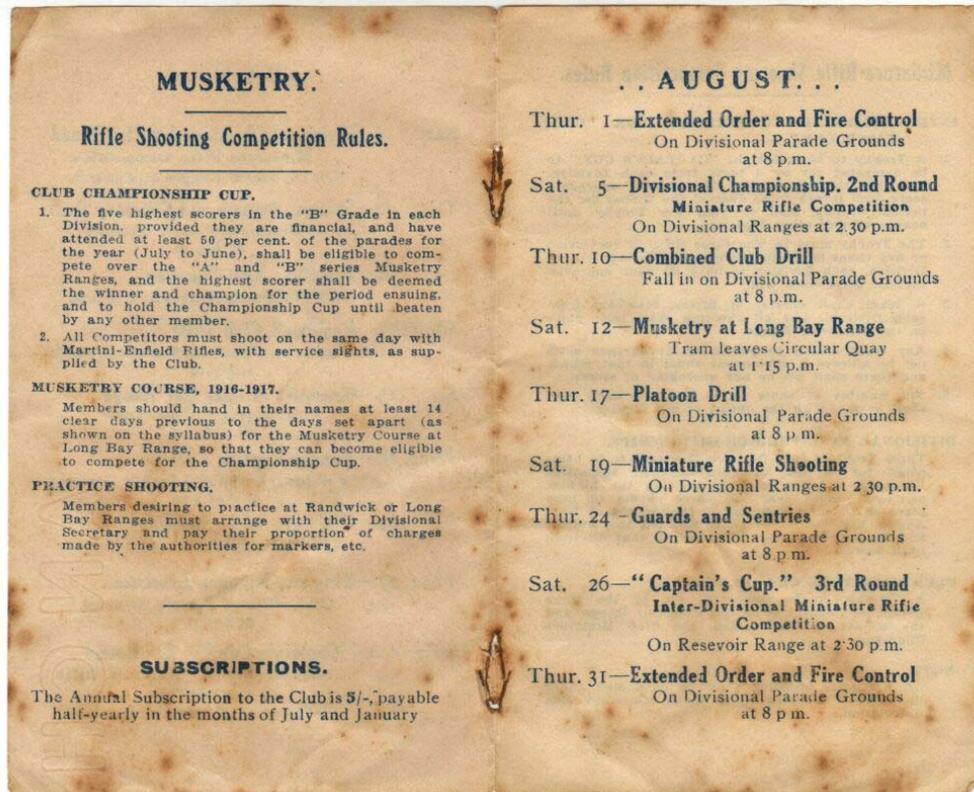
(from the MNBRC Collection)



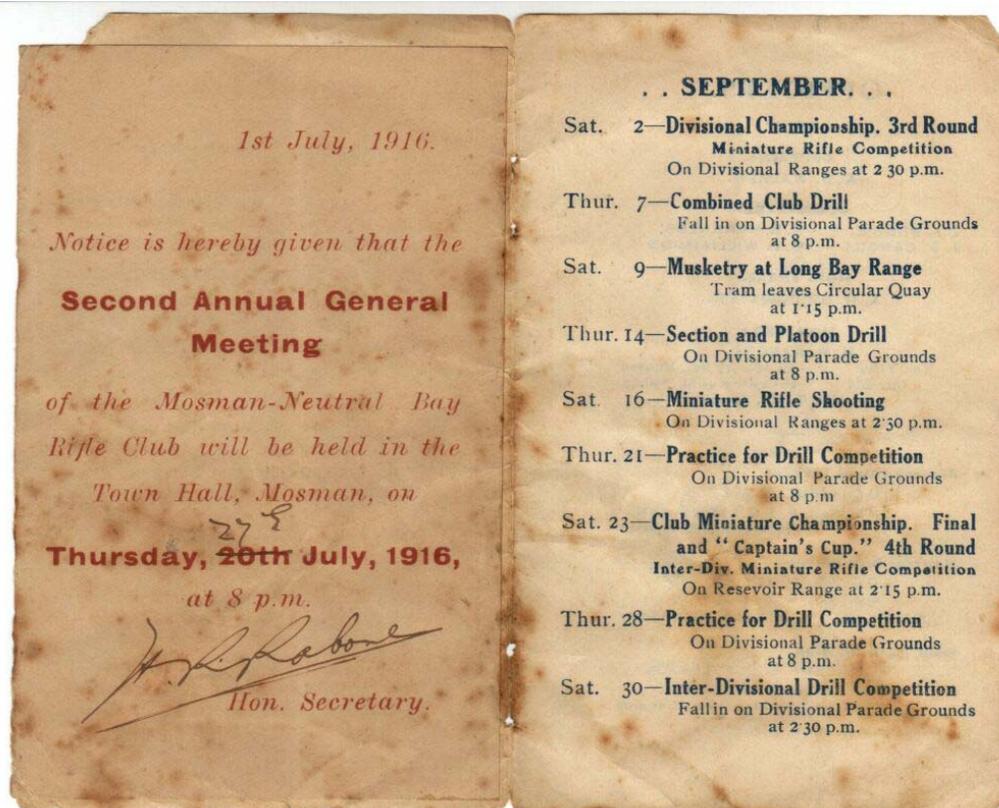
(from the MNBRC Collection)



(from the MNBRC Collection)



(from the MNBRC Collection)



(from the MNBRC Collection)

The Club Badge and Uniform

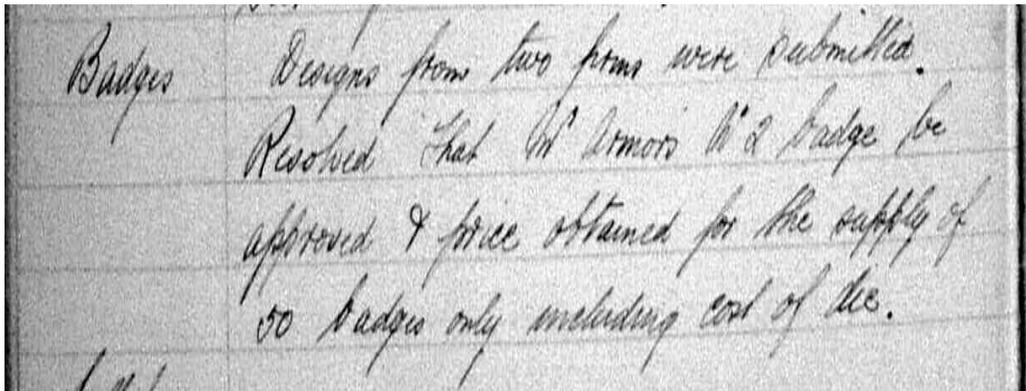
The Club Badge

As part of the setting up of the Club's identity, discussions on uniforms and a Club Badge were undertaken by the Committee. In October 1915, some months after the inception of the Club, the Committee resolved to review designs and prices for a Club Badge. Subsequently 2 designs were submitted, and "W. Amor's No 2 Badge" was approved. A quantity was ordered at 1/6 each for sale to the members. The Club's Badge is reasonably unique among those worn by other Rifle Clubs and appears to have been designed in a military style possibly with the hat or cap in mind that was also being discussed as part of the club uniform that was expected to be adopted.



(Photo G.Somerville)

Extract from MNBRC Minute Book 5 Nov 1915



(Badges - Designs from two firms were submitted. Resolved that W Amors No 2 Badge be approved & price obtained for the supply of 50 badges only including cost of die).

(from the MNBRC Collection)



The Mosman-Neutral Bay Club Badge proudly displayed on their hats by the 1985 Sir Charles Merrett Memorial Teams Winning Team at Williamstown Rifle Range, Melbourne. (from the MNBRC Collection)
Left to Right: S. Birrell, S. Negus, R. Negus, D. McGuigan

The Question of a Club Uniform?

A reflection of how seriously the first Club members were in training for war was the consideration given to adopting a Uniform of some sort. In the end, a Uniform was not adopted, most likely due to the self-funded cost to members.

In July 1915, the Committee was asked to look into prices for a "Uniform" for members and a ballot of members was proposed to determine the style. The proposals were for, Regulation Uniform, Sweater and Cap only, or informal (no uniform). The results were strongly in favour of the simple sweater and cap with 246 votes from 340 (Regulation Uniform 89 votes, Informal 5).

The October/November 1915, the committee moved on to choosing a cap and prices were requested from 2 companies for a "Service Cap in blue with raised front and ventilated". A style was chosen and forwarded to the Divisional Secretaries to book orders from members. The cost for the cap was quoted at 5/9.

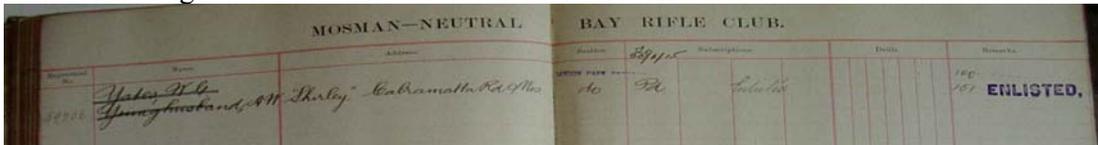
At some point in November/December 1915, at the request of members of the Rawson Park Division to reopen the matter of uniforms, the Committee reconsidered and "the question of uniforms was left optional to members".

A similar fate befell the question of Club Colours (the assumption here is for a flag or banner) which was raised by the Committee in February 1916 with the issue being dropped the following month.

WW1 Enlistments from the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club

C.H. Cromack reported in his chronicle that the number of men enlisting in the armed forces after learning their initial military skills in training with the Club was 243.

A "Roll of honour" was printed with the 4th Annual Report in 1919 and those, along with names gathered from the Minute Books, identify 230 members identified for this record. Of those, 16 were identified as having been Killed in Action, Died of Wounds or Disease whilst on Active Service. It was also noted that a reference in a letter from Club Member F.H. Hunt, that a Lieut Smith, who he mentioned as having been killed in 1916, has not been able to be identified amongst the members from the Club's records.



Above: From the Membership Book showing a Stamp indicating the enlistment of A.W. Younghusband who was killed in action May 1917. (from the MNBRC Collection)



Left - The Mosman Community WW 1 Memorial (photo G.Somerville) is appropriately placed overlooking Mosman's, Alan Border Oval, one of the 3 locations in the area where the members of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club drilled to prepare themselves for war service.

The WWI Memorial at Mosman Oval shows some 1143 names from the area. It should be noted that the memorial displays only one panel of names of those who were killed or died whilst on active service. This panel is identified with the Inscription "They are not dead for all they had to give they sacrificed for love that bids them live" and has 200 names inscribed.

The other 3 panels appear to show the names of those who simply served during the conflict. As with many such memorials, the men who enlisted sometimes confused everyone by enlisting under other names or shortened versions of their own

(sometimes) extended full names. It is possible that the names of members not yet identified are amongst those.

Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club Roll of Honour

Killed in Action/Died Whilst on Active Service

Boone C.A. Lieut KIA	Doyle R.H. Lieut KIA	Stewart W.K. Lieut KIA
Doyle W.S.H. Lieut DOW	Dyer A.E. Sergeant KIA	Glassford E.J.C. Lance-Corp. KIA
Younghusband A.W. Gnr KIA	Godson J.H. Signaller KIA	Butler C.D. Private KIA
Lloyd A.V.R. Private KIA	Cook E. Private KIA	Jhonson C.A. MC Captain DOW
Moors E.H. Lieut DOW	Allen C.F. M.C.Sergeant DOD	Wright M.R.D. Private DOW
Agutter A.E. Corporal DOD		

KIA = Killed in Action, DOW = Died of Wounds, DOD = Died of Disease

Prisoner of War

Goulder R.B. Corporal

Military Medal

Colley-Priest L.W. Private MM

Distinguished Flying Cross

Fletcher H.H. Lieut DFC¹

Military Cross Winners

Hall F.S. Captain MC
Jhonson C.A. Captain MC

Hinds F.G. Captain MC
Harris W.D. Captain MC

Malley G.F. Captain MC
Norman T.B. Lieut MC

Enlisted (All Names)

Agutter A.E.	Chapman N.F.	Davidson R.A.J.
Allen C.F.	Chasling E.H.	Davies A.E.
Anderson G.H.	Chidzey J.	Dawson L.R.
Armstrong J.E.	Cole H.J.	Dawson P.J.
Beaver G.C.	Colley-Priest L.W.	Dewhurst S.
Bell S.H.	Cook A.C.	Dibbs H.
Beohm J.G.	Cooke E.	Dight A.C.
Bolton A.F.	Cooke F.R.	Dodd H.
Boone C.A.	Cooper H.R.	Dowling D.G.T.
Boone L.J.	Cormack O.R.	Doyle R.H.
Brodie R.L.	Courtney C.J.	Doyle W.S.H
Brooks H.R.	Cowles G.A.	Dyer A.E
Bulloch E.	Cox W.C.	East W.G.
Bulte A.J.	Craig A.H.	Elliott S.T.H.
Burkitt H.W.	Crossman H.	Ellis H.
Butler C.D.	Croudace H.M.	Falconer D.
Button T.A.	Crowhurst W.B.	Farnell F.L.
Cameron E.A.	Cullen W.G.	Farquhar J.R.
Carmichael D.M.	Dalrymple F.S.	Felton G.D.
Carne H.	Dalziel V.C.	Ferguson C.H.

¹ Some doubt exists as to the inclusion of H.H. Fletcher for the DFC. The Australian War Memorial Nominal Role for WW1 notes a H.B. Fletcher as winner of the DFC with enlistment date 14th Jan 1915 prior to the formation of the Club. The Club's Enlistment Book shows a H.H. Fletcher who enlisted 31st May 1915 in the 6th Field Ambulance. It is not known if H.B. Fletcher had any connection with the Club.

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Fleming F.J.G.	Jones F.	Payne A.E.
Fleming R.	Jones F.E.	Pearse R.
Fletcher G.W.R.	Jones L.J.W.	Peden G.H.
Fletcher H.H.	Julian L.	Perryman M.
Fox A.M.	Kelly J.	Philp E.L.
Franks F.R.	Keogh A.	Philpott J.G.
Froggart G.E.	Kerr J.	Phipson H.T.
Fryer W.	Kidston R.R.	Pierce H.T.
Gaston E.J.	King G.C.	Pirie W.H.R.
Gellatly G.L.	Lakeman A.E.	Pring F.P.
Gerrett H.H.B.	Langford N.H.	Proctor J.T.G.
Gillham H.K.	Leigh S.H.	Rabbidge E.P.
Glassford E.J.C.	Levy G.I.	Rabone F.H.
Godson J.H.	Llewelyn F.J.G.	Readford M.K.
Goodchild W.G.	Lloyd A.V.R.	Reid N.
Gordon C.	Macgregor A.B.	Richards B.J.H.
Goulder R.B.	Macpherson D.	Roberts G.A.
Grant A.F.	Martindale H.W.	Robin H.S. de Q.
Grear C.S.	Maynard C.R.	Robinson W.
Greig J.W.	McClellan G.F.	Rosborough J.
Grey J.E.	McCulloch J.S.	Ross D.
Hall F.S.	McCusken J.	Roxburgh C.E.
Ham W.J.	McDonald A.W.	Smith S.S.
Harbutt P.H.	McGrady H.C.	Smith T.A.
Hatch W.C.K.	McGrady S.R.	Solomon C.S.
Haymet F.I.	McManus R.A.	Steanes J.W.
Hayne S.	Miller M.C.	Stewart W.K.
Healey C.A.	Mills C.F.	Stinson H.L.G.
Heffer T.B.	Milne J.	Symonds F.R.
Herford E.T.	Miscambie H.H.	Taylor F.
Hewitt H.	Mitchell E.M.	Taylor H.B.
Hill L.R.	Moore E.J.	Temple G.
Hill R.G.W.	Moore G.T.	Thorpe P.
Hinds F.G.	Moorhouse N.E.	Toose K.M.
Hoare E.E.	Moors E.H.	Turnidge A.L.
Hocking A.H.	Moors M.C.	van Gelder S.
Hooker P.J.	Musgrave G.H.	van Heuckelum C.
Horsman G.	Neill C.I.	Vincent J.
Horton G.H.	Niness E.C.	Wagstaffe W.
Hughes M.V.	Norman T.B.	Walker F.W.
Hunt F.H.	Nott L.B.	Wallis W.T.
Hutchison E.	O'Conner V.J.	Warden J.
Ingham R.F.	Ohler C.L.	Watson R.W.
Irving T.	Oliver P.D.	Watson W.R.
James C.S.	Palmer G.H.	Waymax A.U.
Jarman D.	Palmer H.	Webb A.E.
Jhonson C.A.	Palmer J.	Weeding A.G.
Johnston S.A.	Paul W.J.	Welch R.

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB Inc
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Wells J.J.	Wilson A.J.	Wright G.
White E.A.	Wilson J.H.	Wright M.R.D.
Wildridge A.H.	Winn G.R.	Young R.W.
Wilkinson W.	Witcombe E.L.	Younghusband A.W.
Willis E.R.	Woodger W.G.	Zander C.S.
Willson H.S.	Woods G.J.	Zander W.H.

Please note that the spelling of the names in the Roll of Honour has been taken from the 1919 version printed with the Annual Report. It was noted during the writing of these lists that different spelling of some names exists in other records.

As mentioned previously in this document, in May of 1919, the Club was contacted by a Mr J.W. Bishop in regards to a "Soldier's Memorial" for Mosman. The Secretary was asked to request further details and subsequently on reply, Mr J.A. Brodie was appointed the Club's representative with the Memorial Committee. Later C.H Cromack delegated for J.A. Brodie whilst he was absent from the state for some months.

Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour Card for
Club Member C.F. Allen
Sergeant - 1st Australian and New Zealand Wireless Signal Squad.

Particulars Required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum.

1. Name (in full) of Fallen Soldier: Cecil Frederick Allen
2. Unit and Number (if known): 1st Australian and New Zealand Wireless Signal Squad
3. With what Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected (under which his name ought to come on the Memorial) -
Town (if any): Sydney District: Mosman State: New South Wales
4. What was his Birthplace: Sydney
5. Date of Death: August 5th 1918
6. Place where Killed or Wounded: Kavadar Persia

Particulars Required for the Nation's Histories.

1. What was his Calling: clerk Commercial Bank
2. Age at time of Death: 26
3. What was his School: Public Schools Young
4. What was his other Training: bank office & abroad take on stock brokers office
5. If born in Britain or Abroad, at what age did he come to Australia: 1930
6. Had he ever served in any Military or Naval Force before Enlisting in the A.I.F. (Please state particulars): only for a short time in Mosman Rifle Club
7. Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment -

8. Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself. (Please state Relationship) -
1930 No. 3 Flat, Wyreema, 10 George Street, Manly NSW

9. Name and Address of the Parent or other person giving this information -
Name: Ailie Annette Allen
Relationship to Soldier: Mother
Address: Chatham Boulevard Road Manly

10. Names and Addresses of any other persons to whom reference could be made by the Historian for further information -
Name: Brother J. S. Allen
Address: Head office Bank N.S.W. Sydney

307 Folder is Addressed to the Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne. Please fold in four, and stick down gummed flap so that the addressed portion is outside. The information is required urgently.
11/10/11 - C.1674

**Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour Card for
 Club Member A.W. Younghusband
 Gunner - 5th Field Artillery**

REGTELD ON H. R. CARDS

Particulars Required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum.

- Name (in full) of Fallen Soldier *Younghusband Allan Wadham*
- Unit and Number (if known) *5th Field Artillery 7458*
- With what Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected (under which his name ought to come on the Memorial)—
 Town (if any) *Mosman* District _____ State *New South Wales*
- What was his Birthplace *Wapiti New Zealand*
- Date of Death *2nd 15/17*
- Place where Killed or Wounded *Koreil valley*

Particulars Required for the Nation's Histories.

- What was his Calling *Black*
- Age at time of Death *25 years*
- What was his School *Manganui College New Zealand*
- What was his other Training _____
- If born in Britain or Abroad, at what age did he come to Australia *18 years*
- Had he ever served in any Military or Naval Force before Enlisting in the A.I.F. (Please state particulars) *No*
- Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment—

- Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself. (Please state Relationship)— *His brother Major L.H. Younghusband of the Royal Field Artillery, won the Military Cross*
- Name and Address of the Parent or other person giving this information—
 Name *C.M. Younghusband*
 Relationship to Soldier *Mother*
 Address *Cadgully, Raglan St East, Mosman, Sydney*
- Names and Addresses of any other persons to whom reference could be made by the Historian for further information—
 Name *Major L.H. Younghusband, M.C.*
 Address *Cadgully, Raglan St East, Mosman, Sydney*

NOTE.—This Folder is Addressed to the Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne. Please fold in four, and stick down gummed flap so that the addressed portion is outside. The information is required urgently.

D. 1025/10.11.—C.A.C.T.C.

Rifle Ranges

The search for places to shoot commenced soon after the Club was formed. A.D. Walker was charged, in April of 1915, with the task of approaching Manly and North Sydney Rifles Clubs for permission to use their ranges. In the meantime, the divisional commanders were asked to assign personnel to report on sites in their areas suitable for the location of a range.

A.D. Walker's efforts appear not to have borne fruit. It was reported from North Sydney Rifle Club that the Sailors Bay Range had been closed the previous July.



Above - Reservists shooting at The Sailor Bay Range, 600 yard mound - 9th March, 1902. Photograph from a Supplement to the St Leonard's Quarterly Record, April 1902

By June 1915, the sites for Miniature Ranges for the Neutral Bay and Rawson Park Divisions had been secured.

In September 1915, the Club commissioned a Mr W. Schofield to carry out the construction of 3 miniature rifle ranges for practice. These were located at, Neutral Bay (at the Public School, Ben Boyd Road), at Reid Park and Spit Junction (the Brady Street or Reservoir Range). In December of that year, the ranges were inspected by a Lt Grover, and the Ranges at Neutral Bay and Reid Park were passed for use. The Brady Street Range at Spit Junction still required "certain alterations" prior to being used. Interestingly, an alternative quote was asked of Mr Schofield, the minutes stating - "price for double firing platform and iron tubes for the Spit Junction Range be obtained and if reasonable, accepted".

The Committees of each Division were placed in control of the shooting activities at their own Miniature Ranges. The Club was ready to start shooting in its own right.

Later improvements were made to the ranges. Electric Light came to the Reid Park Range in November 1916, whilst the purchase of "suitable lamps" for the Reservoir Range in January 1917 and the Neutral Bay Range in April 1917. These lamps were likely of Acetylene Generator type. It is known that Acetylene lamps were being used for lighting the drill grounds.

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Not much appears to have been reported about the ranges themselves, but it seems from the records that the Reservoir Range in Brady Street was in the most common use for competition and for use by other groups such as the Boy Scouts and Senior Cadets who were given permission to use the range in March of 1918 on Saturday and Tuesday afternoons respectively. It was noted later that some discussion was taken up with the Department of Defence over the payment for damage caused to the range by the Cadets use.

In March of 1919 the Secretary was asked to contact the Mayor of Mosman in regard to discontinuing shooting at Reid Park and offering to sell the installation there to the council with the exception of the Electric Light system. The targets from Reid Park were to be used to improve the Neutral Bay Range at the Public School.

In November of 1920 Mr Atlee-Hunt was asked to undertake the sale of items from the Reservoir Range along with the Acetylene Lamps from there. He was also asked to request an extension of the Electric Light from the Railway Commissioners until the 1st Jan 1921 to assist in the Club's activities but it appears this was refused and the power disconnected.

The range at Neutral Bay, located at the Public School became the long term home of the MNB Miniature Rifle Club until July 1969 when the range was closed and the Smallbore Club moved to use the Manly Club Range in Manly Vale. Ian Young reported that since April of that year they had been dealing without success with the Department of Education and the Government Real Estate Section in an attempt to preserve their occupation of the site. The members determined at their Annual General Meeting to keep the Miniature Club intact and had been offered use of Manly's "new" range. The club members began the job of dismantling the range with the requirement of giving vacant possession by the 31st July 1969. The Neutral Bay range was to be closed so that the school's need to build a new boy's toilet block could be carried out.

Miniature Rifle Shooting

Much of the early military rifle training for members appears to have been based on Miniature Rifle Shooting. Miniature Rifle shooting was the Military's accepted and supported method of training recruits the basics of marksmanship. The Club ran 3 miniature rifle ranges at Neutral Bay (at the Public School in Ben Boyd Road), Reid Park and Spit Junction (the Brady Street or Reservoir Range).



The photograph to the left shows the Neutral Bay Public School circa 1940. The Butts for the Miniature Range can be seen in the background as the light coloured enclosure attached to the building directly behind the pipe band. This was the home of the Club's Miniature Shooting until July 1969.

Photograph from Jillian Skinners "A Plain Brick Building" Neutral Bay Public School 1886 ~1986, Published for the Schools Centenary Celebrations. (Original Photo Source Unknown)

It seems from references in the Club Minutes that initially, the Club was using larger calibre rifles (.303) fitted with Morris Tubes in .230" calibre which they were purchasing at 25/ per 1000 rounds.

In November of 1915 the Club decided to affiliate with the MDRC Union for Miniature Shooting.

Later references in the minutes to the purchase of .22 calibre ammunition and the purchase of Winchester Rifles shows a move away from Morris Tubes although Morris Tubes were available in .22 calibre as well.

A reference is also made to a Special Rifles Committee to secure a common rifle for use by all Divisions for Miniature Shooting showing a more serious approach to the shooting sport than the military training side.

Background to Organised Target Rifle Shooting in the U.K.

Unofficially, "Target Shooting" in some form has been around as long as firearms have in existence. This following brief narrative concentrates on the history of rifle shooting to provide some background to its development. It does tell the story of British Rifle Shooting but its reason for being can, in most parts, be easily transferred to the history of rifle shooting in the Empire's "Colonies".

In several of its wars, and as early as the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, the British Army's poor performances were demonstrated in regards to their weapons and weapons training. It was however, as a result of the threat of invasion by Napoleon III in the 1840's that the Volunteer Movement was formed in Britain. It was from these groups that the Target Rifle Movement descended as a sport carried out by civilians.

Another series of lessons were learnt later by the British Army during the Boer War, when the more "practiced" ability of the Boer's civilian rifleman, gained from a life of hunting on the veldt, proved to be one of the Boer's greatest advantages on the field of battle against the British Army's "old-fashioned" tactics. The Boers showed their marksmanship prowess to be of a higher standard than that of the British by using sniper-like tactics. One outcome of this was the introduction of the prone position that had previously been used only for long range shooting. The Boers found it too easy to hit the profile of a man who was standing, kneeling or sitting. The low profile prone position was seen to be of advantage in saving lives.

Rifle Shooting and Rifle Ranges certainly existed well before the Boer War, but a movement with leaders like Rudyard Kipling and Arthur Conan Doyle was formed to lobby for a way for civilians to become proficient in the use of firearms without having to join the military services. The British War Office was finally convinced and they encouraged the formation of civilian rifle clubs with the provisos that they would affiliate with the National Rifle Association and submit a list of all club members to the District Commander of the area where the club was located in order to provide the military authorities with the details of men who could be called upon during an emergency. The National Rifle Association itself was formed in 1860 "to promote and encourage Marksmanship throughout the Queen's Dominions in the interests of Defence and the permanence of the Volunteer and Auxiliary Forces, Naval, Military and the Air".

The difficulties in arranging for open ranges to be built limited these in number and the alternative of Miniature Rifle was identified as the most economical method for training large numbers of men the rudiments of rifle shooting. Miniature Rifles were those of .230 (Morris Tube) and .22 calibre (Note Morris Tubes were also available in .22 calibre). One of the great advantages of Miniature Rifle shooting is that space for a Miniature Range can be easily found and such locations as roof-tops, and basements of buildings were common. As in the case of our own Club, the first ranges used were in Neutral Bay School yard, Reid Park and near the Reservoir at Spit Junction. Others, with even less space used an enclosed tube system (similar to a number of oil drums joined end to end) to shoot through to the target. An example, similar to this latter type, can be seen at Lyndhurst Rifle Club, NSW. See also the photograph below.



(Picture Australia – Source State Library Vic.)

Many Miniature Rifle Clubs were formed, and soon after organised themselves into the Society of Working Men's Rifle Clubs which later became the Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs. This group later again became the National Small-Bore Rifle Association. The numbers of Miniature Rifle Ranges are much diminished in the 21st century but ranges were commonplace in the early part of the 20th century when men as their duty took up the sport as a practice for when these skills would be needed.

The military forces well supported the use of Miniature Rifle Shooting as an introduction to use of the full-bore Service Rifles. The Musketry Manual of 1915 explains that *"instruction on miniature ranges is in no sense a final training, but it is a most useful and economical preparation for service shooting -- especially useful where range accommodation is distant or altogether lacking. It should be commenced during the recruit's training when frequent visits should be made to the miniature range and the lessons of aiming, pressing the trigger, declaring the point of aim on discharge, etc should be illustrated practically by firing at elementary targets"*.

The value of civilian marksmen was to be proved all too soon in the First World War where many civilian target riflemen became snipers or were seconded to become instructors.

Musketry Practice

Open Range Shooting

During World War I the Club members arranged and undertook open range shooting at various times as part of their "Musketry Practice".

Several ranges are mentioned in records, including:

- Long Bay Rifle Range
- Chatswood Rifle Range
- Randwick Rifle Range
- Liverpool Rifle Range

The Club Syllabus for July to September 1916 gives some details for Musketry Shooting by the Club. The Musketry Course was being held at the Long Bay Rifle Range one Saturday each month. To be eligible for the "Club Championship Cup" awarded to the highest scorer over the "Musketry Ranges", members needed to be financial and have attended at least 50% of parades for the year. Shooting was carried out by all competitors on the same day using Martini-Enfield rifles and Service Sights.

To get to Musketry Practice at the Long Bay Range, Tram passes from Circular Quay were organised, so it appears that the trip to Maroubra was a long one by today's standards and being pre-Sydney Harbour Bridge included the Ferry trip across the harbour.

Where members wished to carry out shooting practice, both the Randwick and Long Bay Ranges were used and a payment was required "proportional to the charges made by the authorities for markers, etc".

Musketry practice consisted of shooting over various ranges commencing from 100 yards through, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900 and 1000 yards.

Snap and rapid shooting were included on the military application targets of the day. Snap and Rapid were normally shot over 100, 200 & 300 yards.

A Snap Shoot was a competition where the target disk was affixed on a long pole, was held by the marker and "exposed" to the shooter. The exposures were fixed in length of time and the number of times exposed as well as 3 different lateral positions. The shooter had 10 shots to count towards his overall score from all the target exposures.

A Rapid Shoot was a competition where the target was exposed for a set period in the one location. The shooter had that time to fire 10 shots to count as his score.

On 22nd June of 1918 the following conditions were set for matches at Long Bay Range.

Running Man - 25 yards each way, seven shots, no magazine to be used, scoring 4 points each hit.

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Turks Head - with visible 4 inch full, target exposed five times at intervals of from 5 to 10 seconds, each exposure 5 seconds. Scoring Bull 5 elsewhere on target 4.

Silhouette, Head Shoulders - Exposed five times at intervals of 5 seconds, each exposure for 5 seconds, scoring 4 points each hit.

Handicap - automatic handicap basis 200 yards

The Club used Randwick Rifle Range for the most part on Saturday afternoons for Club Championship shoots but it appears that targets were being booked at the Chatswood and Long Bay Ranges for various Grade Matches as well as shooting at Liverpool Rifle Range. At some time in 1921/22, use of the range at Randwick was restricted so that 600 yards was the longest range permitted. The Club Championship was subsequently altered to suit the shorter distances.

The later move to Liverpool's Anzac Rifle Range came in 1925/26 and became the Club's permanent home until the Liverpool Range was closed and Clubs were moved to Long Bay (renamed ANZAC) in 1967.

Fund Raising Concerts & Activities

During WW1 the Club arranged a number of concerts and other entertainments to raise funds in order to send "comforts" to its members who were serving overseas. These comforts included simple things that would be appreciated by all personnel away from home such as, soap, socks, lollies, tobacco, local newspapers, etc.



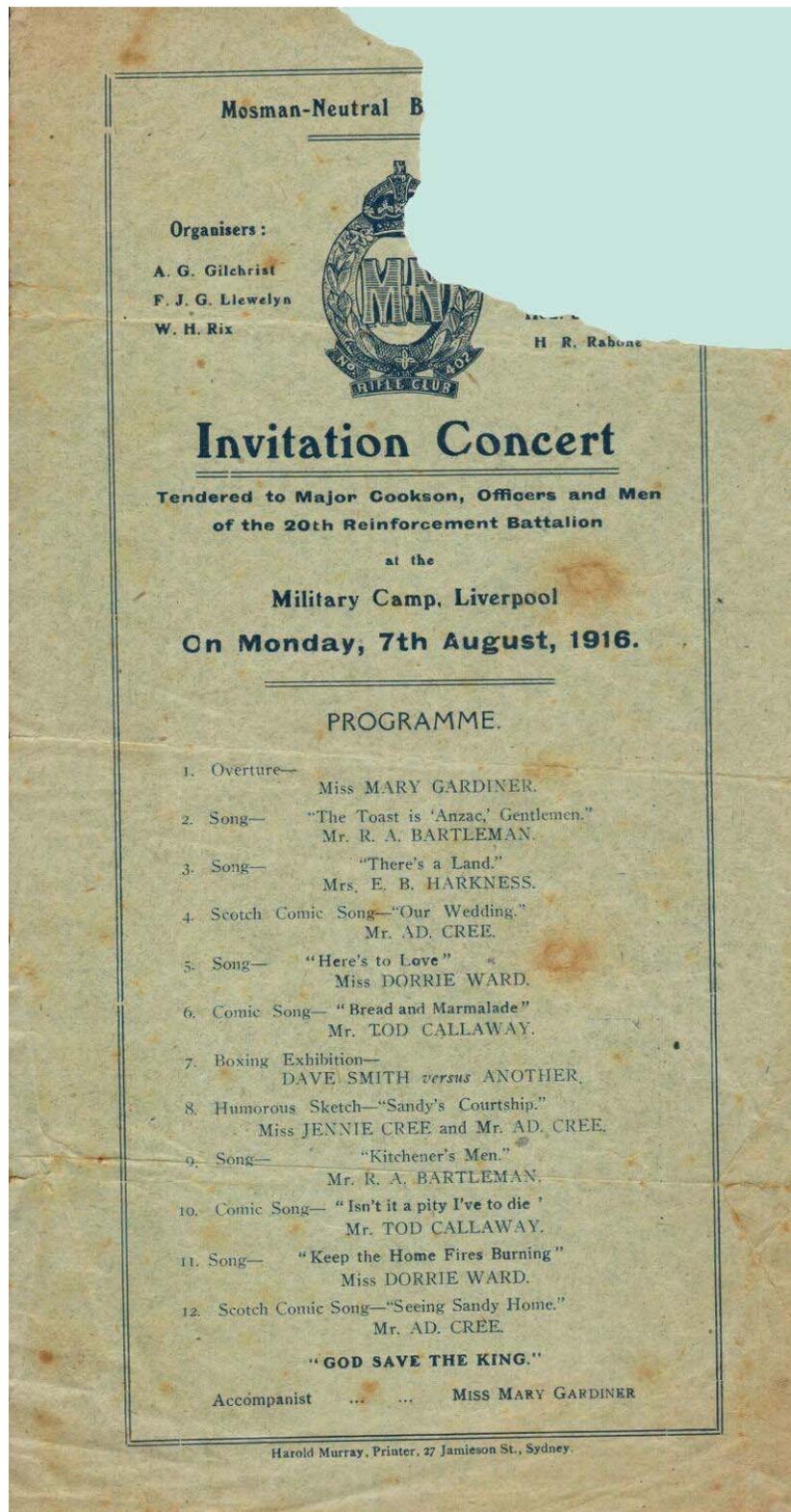
Above: An invitation to a Concert held at the Mosman Town Hall May 1916 in support of the Comforts Fund (from the MNBRC Collection)

From the Club Minutes it appears that Invitation Concerts were arranged where the guest was requested to bring a suitable article. Over 1000 articles were donated from one such concert along with cash proceeds of £13/1/2. Although the types of articles were not described it is likely that they were meant to be items of "comfort" such as those previously described to be sent to the members on the front line. There is also a reference to the 36th Rifleman's Battalion Comforts Depot. It may be that any items donated would have been forwarded to the Comfort's Depot for packaging and forwarding to the troops. There was also a later mention in the Minutes for August of 1915 that the Club had resolved to open a Comforts Depot and were contacting a Mr Warre for his assistance.

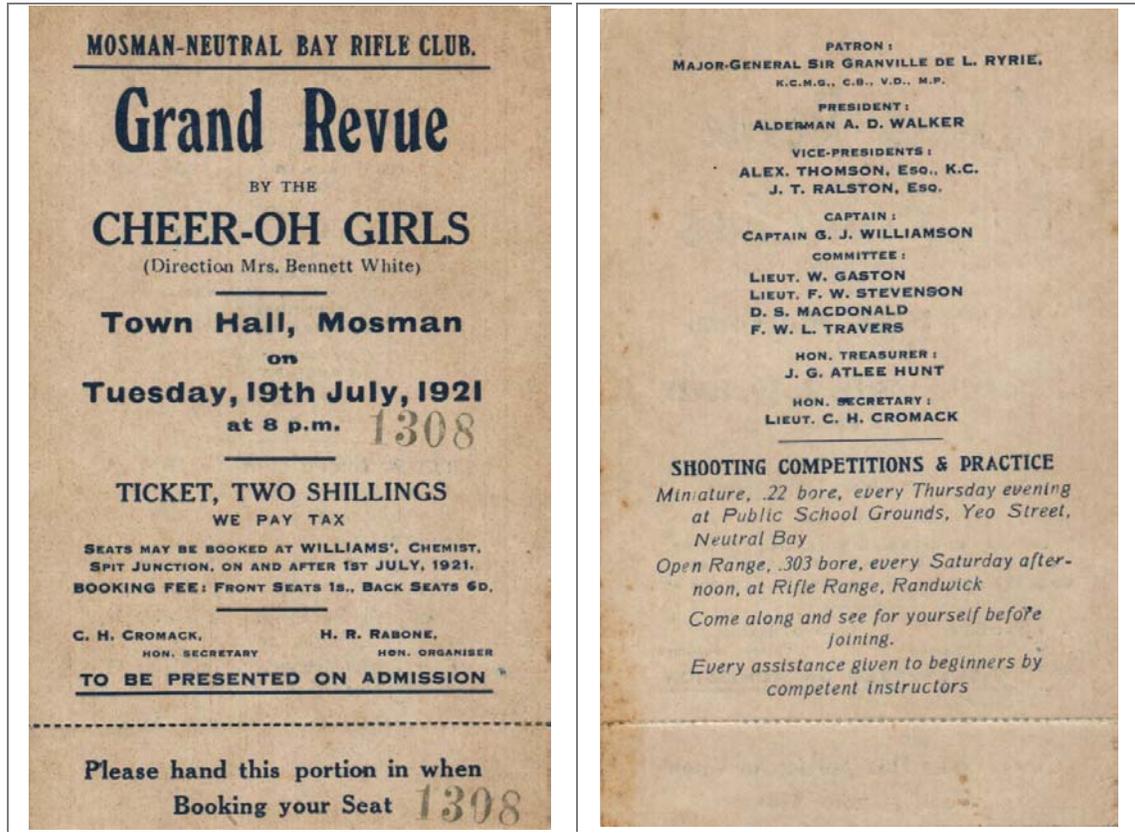
Another purpose of these concerts appears to have been to raise funds to build homes for Returned Soldiers through the Voluntary Workers Association.

The concerts appeared to be popular, with most being held at the Mosman Town Hall and other suitable locations such as the Invitation Concert held at the Military Camp, Liverpool being used. No mention is made of the Liverpool Invitation Concert being used to raise funds and it is possible that it was staged in recognition of Major Cookson's return invitation. In this instance, the Executive Committee accepted the invitation of Major Cookson of an additional visit to the Liverpool Camp over the August Bank Holiday Monday. The Committee resolved to hold a concert that night with a cost not to exceed £2-2-0 more than member contributions.

In one concert, organised with the Sunshine Girls and Merry-makers and held at the Mosman Town Hall records show that the Club applied for and received a reduction in the hall rental from £4/4/0 to £2/2/0.

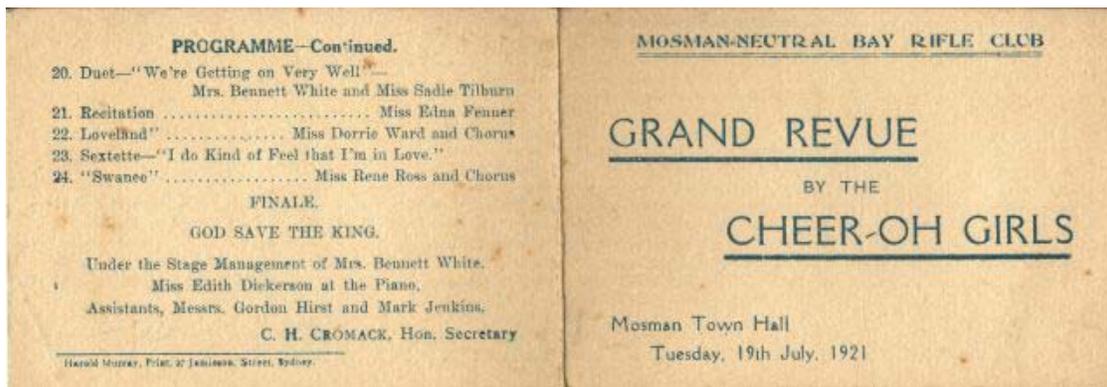


Above: A programme for an Invitation Concert at Liverpool, 7th August 1916 (from the MNBRC Collection)



Above: A ticket to a post-war Concert in 1921 by the Cheer-oh Girls (from the MNBR Collection)

Below: The programme for the Cheer-oh Girls post-war Concert in 1921 (from the MNBR Collection)



PROGRAMME.	
PART I.	PART II.
1. Opening Chorus The Cheer-Ohs	Italian Scene.
2. Song at the Piano Miss Edith Dickerson	13. Opening Chorus The Cheer-Ohs
3. "Smith, Jones, Robinson and Brown" The Cheer-Ohs	Dance—Little Joyce Tilburn.
4. Song and Dance Little Joyce Tilburn	14. Duet—"Venetian Love Song"—
5. Song Miss Dorrie Ward	Misses Dorrie Ward and Una Wilson
6. Character Song Miss Sadie Tilburn	15. "Attractive Girl" Miss Rene Ross and Chorus
7. "Pink Pyjamas" Miss Molly Gillespie	16. "Take Me Back to Sunny Italy"—
8. Burlesque—"Tally Ho"—	Misses Sadie Tilburn and Una Wilson
Mrs. Bennett White and Misses Dorrie Ward and Una Wilson	17. "Yama Yama" The Cheer-Ohs
9. "The Darktown Strutters' Ball"—	
Miss Doris Williams and Chorus	18. Song at the Piano Miss Edith Dickerson
10. Song at the Piano Miss Edith Dickerson	19. Dance Little Joyce Tilburn
11. "Hawaiian Bluebird" Miss Dorrie Ward and Chorus	
12. "Boola Boo" Miss Una Wilson and Chorus	

A reference in Club Minutes of the time indicate that this particular concert was in aid of Club Funds and an Honour Board. Proceeds were around £31. (from the MNBRC Collection)



Cheer-Oh Girls
(photo courtesy of Mosman Library)

Other Fund Raising Activities

The Club did not only use concerts to raise funds, lectures were also organised by various people to raise funds. A number of such lectures were organised on Trenches and Trench Warfare, one by Colonel Spain in September 1916 and another to be held later offered to be presented by Lieut Stowland held at a later date. A later War Lecture and "Exhibition of Relics and Slides" by Captain-Chaplain Wilson, Wednesday 7th August 1918 was another such instance.

Smoke Concerts seemed popular, and are mentioned often in the Club Minutes. With the number of references, it is likely that these were a monthly event for the Club and filled in the gap in the days before television. Smoke Concerts or "Smokers" were probably based on "Regimental Smokers". In general, these evenings featured entertainment by way of club members singing, playing an instrument or perhaps putting on a skit. It was also noted that several meeting minutes referred to a pause in events that featured a musical item. Traditionally, Smoke Concerts were usually put on to raise funds or celebrate an event and featured both alcohol and food.

The Cheer-Oh Girls were a group of amateur performers who seemed to be local to the Mosman area and were often used for fund raising. One such effort was the raising of funds for a "Rifle Club Cottage" for a returned soldier. A photograph of Mrs Bennett-White and the Cheer-Oh Girls can be found amongst the photographs on the Mosman Library Local Studies Website and can be seen on the previous page.

Another group of entertainers that were mentioned for fund raising concerts were the Sunshine Girls and Merrymakers. A photograph of the Sunshine Girls can also be found at Mosman Library and is seen below. They are also likely to have been a local group of amateur performers volunteering their services for the war effort. No reference to who the Merrymakers were was able to be found.



Sunshine Girls
(photo courtesy of Mosman Library)

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB.

The Sunshine Girls Revue
(under the direction of Miss Beth Lorking)

**Town Hall, Mosman ..
Monday, Oct. 26th, 1918**

Programme:

1. Opening Chorus SUNSHINE GIRLS
2. "Ev'rybody's Happy when the Sun Shines"
Miss FLORENCE JOHNSON & GIRLS
3. Dance Sunshine Baby JOYCE FIDDEN
4. "Three Maids" Misses THOMAS, LOWING, & COATES
5. An item by Miss GYPSY MIDDLEHURST
6. "Tulip Time in Holland" Misses DOROTHY LILLYMAN
and OLIVE JENKINS and GIRLS
7. Monologue Miss BETH LORKING
8. Can't Yo' Hear Me Callin' Misses GYPSY MIDDLEHURST
and FLORENCE JOHNSON
9. Whistling Solo Miss OLIVE HEWETT
10. "Cuckoo Town" Miss BETH LORKING & GIRLS
11. Song Miss OLIVE JENKINS
12. Viola Solo Miss DOROTHY LILLYMAN
13. "Hawaiian Butterfly" Miss FLORENCE JOHNSON & GIRLS
14. "The Amateur Rider" Miss IRENE YATES
15. "The Anzac Marsellaise" THE GIRLS

INTERVAL.

16. "The Syncopated Harp" Miss FLORENCE JOHNSON & GIRLS
17. An item by Miss IRENE YATES
18. Dance Baby JOYCE FIDDEN
19. Whistling Solo Miss OLIVE HEWETT
20. Sketch—"THE MERE MAN"
Scene: The interior of the Emancipated Ladies Club,
Macquarie Street, Sydney.
President Miss BETH LORKING
Lady Betty (a Serious Girl) Miss MARJORIE HAVILAND
Dolly (a Lazy Girl) Miss FLORENCE JOHNSON
Irene (an American) Miss MAY LAPSELL
Maisie (a Blushing Girl) Miss DOROTHY HAVILAND
Miss Goadsby (a girl no longer) Miss MILLIE THOMAS
Mrs. Ricaby (a Widow) Miss GYPSY MIDDLEHURST
Amelia (the Maid) Miss DOROTHY LILLYMAN

GOD SAVE THE KING.

At the Piano Miss VIC. LILLYMAN
Producer Miss BETH LORKING

Harold Murray, Printer, 27 Jamieson Street, Sydney.

(from the MNBRC Collection)

World War 1 - Volunteer Workers Association

During the War, some of the Club's Members were involved with the Volunteer Workers Association. One of the purposes of this group was to assist Returned Servicemen by building homes for them and their families. Not much is really known of the Volunteer Workers Association/Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club relationship but with Rifle Club Drills being carried out on Thursdays and Saturdays, the only free time remaining was on Sundays. C.H. Cromack acknowledged that the Club Members were working Sundays on VWA home building projects.



Members of Mosman VWA at the French's Forest Soldier Settlement circa 1916 (Picture Australia – source NSW State Library)

No detailed information is available from Club records to identify how many homes were built with Club Member involvement or where in fact they were built, but such activities reflect the level of community spirit generated in the residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay by that "Call to Empire" and in the pride in, and support, being given to their Servicemen.

The first reference to the Volunteer Workers Association is a letter received and to be responded to, in the minutes for 7th April of 1916. Later correspondence appears in the minutes (May 1916, June 1916), and showing that the relationship between the Club and the VWA at that time could have been strained as some of the VWA's letters may have gone unanswered. In one instance the Secretary was instructed to "use his discretion in answering or otherwise" and another "received without reading contents".

The Club Minutes of 11th January 1918 mention the building of the "Hendy-Pooley Cottage" and the club not being able to make a donation due to a poor financial situation. The Hon. General Secretary was asked to encourage Club Member assistance in the form of labour for the erection of the building. Private H.W.F. Hendy-Pooley, served in the 1st Battalion and was killed in action in France at the battle of Menin Gate in September of 1917 (after having been previously wounded at Bullecourt). Hendy-Pooley was a member of the Registrar General's Department Rifle Club and lived in Young Street, Neutral Bay. The cottage was likely to have been built by the VWA in support of his widow. Graeme Berman recalls going to school with a Hendy-Pooley and that both families lived in Young Street, (Cremorne).

C.H. Cromack reported that on his election to the position of Hon. Secretary in early 1918 that the Club had joined forces with the Volunteer Workers Association in erecting homes for Returned Servicemen and their dependants. A subsequent Concert noted in the minutes of 8th February 1918 appears to have been arranged with Mrs Bennett-White and the Cheer-Oh

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Girls and to assist in raising of funds "to build a Rifle Club Cottage for a Returned Soldier or a soldier's widow" with the concert receiving so heavy a booking that the programme played 2 nights, the 13th and 14th February 1918. It was also noted that the Cheer-oh Girls expenses should not exceed £10 for the 2 nights. This particular Cottage was completed in the 1918/19 year and officially opened by the Captain, A.D. Walker. It was handed over to a Mrs Lester, the widow of an A.I.F. man.



Opening of the Mosman Cottage at French's Forest Soldier Settlement – 1916 (Picture Australia – source NSW State Library)

It was noted in later Club Minutes of 13th June 1919 that the Club Armoury at Reid Park be presented to the Volunteer Workers Association with the resolution the following month that a "tablet be erected in appreciation of the sterling work and character of the late J.A. McCauley". In July 1920 the VWA was asked to confirm that the materials (electric light fittings) that were owned by the Tramways Authority had been returned as it seems that the VWA dismantled the building for materials for their own projects.

A brief look through the records of other communities of the time shows that these types of Volunteer organisations were seen as an essential part of the war efforts of everyone in Australia in the activity of supporting those serving their country (and their families) by providing assistance whilst they were on active service as well as when they had returned home.



Opening of the Mosman Cottage at French's Forest Soldier Settlement – 1916 (Picture Australia – source NSW State Library)

Letters from Members on the Frontline in WW1

Amongst the Club's most prized possessions are 14 letters received by the Club from members who had enlisted and were on active service in places like France, Belgium and Palestine. A letter from W. Watson is missing from the collection and only the envelope remains.

This particular group of letters were sent to convey thanks to the Club for the Comfort Parcels that had been received and in their turn they provided insights into the life and thoughts of the men at the front.

Letters were received from the list of members below and these letters are shown in their entirety in this document.

F.C.S. Lakeman

W.H. Zander

J.W. Greig

T.B. Heffer

S.A. Johnston

W.G. Cullen

C. van Heukelum (1)

F.H. Hunt

W. Watson

J.E. Armstrong

C. van Heukelum (2)

M.L. Peryman

W.G. Goodchild

C.P. Schaedel

R.F. Ingham

Please note that the brightness and contrast for some of the images has been altered to make the writing on the images as legible as possible using this viewing medium.

Note: R.T.A. = Returned to Australia

F.C.S. (Frederick Charles) Lakeman
2nd Signal Troop, 2nd Australian Light Horse Brigade, ANZAC Mounted
Division
Enlisted 15-3-1916, R.T.A. 28-1-1919

14th October 1917

Dear Sir

Many thanks for your two parcels both of which arrived safely a short time ago. it was very good of you to remember me and I assure you anything of that description is most acceptable to soldiers here in the dust of Palestine.

Since leaving Sydney I have gone through a course of signalling at Alexandria and am now with my unit 2nd Signal Troop, 2nd Brigade ANZAC Mounted Division.

So much traffic and no rain has turned this fertile tract into fine dust for miles round, and whenever we have any wind, clouds of grit are deposited on everything and sometimes one can only see a few feet ahead.

This is the Holy Land, but to us it is a land of pests. While actually writing this I have had to stop in order to bait a large black scorpion about three inches in length, the other day, with the same useful weapon, I despatched a small snake which was under my kit, there are flies & lizards innumerable while

While various other pests infect the neighbourhood.
However on the whole our chaps
take it all in good part & have shown
themselves to be a match for anything
that may chance their way.

We are expecting rain any time now
and judging from appearances it must
be very heavy, & one can understand
this since the ~~an~~ average fall is about
20 inches per year, all of which falls
within a period of two to three months.

I should like to say a lot which
would doubtless be of much interest to you
but censorship forbids & there is very
little local news.

This Brigade has just had a fine
rest on the beach. There we had any
amount of swimming both for ourselves
and our horses, the latter especially appreciate
a salt dip.

Well Christmas is nearly on us again
& I sincerely trust that we shall not have
to put in another in Palestine.

Again thanking you, and wishing all
members the compliments of the season
I Remain
Yours Sincerely
J. B. McKernan

No 2958

14th October 1917

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for your two parcels both of which arrived safely a short time ago. It was very good of you to remember me and I assure you anything of that description is most acceptable to soldiers here in the dust of Palestine.

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However on the whole our chaps take it all in good part and have shown themselves to be a match for anything that may chance their way.

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I should like to say a lot which would doubtless be of interest to you but censorship forbids and there is very little local news.

This brigade has just had a fine rest on the beach. There we had any amount of swimming both for ourselves and our horses, the latter especially appreciate a salt dip.

Well, Christmas is nearly on us again and I sincerely trust that we shall not have to put in another in Palestine.

Again thanking you, and wishing all members the compliments of the Season.

I remain

Yours sincerely

F.C.S. Lakeman No 2958

This letter was dated the 14th October 1917. On the 31st October 1917 the 2nd Australian Light Horse Brigade was involved in the attack on Beersheba.

For more information on the 2nd Australian Light Horse Brigade, ANZAC Mounted Division link to:

http://www.unsw.adfa.edu.au/~rmallett/Anzac_Mounted_Division.html

W.H. (Waldo Hyman) Zander
Lieutenant (later Captain), 30th Battalion
Enlisted 23-5-1915, R.T.A. 22-5-1919

Belgium
18.10.17.

The Secretary
Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle
Club.

I wish to
thank the members of the
club for a parcel that
arrived the other day from
them containing smoking
materials. It arrived at
a most appreciative moment
as we were just going
into the trenches and had
run out of smoke. So
I can assure you the
contents were not wasted
at all.

This makes the second
parcel that has come from
the club - the previous one
arriving safely also.

We are in the
thick of all the scuffling
up here and things are
fairly warm I can tell
you - however one satisfaction
we have is that they are
still warmer for Fitz.
I know which side I'd
sooner be on at any rate.

Censorship regulations
forbid me telling you of
conditions and places
up here but it is
worse than the Dome, &
I put all last winter
in down there. And it
wasn't any picnic either.
However the Australians
are doing great work

and making a name for
themselves that will never
be surpassed. They certainly
shed us in the thick of
all the scrapping, but we
don't mind that at all.
The lads are as keen as
mustard and one couldn't
wish for a finer body
of men to command.

I have seen some
of the other Club members
lately, Herford & Colley Presley,
they both are well and
received their parcels also.
Occasionally one brushes
up against other members
in all sorts of queer
places and positions, they
seem to be scattered all
over the place.

I am doing
assistant adjutant work
now with a battalion

on the line. It is hard
work & but most interesting.
Jane doesn't
allow any more news so
once more thanking
you for the parcel
I remain

An old member
of the M-N.B. Club.

W. Anderson *Leant*

Belgium

18-10-17

The Secretary

Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

I wish to thank the members of the Club for a parcel that arrived the other day from them containing smoking materials. It arrived at the most appreciative moment as we were just going into the trenches and had run out of smokes. So I can assure you the contents were not wasted at all.

This makes the second parcel that has come from the Club - the previous one arriving safely also.

We are in the thick of all the scrapping up here and things are fairly warm I can tell you - however one satisfaction we have is that they are still warmer for Fritz.

I know which side I'd sooner be on at any rate.

Censorship regulations forbid me telling you of conditions and places up here but it is worse than the Somme and I put all last winter in down there and it wasn't any picnic either.

However the Australians are doing great work and making a name for themselves that will never be surpassed. They certainly stick us in the thick of all the scrapping, but we don't mind that at all, the lads are as keen as mustard and one couldn't wish for a finer body of men to command.

I have seen some of the other Club members lately, Herford and Colley-Priest, they both are well and received their parcels also.

Occasionally one brushes up against other members in all sorts of queer places and positions, they seem to be scattered all over the place.

I am doing Assistant Adjutants work now with a battalion in the line. It is hard work but most interesting.

Time doesn't allow any more news so once more thanking you for the parcel.

I remain

An old member of the M-N-B Club

W. Zander Lieut.

J.W. (John William) Greig
BQMS, 2nd D.A.C.
Enlisted 31-8-1915, R.T.A. 24-8-1918

France.
14.10.17.

The Secretary
Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir

I have to thank your club very greatly for the receipt of two parcels by the mail containing so many useful & valuable articles. I can assure you that those efforts of the Home people to keep in touch with the men in the field are very highly appreciated. Life over here is at the best a somewhat miserable business, specially in winter, but without the continued kind attention of our friends at Home it would be at times almost unbearable. Of course we have our compensations, plenty of excitement & adventure, tho' the novelty of that is wearing somewhat thin and the great satisfying knowledge that we are winning the War, that Dritz is getting hopelessly beaten & that some day soon we hope to be free to return to the joys of civilisation & the dear old human life in Sydney, when gun will not roar in our ears day & night nor shells scream continuously overhead, nor be called a mad to the neighbours nor be cold & wet & hungry & tired to death. What a splendid reward to look forward to.

I trust the club is still as strong & enthusiastic as ever in carrying on the good work. Please convey to the members my congratulations for the splendid results they have attained also my very best thanks for the 8/6 so kindly sent to me

Yours very sincerely
J.W. Greig. BQMS

France

14-10-17

The Secretary

Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

I have to thank your club very greatly for the receipt of two parcels by the mail containing so many useful and desirable articles. I can assure you that these efforts of the Home People to keep in touch with the men in the field are very highly appreciated. Life over here is at the least a somewhat miserable business, especially in winter, but without the continued kind attention of our friends at home it would be at times almost unbearable. Of course we have our compensations, plenty of excitement and adventure, tho the novelty of that is wearing somewhat thin and the great satisfying knowledge that we are winning the War, that Fritz is getting hopelessly beaten and that some day soon we hope to be free to return to the joys of civilisation and the dear old humdrum life in Sydney, when guns will not roar in our ears day and night, nor shells scream continuously overhead, nor be caked in mud to the eyebrows nor be cold and wet and hungry and tired to death. What a splendid reward to look forward to. I trust the club is still as strong and enthusiastic as ever in carrying on the good work. Please convey to the members my congratulations for the splendid results they have attained also my very best thanks for the gifts so kindly sent to me.

Yours sincerely

J.W. Greig QMS

Captain T.B. (Thomas Baker) Heffer
15th Battalion AIF (later 19th Battalion)
RTA 13-12-1918

No 2 Command Depot, A.I.F.
Westham Detachment,
Weymouth, Dorset,
England,
20.9.17

The Secretary,
Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

I have to send the club my very sincere thanks for a fine parcel from the members and friends, which has safely reached me.

Believe me, I greatly appreciate this kindly action on their part. It is good to be remembered like this by friends at home.

I have not heard of the club for some little time but hope and trust that it is still in the most flourishing condition and carrying on the good work with all its old success.

A bad wound in the leg has kept me out of action for over seven months, but I am glad to say that I am now fit for active service again and expect to push off for France at any time now.

Again assuring you of my deep
appreciation of the kindness of the
Club members and their friends and
with kindest regards and best of
wishes to all.

Yours sincerely,

D. B. Keffler, Captain,
15th Battalion, A.I.F.

No 2 Command Dept AIF

Westham Detachment

Weymouth, Dorset

England

20-9-17

The Secretary,

Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Sydney

Dear Sir,

I have to send to the Club my very sincere thanks for a fine parcel from the members and friends, which has safely reached me.

Believe me, I greatly appreciate this kindly action on their part. It is good to be remembered like this by friends at home.

I have not heard of the club for some little time but hope and trust that it is still in the most flourishing condition and carrying on the good work with all its old success.

A bad wound in the leg has kept me out of action for over seven months, but I am glad to say that I am now fit for active service again and expect to push off for France at any time now.

Again assuring you of my deep appreciation of the kindness of the Club members and their friends and with kindest regards and best of wishes to all.

Yours sincerely

D.B Heffer Captain

15th Battalion AIF

Gunner S.A. (Stuart Amphlett) Johnston
18th, 6th Army Brigade A.F.A.
Enlisted 10-4-1916, RTA 4-6-1919

Belgium
27-9-17

The Hon Sec
Mosman N.B. Rifle Club

Dear Sir

a few days ago I received a very welcome parcel from the Club & also a programme of the concert that enabled these gifts to be sent. It was a generous idea of the Club brought back many a little thought of the old "Bulling days" in Neutral Bay. I received the parcel while on the gun from a very warm "posie". I cannot give any news of the two pushes, but after 16 days at the pits I was glad to be relieved for a few days. It's pretty solid firing these "stunts", they usually last a whole day & the concussion from our gun & from the muzzle of guns around you, soon begins to tell on a man, as we get very little sleep as the S.O.S. keeps us busy. July gives us a warm time, but now & again we do get a few hours peace, not so with

Friday, for night & day shells just sail over to
his lines ~~over~~ Batteries all take it in
turns, so that there is practically one long
row all the time - My Battery is the 18th
6th Army (Mobile) -

Thanking you all for your
kindly thought & good luck to the
Old Club

Yours sincerely

27302

Thurston Johnston Esq

Belgium

27-9-17

The Hon Sec Mosman-N.B. Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

A few days ago I received a very welcome parcel from the Club and also a programme of the Concert that enabled these gifts to be sent. It was a generous idea of the Club and brought back many a little thought of the Old Drilling days in Neutral Bay. I received the parcel while on the guns and in a very warm possie. I cannot give any news of the two pushes, but after 16 days at the pits I was glad to be relieved for a few days.

Its pretty solid firing these "stunts", they usually last a whole day and the concussion from our gun and from the maze of guns around you, soon begins to tell on a man and we get very little sleep as the S.O.S keeps us busy.

Fritz gives us a warm time, but now and again we do get a few hours peace, not so with Fritz, for night and day shells just sail over to his lines and our Batteries all take it in turns so that there is practically one long roar all the time. My Battery is the 18th, 6th Army (Mobile).

Thanking you all for your kindly thought and good luck to the Old Club.

Yours sincerely

27302 Stuart A. Johnston Gnr

Pte. W.G. (William George) Cullen
A Coy, 3rd Battalion AIF
Enlisted 17-1-1916, RTA 31-5-1919

France
28. 9. 17

The Secy.
Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club.

Dear Sir.

On the day that I
came out of the line
after going through the
present day attack I
received a very warm
welcome. Everything
was in good order and
condition. With regards
to the members of
the flight accept my very
best thanks for having
you have no doubt read
the account of the advance
of the 1st New Zealand
battalion. I can't describe it but
the artillery bombardment
was terrific. It is a wonder
that any thing lives in it.
I don't think there is a
square yard of ground that
has not been tumbled by
shell fire.

Well in a few days we
expect to be in another
big hunt, which you will
know all about before this
letter reaches you
wishing you and the
club every success.
Yours sincerely
W. J. Collier
D. Coy.
3rd Batta
A. I. P.

France

28-9-17

The Secy.

Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

On the day that I came out of the line after going through the recent big stunt I received your very welcome parcel, everything was in good order and condition. Will you on behalf of the members of the club accept my very best thanks for same.

You have no doubt read the account of the advances of the Menin Road battle. I can't describe it but the artillery bombardments were terrific it is a wonder that anything lives in it. I don't think there is a square yard of ground that has not been bombed by shell fire.

Well in a few days we expect to be in another big stunt, which you will know all about before this letter reaches you.

Wishing you and the club every success.

Yours sincerely

W. G. Cullen

"A" Coy

3rd Battn

A.I.F.

Sgt C. (Charles) van Heuckelum (later S/Sgt)
8th Field Ambulance
Enlisted 1-9-1915, RTA 21-4-1918
(Letter 1)

In the Field
Somewhere in Belgium
23/9/17

The Hon Secretary
Mosman & Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir

On 20th instant I safely received a parcel containing tobacco - cigarettes - one pair of socks & some lollies. This being my first opportunity I hasten to most gratefully thank all those who so kindly sent it & also for the interest taken in me.

Without the receipt of such presents we all know that by those at Home we are not forgotten. The many comforts handed to us - the gifts of our Red Cross Societies & Comforts Friends is sufficient proof of same & what we all look forward to is for the opportunity to soon arrive when we can in person thank our friends who have so earnestly given their time & money in helping to make our lot as comfortable as possible. I can truly say that the Aussies & N.Zers are the most envied troops. It fairly opens the eyes of others to see the way all sorts of gifts are showered on them. But we

are in no way greedy & many a time we have been able to help another poor dog along the road - So you see how the good of our dear ones is passed along the line. Your daily papers keep you fully advised as to war matters - In fact they are allowed to tell you more than I - so in that respect I cannot interest you - With me are several of chaps from the club and like me are all well - One of them, just a pocket full, is doing splendid work in this battle of Meriv - I could string you a tip about what he will get - but fear to do so because you never know how they cannot come off - The others also are keeping their end up & the greatest of praise is given to all our lads by the wounded - Of course I am naturally a little prejudiced - but this is some ambulance - there are others but of course we naturally reckon their particular one is the prize winner - If weather keeps fine I prophesy that Fritz is out of Belgium by Dec^r last year our brigade drove him out of Papoume - The Anzacs have got the wind fairly up in the Hous - Must end up otherwise you will be trying to get me back to do some recruiting work - Hope back sticks to us all to see a satisfactory end to the biggest & noblest game I have ever played in - & the fair sex backrackers will always do for you who again most gratefully thanks those so kindly interested in them Ch. Van Heuckelom Sgt

In the Field

Somewhere in Belgium

23/9/17

The Hon Secretary

Mosman and Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

On 20th instant I safely received a parcel containing tobacco, cigarettes, one pair of socks and some lollies. This being my first opportunity I hasten to most gratefully thank all those who so kindly sent it and also for the interest taken in me.

Without the receipt of such presents we all know that by those at Home we are not forgotten. The many comforts handed to us, the gifts of our Red Cross Societies and Comforts Fund is sufficient proof of same and what we all look forward to is for the opportunity to soon arrive when we can in person thank our friends who have so earnestly given their time and money in helping to make our lot as comfortable as possible. I can truly say that the Aussies and N.Zders are the most envied troops. It fairly opens the eyes of the others to see the way all sorts of gifts are showered on them. But we are in no way greedy and many a time we have been able to help another poor dog along the road. So you see how the good of our dear ones is passed along the line.

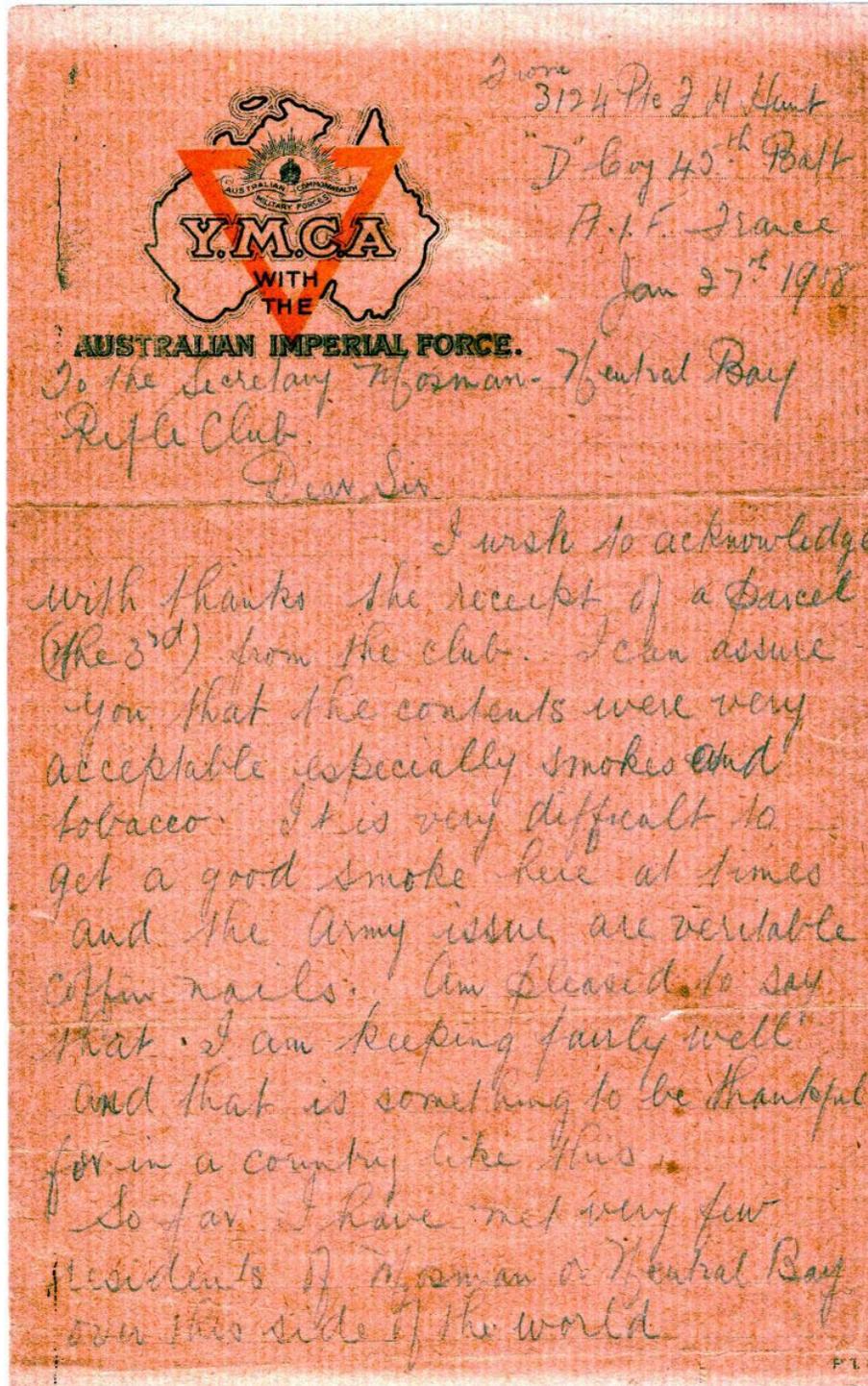
Your daily papers keep you fully advised as to war matters. In fact they are allowed to tell you more than I so in that respect I cannot interest you. With me are several of chaps from the club and like me are all well. One of them, just a pocket full, is doing splendid work in this battle of Menin. I could sling you a tip about what he will get, but I fear to do so because you never know how they cannot come off.

The others also are keeping their end up and the greatest of praise is given to all our lads by the wounded. Of course I am naturally a little prejudice but this is some ambulance. There are others but of course one naturally reckons their particular one is the prize winner. Of weather keeps fine I prophesy that Fritz is out of Belgium by Xmas, last year our brigade drove him out of Bapaume.

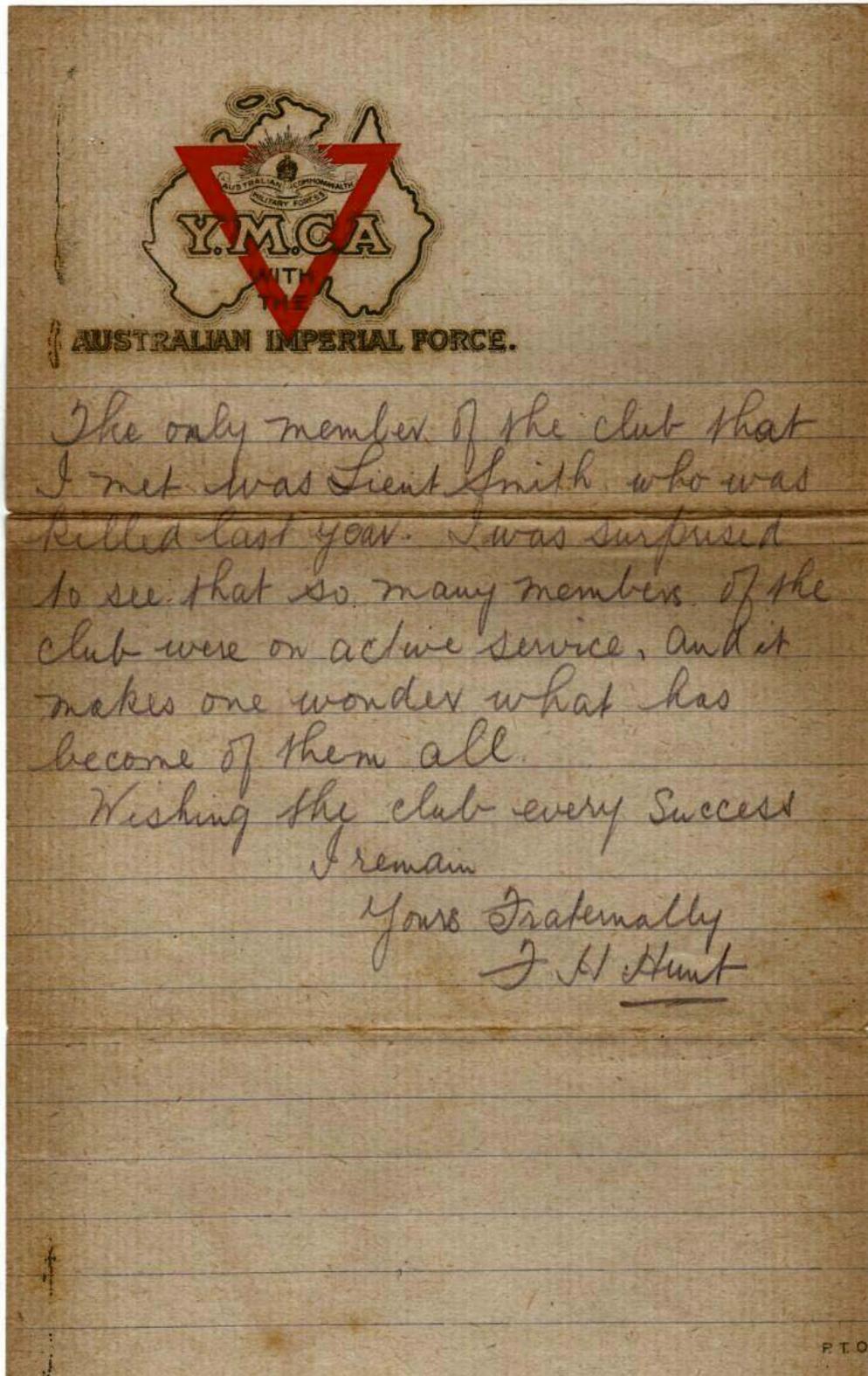
The ANZACs have got the wind fairly up in the Huns. Must end up otherwise you will be trying to get me back to do some recruiting work. Hope luck sticks to us all to see a satisfactory end to the biggest and noblest game I have ever played in and the fair sex barrackers will always do for yours who again most gratefully thanks those so kindly interested in them.

Ch van Heuckelum Sgt

Pte. F.H. (Frederick Hugh) Hunt
45th Battalion
Enlisted 6-8-1915, RTA 10-10-1918



Please note that the first page of this letter was for many years displayed, framed on the wall of the Club Hut. It has faded somewhat and to allow the writing to be legible for this display the image has been altered in contrast and tint. The second page displayed below has not been altered and its colour shows only the normal aging of the paper.



From

3142 Pte F.H. Hunt

"D" Coy 45th Batt

A.I.F. France

Jan 27th 1918

To the Secretary Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a parcel (the 3rd) from the Club. I can assure you that the contents were very acceptable especially smokes and tobacco. It is difficult to get a good smoke here at times and the Army issue are veritable coffin nails. Am pleased to say that I am keeping fairly well and that is something to be thankful for in a country like this.

So far I have met very few residents of Mosman or Neutral Bay over this side of the world. The only member of the Club that I met was Lieut Smith who was killed last year. I was surprised to see that so many members of the Club were on active service and it makes one wonder what has become of them all.

Wishing the Club every success

I remain

Yours fraternally

F.H. Hunt

Lieut J.E. (John Edward) Armstrong
4th Tun. Company
RTA 31-5-1919

France
29th Sep. 1917.

Dear Sir,

Please convey to the members of the Mosman & Neutral Bay Rifle Club, my thanks for two parcels received to day containing tobacco, cigarettes sweets & soap.

These comforts are not only greatly appreciated on account of their utility, but they also convey the knowledge that we are not forgotten by our friends, and this fact alleviates considerably the trials and difficulties we are called upon to face.

With many thanks and
with kind regards
I remain
Yours sincerely
J.E. Armstrong

France

29th Sept 1917

Dear Sir,

Please convey to the members of the Mosman and Neutral Bay Rifle Club my thanks for two parcels received today containing tobacco, cigarettes, sweets and soap.

These comforts are not only greatly appreciated on account of their utility, but they also convey the knowledge that we are not forgotten by our friends, and this fact alleviates considerably the trials and difficulties we are called upon to face.

With many thanks and with kind regards.

I remain

Yours sincerely

J.E. Armstrong

Sgt C. (Charles) van Heuckelum (later S/Sgt)
8th Field Ambulance
Enlisted 1-9-1915, RTA 21-4-1918
(Letter 2)

In the Field
Somewhere in Belgium
15/1/17

The Secretary,
Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club,

Dear Sir,

I am again deeply grateful to all members of the Rifle Club who so kindly interested themselves in sending me a parcel which came to hand this day - contents being as follows: - 1 Pair Silk Hosiery, 1 Cake of Lifebuoy Soap, 1 tin Blotter paper, 1 tin Vice Royal Pipes, 1 packet of Spearmint, 1 tin of State Express cigarettes, 1 tin of Lilies, 2 Khaki handkerchiefs, & a packet of Captain Gips - This is the second parcel that I have received within the last three months (other one previously acknowledged) and I am unable to sufficiently express my gratitude. If reports are fully appreciative of the Circus in place, a Heav machine is just overhead & our anti air craft are at him - must have a look to see if they bring him down - It is an awful sensation having one of those devils out at night & not knowing where he is or when he is going to drop his bombs - They did not get him - but turned him back) to continue - interest to them not only in me - please convey to all concerned my assurance that they will be never forgotten -

As to our doings - Your daily papers give you all detailed particulars - they per

is cancelled by Mr Censor - I can tell you a little
but very little at that - Our field of battle is no oil
painting. Unfortunately we have had a
fair amount of rain & the result has been
over 18 inches of mud - (No they did not manage to
turn that devil - he has just dropped five bombs in
just as many seconds - being night time we cannot
see if any damage done or more important than
anything else if any of our wags have got the ball
to the beyond.) It is hard work advancing in
such a bog - but our boys are only stopped
in their determination to get on - mostly by the
bullets of concealed snipers - Winter has made
a good start & our tropical blokes feel the
cold very much - Oh! to have those freshers
Hens completely crushed to be back in dear
old sunny Australia - It is over two years since
I said Au revoir to N.S.W. and my twenty five
years established Sydney business - I have a debt
up against Fuly that he will never be able to pay -
Before ending might I ask you to please remember
me to Bob Harkness & McCall - both of them are
very old friends of mine - I trust they & all others
interested in the Club are in the very best of health
& wishing you all a bright & ~~long~~ of all coming
New Years to be full of prosperity

I am - gratefully yrs
Ch. Van Heeriksum Sgt

In the Field

Somewhere in Belgium

15/10/17

The Secretary

Mosman - Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Dear Sir,

I am again deeply grateful to all members of the Rifle Club who so kindly interested themselves in sending me a parcel which came to hand this day - contents were as follows - 1 Pair Silk Mittens, 1 Cake of Lifebuoy Soap, 1 tin BLOATER Paste, 1 Tin Vice Regal Tobacco, 1 packet of Spearmint, 1 Tin of State Express Cigarettes, 1 tin of lollies, 2 khaki handkerchiefs and a packet of Capstan Cigs.

This is the second parcel that I have received within the last three months (other previously acknowledged), and I am unable to sufficiently express my gratitude.

If thoughts are fully appreciative of the (excuse me please, a Hun machine is just overhead and our anti air craft are at him - must have a look to see if they bring him down - It is an awful sensation having one of these devils out at night and not knowing where and when he is going to drop his bombs - They did not get him - but turned him back) to continue - indeed taken not only in me - please convey to all concerned my assurance that they will be never forgotten.

As to doings - Your daily papers give you all detailed particulars. My pen is controlled by Mr Censor - I can tell you a little but very little at that. Our field of battle is no oil painting. Unfortunately we have had a fair amount of rain and the result has been over 18 inches of mud. (No they did not manage to turn that devil - he has just dropped five bombs in just as many seconds - being night time one cannot see if any damage done or more important than anything else if any of our mates have got the Call to the Beyond).

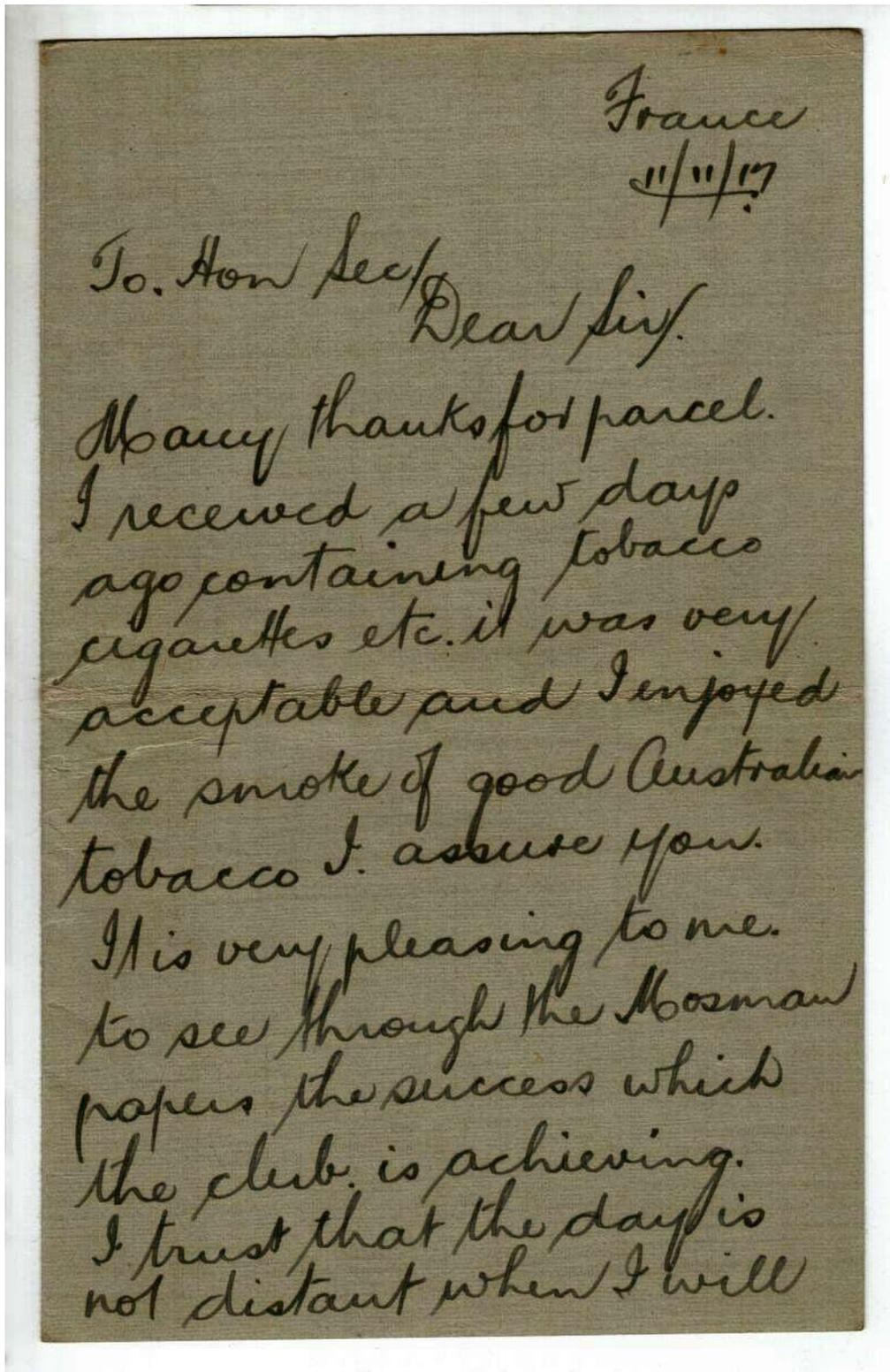
It is hard work advancing in such a bog - but our boys are only stopped in their determination to get on - mostly by the bullets of concealed snipers. Winter has made a good start and us tropical blokes feel the cold very much. Oh! to have those treacherous Huns completely crushed and to be back in dear old sunny Australia. It is over two years since I said Au revoir to N.S.W. and my twenty five years established Sydney business. I have a debt up against Fritz that he will never be able to pay.

Before ending might I ask you to please remember me to Bob Harkness and Mr Gall - both of them are very old Friends of mine. I trust they and all others interested in the Club are in the very best of health and wishing you all a bright Xmas and all coming New Years to be full of prosperity.

I am gratefully yours

Ch van Heuckelum Sgt

Lieut M.L. (Mario) Peryman
A Coy, 19th Battalion
Enlisted 23-10-1915, RTA 4-7-1919



be back again with
Reid Park section to
renew acquaintances there
with every wish for future
success. Yrs faithfully
Mario J. Penman
Lieut.
A Coy
19th Battalion

France

11/11/17

To. Hon Sec

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for parcel I received a few days ago containing tobacco cigarettes etc. it was very acceptable and I enjoyed the smoke of good Australian tobacco I assure you.

It is very pleasing to me to see through the Mosman papers the success which the club is achieving. I trust that the day is not distant when I will be back again with the Reid Park section to renew acquaintances there.

With every wish for future success

Yrs faithfully

Mario L. Peryman Lieut

A Coy

19th Battalion

Sgt. W.G. (William) Goodchild
18th Battalion
Enlisted 15-8-1915, RTA 23-12-1917

Weymouth,
5th Nov, 1917.

The Hon. Secretary,
Mosman - Neutral Bay Rifle Club,
Mosman Bay.

Dear Sir,

I wish to convey my best thanks to you, and my good friends connected with the Rifle Club, for a parcel which awaited my arrival at this camp after Furlough. It is very pleasing to have such a remembrance from the people at home. I received one previously in France, + trust you received my note of thanks - I find a great many of my letters did not reach their destination.

I might mention that I have been finally Boarded for Australia, and hope to leave during the next

few weeks. My leg is mending quietly, and I will probably discard crutches before reaching Sydney. In less than a year it should be as strong as ever.

I hope the old Club is still going strong - I know a great many of its members have come away on active service, and trust more will be able to follow, as men are needed.

Once again thanks, and best wishes.

Yours very sincerely,
W. S. Goodchild.

Weymouth

8th Nov 1917

The Hon Secretary

Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Mosman Bay

Dear Sir,

I wish to convey my best thanks to you, and my good friends connected with the Rifle Club, for a parcel which awaited my arrival at this camp after Furlough. It is very pleasing to have such a remembrance from people at home.

I received one previously in France, and trust you received my note of thanks - I find a great many of my letters did not reach their destination.

I might mention that I have finally Boarded for Australia, and hope to leave during the next few weeks. My leg is mending quietly, and I will probably discard crutches before reaching Sydney. In less than a year I should be as strong as ever.

I hope the Club is still going strong. I know a great many of its members have come away on active service and trust more will be able to follow as men are needed.

Once again thanks and best wishes.

Yours very sincerely

W.S. Goodchild

SQMS C.P. (Cyril Phillip) Schaedel
A Corps Headquarters
Enlisted 20-9-1915, RTA 1-8-1919

France
23rd October 1917

To The Secretary Members
Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club
Sydney

Dear Friends

Very many thanks for your ripping parcels of good things, both of which I received in perfect order this week, within a day or so of each other.

I feel it is unnecessary for me to try and tell you how much they were appreciated, and I cannot thank you all enough for your kindness. I am sure they must have been packed by some, who have either a brother or friend over here, as they both contained just those things which one and all the boys are always so pleased to receive, & which are so much appreciated.

As this is the last mail to arrive in Sydney New South Wales before Xmas, I take this opportunity to wish you all the compliments of

the Season, only hope that this time next
year will be spent in Australia in a happy
Reunion with all old friends.

With kindest regards & wishes to all.

from

Yours sincerely

Cyprian Schaedel

France

23rd October 1917

To The Secretary and members

Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Sydney

Dear Friends,

Very many thanks for your ripping parcels of good things, both of which I received in perfect order this week, within a day or two of each other.

I feel it is unnecessary for me to try and tell you how much they were appreciated and I cannot thank you all enough for your kindness.

I am sure they must have been packed by some who have either a brother or friend over here, as they both contained just those things which one all the boys are always so pleased to receive and which are so much appreciated.

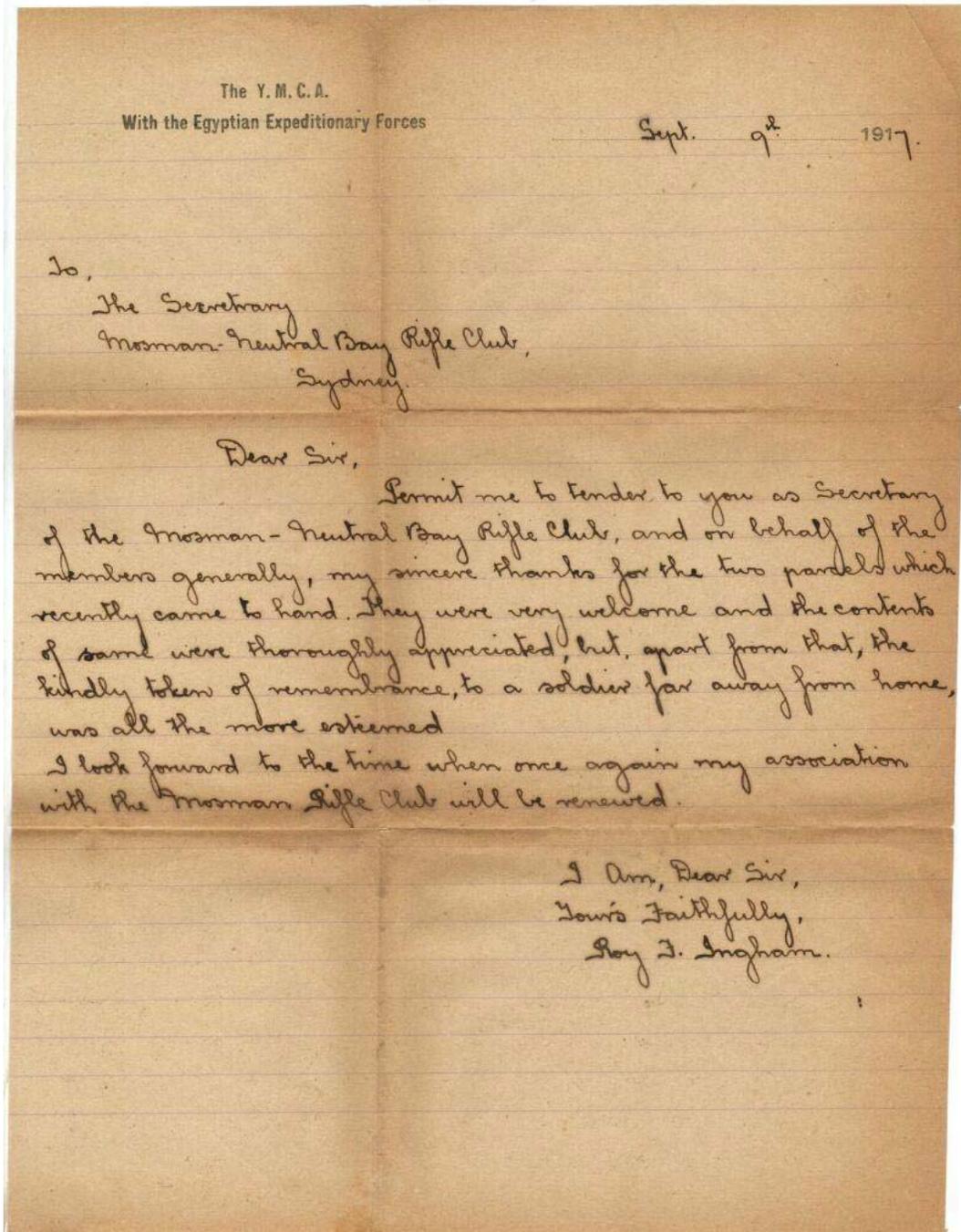
As this is the last mail to arrive in Sunny New South Wales before Xmas, I take this opportunity to wish you all the Compliments of the Season, and only hope that this time next year will be spent in Australia in a Happy Reunion with all old friends.

With kindest regards and wishes to all

from Yours sincerely

Cyril P Schaedel

Pte. R.F. (Roy Frederick) Ingham
1st Light Horse Field Ambulance
Enlisted 13-5-1915, RTA 15-5-1919



The YMCA

With the Egyptian Expeditionary Forces

Sept 9th 1917

To,

The Secretary

Mosman Neutral Bay Rifle Club

Sydney

Dear Sir,

Permit me to tender to you as Secretary of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club, and on behalf of the members generally, my sincere thanks for the two parcels which recently came to hand. They were very welcome and the contents of same were thoroughly appreciated, but apart from that, the kindly token of remembrance, to a soldier far away from home was all the more esteemed.

I look forward to the time when once again my association with the Mosman Rifle Club will be renewed.

I Am Dear Sir

Yours Faithfully

Roy F. Ingham

**MOSMAN –NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB.
NEW SOUTH WALES – AUSTRALIA**

A CHRONICLE by C.H. Cromack 1951/52

Part 1

On Wednesday the 3rd February 1915, in response to a public announcement a well attended public meeting was held in the Mosman Town Hall. The Empire was in the throes of the Great War of 1914-18 and the residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay wanted a Rifle Club and Training Corps wherein the rudiments of drill and military discipline might be learned and from which recruits for service abroad might be enlisted and recruiting influence derived.



The Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club was born that night and I well remember the enthusiasm of the meeting. The membership rapidly grew and within three months it totalled 707. Men of all ages enrolled, the elders to assist in the training and in the other numerous functions of the Club; and the youngsters to prepare themselves for service ultimately with the Australian Forces abroad.

The Club has reason to be proud of the fact that there were no less than 243 enlistments from its ranks and that so many of them left these shores as commissioned or non-commissioned officers in the A.I.F. very largely due to the instruction and training received in the Club through its excellent military officers.

Left: C.H. Cromack 1927

The next duty of the Club was to keep in touch with those of its members who were with the A.I.F. and to provide comforts for them. Some of the most largely attended and most successful entertainments ever held in Mosman were arranged, the proceeds of which were expended in sending comforts away every half year. The letters from our members in the trenches, hospitals, etc., show how deeply these comforts were appreciated and those letters constitute one of the Club's most valued treasures.

In the early months of 1917 when I was elected honorary secretary, a further service required attention. A Voluntary Workers' Association had come into existence and the Club joined forces with it in the work of erecting homes for our returned men and their dependants.

You can realise how busy a time it was with the Club when two drill nights per week were held, Saturday afternoon rifle shooting was indulged in, Sundays were spent with the V.W.A. home building and the organisation of entertainments and in the receipt and despatch of comforts had to be continually attended to. The support of the Club members and other residents of Mosman and Neutral Bay was simply wonderful. One concert we arranged produced over £100 net profit, the whole of the Mosman Town Hall being booked out for two consecutive nights before the doors opened. The Cheer-oh Girls under the supervision of Mrs. Bennett White and the Sunshine Girls contributed excellent programmes and too high praise cannot be rendered to those ladies who worked with the fullest enthusiasm wherever their help could be availed of.

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The armistice was ultimately signed – the Great War ended – and our members came home. They were welcomed at one of the largest banquets ever held in Mosman, every available foot of the Town Hall being used in this “Bumper Welcome Home”.

With the end of the war came a vast change in the activities of the Club. Drill parades ceased and those members for whom rifle shooting had a fascination, held together, with the result that the club has become one of the strongest shooting combinations in the Commonwealth.

The achievement of this distinction was due to two principle factors; firstly, the wonderful esprit-de-corps which existed among its members and secondly the good fortune to possess good coaches and excellent material for those coaches to work on.

In this report I am refraining from mentioning names wherever possible, but I must depart from that rule in some instances. The Club operated first under the captaincy of Mr A.D. Walker and later under Mr G.J. Williamson for a period of about ten years. Both Mr Walker and Mr Williamson were foundation members. Since 1931 the captaincy has been in the hands of Mr F.W.L. Travers. I think you will agree that the fact that these three gentlemen have led the Club through their respective periods of office provides a third reason why the Club has achieved such distinction.

As a Club which had to be reckoned with in competition shoots, Mosman-Neutral Bay “peeped into the sunlight” in the year 1919 when the “A” Grade team won the “B” Grade of that years Metropolitan Union Grade Matches and the A.N.A. Competition as a Tyro team. From that year onwards the Club has not looked back and its record is really remarkable. In the M.D.R.C.U. Grade Matches wherein the cream of all the clubs competes in the “A” Grade, the Club has won that first or champion grade ten times out of 15 matches. On the other five occasions it has come second twice, third twice and fourth once. It won the first Shield outright and presented it for further competition. It won that Shield again and retained it. It has won the new Akubra Shield outright.

Last year it was beaten only by the tip of a cat’s whisper – 1 point.

In the A.N.A. Competition the Club had six wins in nine matches and won both the cups outright.

In the Eight-Hours Day Prize Meeting the Club came first in 1921-22, 1923-24, 1929-30, 1933-34 and second on many other occasions.

In the NRA Prize meeting in October of one year the Club came first in no less than six of the seven teams events and eventually won outright no less than four of the seven cups presented. In the NSRCA Grade Matches the Club has come first in the “A” Grade on almost every occasion for many years.

The Club sent a team to Tamworth in three consecutive years and won the Teams Match on each occasion thereby becoming owners of the Tamworth Shield which was handed back to Tamworth Club for further competition. I could go on enumerating the successes of teams from this club but time will not permit and I can only further mention, therefore, that in 1932 a team from the Club came first in the Queensland Rifle Association meeting in Brisbane. You must pardon me if I have omitted some of the outstanding successes but space will not permit for further details in this regard.

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In individual matches I can only refer to the fact that members of the Club in the persons of Messrs S.J. Jackson, D.S. Macdonald and H.W. Mason have each won their "King's" and that Mr F.G. Harrison was also a member of this club when he achieved a similar distinction.

The individual merits of some of our members have been recognised by their inclusion in State Representative Teams and only this year Mr Travers was one of the coaches of the State Team which visited Adelaide and won two of the three Interstate matches, Mr D.S. Macdonald on that occasion forming one of the team.

I have outlined in the foregoing remarks what might be considered the principal personal assets of the Club; it has decidedly a material asset in its Club "Hut". "Our Hut" was constructed by voluntary labour almost entirely and the cost of materials was a charge against a grant from the Club funds augmented by the issue of interest bearing debentures. It was officially opened on Saturday, 24th September, 1927, and from that day to this has indeed proved an asset the value of which it is difficult to estimate. Its acquisition has quite definitely resulted in a cementing influence among the members of the Club hitherto had not existed to anything like the same degree. It is indeed a home.

Summarising the condition of the Club at the present time I would state without fear of contradiction that its membership is more healthy than at any time in its existence because of the calibre of its personnel and the pride which each and every member takes in the reputation of the Club. There is not one member who is not a right good fellow and a good sport and they all realise that rifle shooting is a science, the study of a lifetime, wherein you may exhaust yourself but never your subject. It is a contest, a duel calling for courage, skill, strategy and self-control. It is a test of temper, a trial of honour, a revealer of character. It affords the chance to play the man and act the gentleman. It gives opportunities for courtesy, kindness and generosity to an opponent. It promotes not only physical health but moral force. The more that this is realised the higher must be the plane to which the science is lifted.

I cannot conclude this report without making reference to the loyal support which has been accorded by the ladies, the friends and wives of some of our members. In their own quiet way they have contributed marvellously to the success of the Club. They cheerfully agree to forego the pleasures which an outing on a Saturday afternoon might afford them with their husbands in order that those husbands may devote themselves to rifle shooting with the Club. On special occasions they come up here and perform duties in connection with catering and cleaning which the Club deeply appreciates. I am sure that every member present joins me in conveying to these ladies, you know who they are, our very deep appreciation and thanks for their kindnesses.

Part 2

Part 1 of this chronicle has been devoted to the “Call to Empire” which prompted the formation of the Club, and a record of achievement in the years that followed until 1935. In Part 2 it will be revealed how the traditions of the Club have been honoured and the successes of earlier years continued with unabated co-operation and enthusiasm.

The Club “Hut” has provided an “atmosphere” wherein the members have developed very much deeper fellowship than would otherwise have been possible – an essential to a good “team spirit”. From a small one-roomed structure it has grown to a building containing more floor-area than any other on Anzac Range. Best of all, the whole building and its furnishings can be labelled “Voluntary work” by members. True team spirit and pride in Club. New members now have that “Hut” free from any debt; but, in the same spirit as their predecessors, they will surely improve and maintain it. We pause here to think of the many members who worked so hard at that “Hut” but are now numbered among the “departed souls”.

‘From that Hut’ we have gone into the field of competition; and with what result? The long list of “Team Successes” from 1935 to 1951 cannot be detailed – so often has supremacy come our way. Records reveal our outright win of the “Akubra” Shield in the Grade Matches. Placed third in 1935, “A” Grade; second in 1936, “A” and 1st in “D”; third in 1938-39 “A”; second in each of “A”, “C” and “D” in 1939-40. Then came the Second World War when only our Miniature Range could be used. Upon resumption of open range shooting in 1946-47 the Club came third in “A” Grade, 1st in “B” and in two stages 1st in “D”. In 1947-8 we won “A”, third in “B” and second in “D” and won the superlative honour of “Champion Club”. In 1948-9 came fifth in “A”. In 1949-50 fourth in “A” third in “B” and second in “C”. In 1950-51 tied in “A” for first but counted out at long range; second in “B” first in “D” third in “F1”.

In the Northern Suburbs R>C>A> Grade Matches before the Second World War we won the “A” Grade every year but one, and on that occasion were counted out for first. We won the “White Horse Shield” outright.

In Metropolitan D.R.C.U. prize meetings we secured four first and three seconds in Teams’ Matches.

In the N.R.A. Meeting 1948-49 we won “The Sargard” Shield and came second in 1949-50 but first and third in “Sargard Sweepstake”.

Add to these the “Crago Cup”, Goulbourn Teams’ Match, Mudgee, Bulli and in 1950 M.D.R.C.U. Teams’ Matches, and some idea of the “Teams” successes may be gleaned. The list is not complete.

Individual successes would fill a page, but some of the most prominent achievements were:

1925 – D.S. Macdonald, Weinholt Aggregate, Brisbane

1928 – F. Harrison, “King’s”, Sydney.

1928 – D.S. Macdonald, Syme Aggregate, Melbourne.

1930 – S.J. Jackson “King’s” and “A” Series, Western Australia.

1930 – D.S. Macdonald, Weinholt Aggregate, Brisbane.

1932 – D.S. Macdonald, “King’s” and Weinholt Aggregate, and Grand Championship, Brisbane.

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1925 – H.W. Mason, “King’s” and Weinholt Aggregate, Brisbane (date not known).

1936-37 – H.W. Berman, Champion of Champions (Small-Bore).

1938 – F. Travers, won Champion of Champions.

1940 – F.C. Mason, won Champion of Champions.

Apologies for any omissions.

Members included in International and Interstate Teams are:-

Neville Holt for Bisley, D.S. Macdonald, F.W.L. Travers, Ken Lee, F.C. Mason, H.W. Mason, H.W. Berman, A.J. McDonald, T. Finlay, in State Teams.

These are just a few of the successes achieved by the teams and individuals, but they certainly prove that the Club is continuing that fine record in competition which was attained by its members in earlier years.

Nor has the Club been entirely self-centred, for it is recalled that during World War II many enlistments by Club members are recorded. “Loyalty to the King and Country”. On the Miniature Range at Neutral Bay (when the open range was closed down during war) no less than 300 members of Mosman V.D.C. and 100 North Sydney V.D.C. members completed their initial musketry course to qualify for the open range. Between 20 and 30 Boy and Sea Scouts qualified also under instruction for their “Marksman” badges. Just prior to embarkation about 40 members of the A.I.F. were given instruction by us on our miniature range – the O.C. expressed his thanks. Many members who could not enlist for active service abroad in World War II joined the Voluntary Defence Corps and some of them qualified as instructors.

During the period covered by Part 2 of the Chronicle some other events of importance to the Club should be recorded. In 1936, the Club’s 21st Birthday was celebrated at a Ladies’ Day function when the “Hut” was filled to capacity. Each year when the “Hut has been at the Clubs disposal (it was used as a Prisoner of War quarters for some years), Ladies’ Day has been celebrated, and it is an event thoroughly enjoyed by all members and their home folk.

The success of any organisation is largely due to the ability and enthusiasm of its leaders. The Club has been fortunate in that in 36 years it has had four excellent captains. Alderman (later Mayor) A.D. Walker was the Captain at the birth of the Club. He was followed by Mr George J. Williamson. On his retirement in 1931 Mr Fred W. L. Travers, who had come to us from Broken Hill Rifle Club some years previously, was elected, and he, at retiring age, gave place in July, 1948, to Mr Frank C. Mason. There have been many hon. Treasurers, and the Club is very happy with the present official, Mr E. Hilton Stanford. The original hon Secretary was Mr Harold Rabone (since deceased) who took office from a “pro. Tem.” Secretary shortly after foundation date. Early in 1917 I was entrusted with the position, and unhesitatingly I assure you that the 31½ years I was fortunate enough to hold that office were brimful of happy Club life and work. Time marched on, and as with Mr Fred Travers I had too many birthdays. In July, 1948, Mr G.W. Potter took office for 12 months, succeeded by Mr Keith G. Ernst in July 1949. As this Chronicle goes to press we hail with pleasure the appointment of Mr John Davidson as Hon. Secretary.

I cannot conclude this report without making reference to the loyal support which has been accorded by the ladies, the relatives or wives of our members. In their own quiet way they have contributed marvellously to the success of the Club. On special occasions they travel to the “Hut” and perform duties in connection with catering and cleaning which the Club deeply

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appreciates. Every member joins in conveying to these ladies very deep appreciation and thanks for their kindnesses.

Looking through the records from which this Chronicle is compiled, and calmly reflecting upon the Club's 37 years of life, I fancy I see the faces of so many splendid members of this



Club with whom we were indeed privileged to associate. Thirty, forty, and yet the list is incomplete as I write their names. Two of the foundation members are still spared and retain their interest in the Club; and if you were to ask Mr D.S. Macdonald or me what one of our dearest wishes is, the reply would unanimously be: That the Rifle Club hold together, carry on the good work of the Club and instil into the younger members that theirs is the heritage; into their hands is placed the custody of the Club's clean record of remarkable achievement, theirs is the responsibility to see that they at least live up to the high standard set by those who have gone before them. A "hurt" to their Club is a "hurt" to them.

Left: C.H. Cromack circa 1950's

C. Howard Cromack
President

Rifles Used by the Club

Some of the first rifles used by the Club are likely to have been Martini-Henrys of the late 1800's. The minutes refer to returning some Henry Rifles to a Mr A.B. Pyke from the Mosman Oval and Neutral Bay Divisions in November of 1917.

An earlier reference was made in April 1915, immediately after the Club was formed of the acceptance of an offer of 150 rifles (type unknown) on loan from a Lieut Alcock and then later, in August 1915, to 50 ME (Martini-Enfield) Carbines being offered for Drills by Major Brown, the S.O.O. The offer was accepted and the rifles were forwarded to the Reid Park Section.

The ME was another rifle from the late 1800's, many of which were converted to the .303" cartridge. These were being used by the Club in 1916 for their Musketry practice and it was noted in a Club Syllabus in the competition rules for the Club Championship Cup.

An interesting point noted during the preparation of these notes was that, with the conversions from the standard military .45" and .40" calibres to the .303" with ME rifles, some possibly "tongue in cheek" references were being made in regard to .303" being "Smallbore", the term we now commonly use to describe .22 calibre rimfire shooting. It makes some sense of the term "Miniature Rifle" being used at the turn of the 19th century and indeed in some instances, retained to the present day for .22" shooting clubs.



The ME Rifle

Later, the Club applied to return 20 ME rifles and requested that they be replaced by 50 MLE (Magazine Lee Enfield) rifles. The MLE, one of the "Long Lees" and sometimes known as the "Long Tom" was actually released in 1895. The "Long" part of the MLE's nickname referred to the overall length of the rifle being an extended 49.5". The more famous SMLE (Short Magazine Lee Enfield) was 44.5" and already in production from around 1902/03. This was the Mark 1 SMLE.



The MLE Rifle

A rifle pattern was released in 1904 called the "Australian Rifle Club Pattern", a Lee Enfield Carbine. This particular rifle pattern was a shortened version of the Magazine Lee Enfield and possibly some of the still existing Magazine Lee Metfords. The modifications involved shortening the rifle fore-end and fitting a barrel the same length as the SMLE. This pattern was introduced at the same time as the SMLE into Australian Rifle Club competition. It remained in use up until WW2 when the government recalled all .303 rifles used by Rifle Clubs to help alleviate the shortfall in wartime production of these weapons. The Australian Rifle Club Pattern rifle was also known as the "Cutdown" as the methods involved in its production were, cutting the barrel length down to the SMLE length and recrowning, or fitting the rifle with a new Lithgow barrel with a MLE profile, or fitting a new SMLE barrel and then sleeving the muzzle part of the old MLE over the turned down SMLE barrel to retain the MLE foresight assembly.



The SMLE No1 Mk3

No reference appears to be made to SMLE's in the Club records for drill training during the WW1 period so it may be assumed that the rifles being provided to Rifle Clubs for these activities were "older" types such as MEs and MLE's. It is also noted that by the beginning of the WW1 many old MLEs had already been converted into SMLE's, mostly between 1903 and 1909.

An amusing continuation of the .303 "Smallbore" tag mentioned previously was the following taken from an article published in 1889 by W.W. Kimball U.S.N., U.S. Inspector of Ordnance, from "The Small Arms of European Armies". In referring to the recoil of the .450" calibre Martini-Henry;

.... and in her late wars "with peoples who wear not the trousers" her soldiers have gallantly fired on the enemy when they knew full well what a horrible punishment they were to receive

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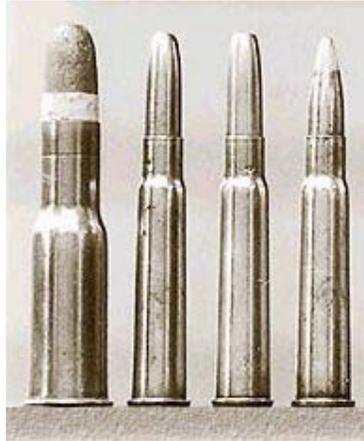
from the brutal recoil of their weapons, and have borne their torture with true English grit. An English officer informed the writer that the practice was a great aid to gallantry in battle in South Africa, for "when a fellow has been so brutally pounded by his own rifle half a hundred times, he don't much mind having an assegai as big a shovel stuck through him; it's rather a relief don't you know".

Following WW2, the return to shooting involved, for the most part, the use of the SMLE Mk3 in its various models, fitted with a heavy barrel. As practically all of the "Cutdown" rifles had been recalled to military use for WW2, only a few were able to reappear at the 1947 resumption of shooting. The SMLE was known as the "Stumpy" and it was mainly this rifle that served Australian Rifle Clubs until the next change, the conversion to 7.62 NATO.

Long serving members of the Club recall the use of both "Cutdowns" and "Stumpies" for Rifle Club shooting during the period between the wars and post WW2. Shooting continued using these rifles until the introduction of the 7.62 where rifles became more specifically of a "Target" nature and models such as the Omark were introduced leading up to the large variety of rifles approved for use today.

Ammunition

From 1915, whilst the Club had used a number of different rifles for open range shooting, there appears to be no reference to the use in shooting of any calibre other than .303 British. The following is some background into the development of the .303" British cartridge used by Club Members.



Left to right: the .577/450 Martini-Henry, the MkII .303, the MkV .303 Hollow Point & the MkVII .303

(Photo from The .303 British Website – Charlie Haley)

The .303 was first accepted by the U.K. as the military round in 1888, along with the Lee-Metford Rifle with both cartridge (Swiss) and Rifle (American) being of foreign design. Martini-Henry Rifles were originally in calibre sizes of .450", and a great number of these were later converted to .303" along with the ME's.

The original .303 cartridges as introduced in 1888 used 70 grains of black powder and a round nosed projectile of 215 grains. This was designated Mk1 ammunition and had a muzzle velocity of 1850 fps. Further development came with the introduction of nitro-glycerine based cordite in 1892 with a cupro-nickel jacketed, round nose ball projectile of 215 grains. This was designated Mk1* ammunition. Minor changes to the cartridge required by the change to cordite resulted in the release of MkII ammunition which was also fitted with the round nosed ball projectile turning out a muzzle velocity of around 1970 fps (another source quotes 2060 fps).

Further changes to the .303 cartridge were made following the experiences gained on the North West Frontier of India where it was confirmed that the round nosed ball Mk II round performed poorly when compared against the .303 Dum Dum rounds being produced in India and specially issued at that time (1897) as well as the comparison with the "man-stopping" capability of the old Martini .45" bullet. The results of investigations were developed to increase the effectiveness in this area and thus came the MkIII round which was a 215 grain, cupro-nickel jacketed hollow point (also made from 1897) and similarly used in the later MkIV (again 1897) and MkV (1899) rounds. These hollow pointed projectiles were soon to be considered to be in contravention of the St Petersburg Declaration and the Hague Convention of 1899 and were subsequently withdrawn in 1903. The remaining stocks of this ammunition were then limited for target practice use.

The term "Dum Dum" is derived from the name of the town in India where these rounds were manufactured (the Dum Dum Arsenal outside of Calcutta) and is now used generally to describe all hollow-point expanding bullets.

A MkVI round was next produced and introduced in 1904 with a 215 grain round nose ball projectile (non expanding in the human body) which had a thinner jacket than the earlier MkII round. The muzzle velocity of the Mk VI was around 2060 fps.

By the time of the First World War, MkVII ammunition was in service having been introduced in 1911. It used a 174 grain spitzer projectile (the term "Spitzer" being derived from "Spitzgeschoss", the German word for pointed bullet) and tubular cordite charge giving a higher muzzle velocity of 2440 fps. Due to the pressures of war the search for greater ammunition production levels led to the USA, and saw the introduction of a smokeless nitrocellulose powder for the ammunition made there. This was designated MkVIIz and is essentially the way the cartridge remained for the rest of its service life until replaced in the U.K. by the 7.62 NATO cartridge in 1957.

At the beginning of the War, the Australian Army still used the older Mk VI ammunition, which had been manufactured at the Cordite Factory at Maribyrnong, Victoria. The SMLE Mark III rifle was able to use either Mk VI or Mk VII ammunition but the rifle had to be resighted when upgrading to the Mk VII round. Around 15 million Mk VI rounds were sent overseas with the troops in 1914.

As with the "hand-me-down" rifles, it seems that the Club's members were carrying out their musketry practice using the earlier Marks of .303 ammunition (probably MkVI) even though it appears most manufacturing in Australia at that time was of the MkVII ammunition.

The MkVII cartridge with its spitzer projectile did not come into use with Australian Target Shooters until 1934. Until then, they had been using the round nosed Marks of ammunition (MkII to MkVI). With the changeover, the effect on improved accuracy was immediate, with 3 shooters scoring 105x105 in the First Stage of the 1934 N.S.W. King's Prize with this score never having been previously posted.

Discussion Over MkVI vs MkVII Ammunition and Short Barrels **for Australian Marksmen**

Amongst C.H. Cromack's papers is a letter he penned to the then Minister of Defence, Mr Archdale Parkhill dated 10th October 1935. In this letter Cromack is quite scathing of a reply received from the Minister over several issues including the use of MkVI and MkVII ammunition and the suspension of Open Range Shooting during WWII.

Cromack begins his response:

5. I am sorry I cannot agree that the change-over from Mark VI to MkVII was "acclaimed by riflemen throughout Australia" as a whole. That was not the feeling amongst the thousand or two with whom I came into contact in N.S.W. and I hardly believe those riflemen held different views from those in other states".

I admit it is easy to be "wise after the event" but would it not have been more expedient if the stocks of MkVI ammunition (which is apparently still serviceable) had been issued to Clubs in

1933 and the changeover to Mark VII deferred another year. I again frankly admit that the Mark VII and Short Rifle has been instrumental in retaining more recruits than any other factor, but what a bad policy the introduction of them at that time will prove, if the impetus the Clubs have thereby received is now to be more than offset by a shortage of ammunition involving a stoppage of shooting.

6. & 7. If these paragraphs are read in conjunction with yours numbered 5, the natural question is - "which way do you want it". The Mark VII, the serviceability of which the Department was dubious about, was of 1918 manufacture and was issued in 1933. It proved so unreliable and in some instances so dangerous that it was examined, withdrawn and condemned - (fifteen years after manufacture). The 1919 Mark VII has also passed and now in 1935 the 1920 manufacture is in use. I have seen some of that and it is positively not "serviceable and 100% useful in case of emergency".

8. My view in regard to the usefulness of Mark VI ammunition at this juncture with the Short Rifle represent the opinion of the active riflemen who are being asked to use it. I have read the opinion of the Chairman of the Commonwealth Council regarding this matter. Some Clubs are taking it only because they have no option. Not one rifleman will admit it is worth a jot from the point of view of training as it is not suited to our short barrelled rifles. It only confuses a marksman and spoils his calculations. Many Clubs will not take it even for free.

Your remarks that there should be no appreciable bar to the continuation of our programmes as Mark VI ammunition can be used to supplement Mark VII, conveys what we hope is an erroneous impression, viz. that the Department has no regard whatever for the rifleman's deep seated ambition to be a first class marksman. Even the novice at rifle shooting knows that competitions commenced with Mark VII ammunition and finished with Mark VI ammunition would result in a farce.

Why is Mark VII ammunition being sold to business firms at less than the cost of manufacture or at any price if there is a shortage of it?

It is suggested that only Mark VI be sold to firms and that Mark VII be given to the riflemen.

Although the depth of the reasoning for Cromack's frustration is uncertain, an answer may be found in the H.M. War Office Publication - Textbook of Smallarms 1929. Chapter VII, Section 1. contains the following comments amongst others on the MkVI cartridge:

This cartridge was the immediate predecessor of the present service cartridge, and is now virtually obsolete for army purposes, but is still used by certain colonial troops and other forces in the Empire.....

This ammunition was designed for shooting in the long MLE Rifle which is sighted suitably for the ballistics of this cartridge. It is not suited for shooting in the SMLE or short rifle, although the bore and chamber size are the same. as the shorter rifle is sighted for the higher velocity Mark VII cartridge.....

The Conversion to 7.62 mm

In more recent times, the transfer from .303 to 7.62 for Australian Target Shooters came officially in 1969. After a flurry of concerns voiced by riflemen, a "bridging period" began in August/September 1968 where both .303 and 7.62 were made available while shooters came to grips with the conversion of their rifles and for testing. In the U.K., the 1968 Bisley Queen's had already been competed for with the new cartridge.

From the 1st July 1969, 7.62 was officially launched in Australia and while remaining stocks of .303 were depleted, the NSWRA allowed competition using both types of cartridge. The NSW Queen's in October 1969 was the first to be officially carried out in Australia with the new 7.62 cartridge.

The Morris Tube

Below are images of a Martini Metford Carbine converted for use with a .297"/230" Morris miniature cartridge.



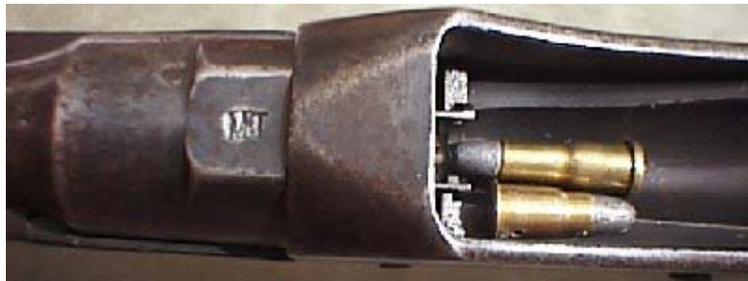
Originally an 1874 Enfield manufactured Martini Henry Carbine II, its markings show it to have been converted initially to a Martini Metford Carbine .303" III in 1893. Unlike the later .22" Aiming Tube for the S.M.L.E., which is in one piece and slides into the bore from the rear with the bolt removed, this is not possible with the Martini action. Instead, the unit is made in two pieces.

The rifled tube is fitted from the muzzle, and the chamber section shown above is fitted via the receiver. A locking tool is used to hold the Morris chamber and prevent it from turning whilst the rifled tube is screwed into it from the muzzle.



The larger brass locking nut is then screwed up to the muzzle crown with a leather washer in between.

The image below illustrates the Long and the Short of the Morris cartridge, so to speak. The rifle shown is chambered for the Long cartridge. The flanged sliding extractor of the Morris chamber is pulled back by the original full-bore extractor as if it were a .303" cartridge.



Acknowledgements

Club Sources:

Club Members: Ray Franklin, Graeme Berman, Frank McDermott, Rod Evans, Phillip Somerville.

Club Minutes and Annual Reports 1915 -1920

Correspondence and Documents gifted to the Club from the estates C.H. Cromack and F.W.L. Travers

Non-Club Images:

In researching this history photographs were included from a number of sources. With the exception of the following, the images contained in this document are from the collection of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club.

Picture Australia

A number of images are from the Picture Australia Website and its various contributors these are noted with the image.

Mosman Library Collection

Photographs of the Club's First Captain, A.D. Walker, the Cheer-Oh Girls and the Sunshine Girls are courtesy of the Mosman Library – Local Studies section.

Non-Club References:

The Australian War Memorial – Roll of Honour and Nominal Rolls as published on their website.

Ian Skennerton's – The Lee Enfield Story

“A Plain Brick Building...” Neutral Bay Public School 1886 ~ 1986, Jillian Skinner

1929 Textbook of Smallarms. H.M. War Office Publication

Websites:

The following websites provided background information on rifles, ammunition, histories of military units, (both AIF and Cadet) and are well worth browsing through for their content of Australian history alone.

<http://anzacday.org.au>

<http://harringtonmuseum.org.uk>

<http://chuckhawks.com>

http://members.lycos.co.uk/rifle_range/index-26.html

<http://www.uidaho.edu/~stratton/history.htm>

<http://diggerhistory.info/>

<http://members.optushome.com.au/lee-enfield/303brit.html>

<http://www.researchpress.co.uk/firearms/lee.htm>

http://www.geocities.com/lee_enfield_rifles/P14.html

Postscript

On the 3rd of June 2004 the Club passed many of the original documents used to prepare this history on permanent loan to the Mosman Library Local Studies Section.

In a short ceremony attended by the Mayor of Mosman Shirley Jenkins, Club Captain, Wendy McGuigan presented the documents to the Library.



Above: Wendy McGuigan with Mayor Shirley Jenkins (Photo Courtesy of Donna Braye)

A list of the documents that are now in the care of the Mosman Library are shown on following pages.

MOSMAN-NEUTRAL BAY RIFLE CLUB Inc
CLUB CHRONOLOGY 1915 TO 1920

Pre 1915

Doc Ref:	Description
1	Commonwealth Celebrations – Ticket to Swearing In Ceremony 1 st January 1901
2	Poem – Ode to Commonwealth Day 1 st January 1901
3	Ticket to Commonwealth Celebration Swimming Carnival 2 nd January 1901

1915 to 1919

Doc Ref:	Description
1	Programme MNBRC Invitation Concert 7-8-1916
2	Mosman Neutral Bay Annual Report 1918-19
3	MNBRC Revenue Account Year End 1918-19
4	Poem “King of the World” by Club member F. Rhoades
5	Roll of Honour List (attachment to 1918-19 Annual Report)
6	Leaflet “For the Empire” announcing a proposed meeting for the formation of a Rifle Club - 1915
7	Programme for Sunshine Girls Review (Honour Roll on Reverse Side – October 28 1918.
8	MNBRC Syllabus July, Aug, Sept 1916 (several pages)
9	Ticket to MNBRC “Grand Invitation Concert” 25 th May 1916
10	MNBRC Syllabus Jan – March 1916
11	MNBRC Syllabus June 1919
12	MNBRC Syllabus August 1918
13	Ticket to Recognition Night 11 th August 1919
14	Rules and By-laws of the Mosman-Neutral Bay Rifle Club 1915

1920 to 1930

Doc Ref:	Description
1	Programme for Grand Revue by the Cheer-oh Girls 19 th July 1921
2	Tickets (x2) Grand Revue by the Cheer-oh Girls 19 th July 1921

Additional Documents:

- Club Minute Book for the period 1915 to 1923.
- Club Membership Book – 1915 showing names and addresses of the original Club members.

Letters from Club Members Servicing Overseas in 1917:

- 1) F.C.S. Lakeman
- 2) W.H. Zander
- 3) J.W. Greig
- 4) T.B. Heffer
- 5) S.A. Johnston
- 6) W.G. Cullen
- 7) C. van Heukelum (1)
- 8) F.H. Hunt
- 9) W. Watson (envelope only)
- 10) J.E. Armstrong
- 11) C. van Heukelum (2)
- 12) M.L. Peryman
- 13) W.G. Goodchild
- 14) C.P. Schaedel
- 15) R.F. Ingham



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