



# Clan Forsyth

SYDNEY BRANCH

## NEWSLETTER

**CLAN FORSYTH SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA – SYDNEY BRANCH**

**PO BOX 396, ROSEVILLE NSW 2069**

**October 2014 #3**

**clanforsythaustralia@hotmail.com**

**<http://www.clanforsythaustralia.org/>**

# Clan Forsyth Day

Now on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**From 2 to 5pm**

**Uniting Church, Clanwilliam Street, Willoughby**



This is the day to bring along your Forsyth mementos: photos, literature, artworks.... anything related to your clan and your family history.

Being the Centenary of the start of World War One, the focus this year will be on war memorabilia including medals, photos, letters to and from the front, war diaries etc.

*(The photo shows last year's Clan Forsyth Day)*

The day also gives you a chance to meet other clan members and to have some refreshments including tea, coffee, delicious sandwiches and cakes.

Members of other clans are welcome!

**RSVP to Judy Forsyth by 1<sup>st</sup> November: [jaforsyth@ozemail.com.au](mailto:jaforsyth@ozemail.com.au) OR 9634 2749**

# A POEM

He was getting old and paunchy  
And his hair was falling fast,  
And he sat around the Legion,  
Telling stories of the past.

Of a war that he once fought in  
And the deeds that he had done,  
In his exploits with his buddies;  
They were heroes, every one.

And 'tho sometimes to his  
neighbors  
His tales became a joke,  
All his buddies listened quietly  
For they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer,  
For ol' Joe has passed away,  
And the world's a little poorer  
For a Veteran died today.

He won't be mourned by many,  
Just his children and his wife.  
For he lived an ordinary,  
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family,  
Going quietly on his way;  
And the world won't note his  
passing,  
'Tho a Veteran died today.

When politicians leave this earth,  
Their bodies lie in state,

While thousands note their passing,  
And proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories  
From the time that they were young,  
But the passing of a Veteran  
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution  
To the welfare of our land,  
Some jerk who breaks his promise  
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow  
Who in times of war and strife,  
Goes off to serve his country  
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend  
And the style in which he lives,  
Are often disproportionate,  
To the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Veteran,  
Who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal  
And perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians  
With their compromise and ploys,  
Who won for us the freedom  
That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,  
With your enemies at hand,  
Would you really want some cop-  
out,  
With his ever-waffling stand?

Or would you want a Veteran  
His home, his country, his kin,  
Just a common Veteran,  
Who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Veteran,  
And his ranks are growing thin,  
But his presence should remind us  
We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,  
We find the Veteran's part,  
Is to clean up all the troubles  
That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor  
While he's here to hear the praise,  
Then at least let's give him homage  
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline  
In the paper that might say:

**"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,  
A VETERAN DIED TODAY."**



## LOSS OF INNOCENCE

Memories of Childhood by Denise

With the present interest in War and Australia's involvement in past conflicts and the current international situations, I was recalling my childhood memories of the post war period. As I was born in 1944, I well recall men wearing uniforms, both in our family and in the street. Rationing was in force. With sharing of fruit, vegetables and eggs, there was great camaraderie and innovation abounded.

Across the road from 9 Edward Street Gordon was a magnificent mansion owned at that time by the Red Cross as a convalescent home for ex-servicemen. This is now Roden Cutler Village an aged care facility.

The grounds were extensive and wonderfully landscaped into themed zones. As children we loved to explore the jungles, waterfalls and bush pools as well as rolling down the hills of grass.

The servicemen, when well enough, attended the Occupational Therapy unit located in the old garage wing where they made baskets, model planes out of balsa and sundry wood working projects. We were fortunate that there were some great story tellers, especially one old gentleman, a veteran of the Boer War, who was a master of creative storytelling, weaving the local terrain into engrossing tales of mystery.

I believe Australians also fought in the Crimean War as mercenaries. We don't hear about them? Information would be gratefully received.

In our own gardens, the Servicemen passing would strike up a conversation. The gravel paths were raked after anyone walked on them, so we were often out in the front attending to this and pleasantries exchanged. Now unfortunately due to personal safety and daily reporting of deviants we don't have the wonderful freedom and innocence of those times.



### BAGPIPE HUMOUR

- Q. How do you get two bagpipes to play in perfect unison? A. Shoot one.  
Q. What's the difference between a bagpipe and an onion? A. No one cries when you chop up a bagpipe.  
Q. What's the definition of a gentleman? A. Someone who knows how to play the bagpipe and doesn't.  
Q. What's the range of a bagpipe? A. Twenty metres if you have a good arm.  
Q. Why do bagpipers walk when they play? A. To get away from the sound.

# Major General John Kealty Forsyth

8 February 1867 – 12 November 1928

John Kealty Forsyth was born in Brisbane on 8 February 1867, the son of a builder. He was educated at Fortitude Valley State and the Normal School, Brisbane and became a clerk in a sawmill and later in a solicitor's office. Forsyth enlisted in the Queensland Mounted Rifles as a trooper in November 1885. He served in all NCO ranks before being commissioned a second lieutenant in the Queensland Mounted Infantry on 18 July 1892. He was promoted to lieutenant on 4 November 1892 and captain on 22 September 1896. He joined the Queensland Permanent Forces at a staff lieutenant on 1 August 1897, and was promoted to captain on 1 February 1901. Forsyth served as adjutant of the 4th Queensland Mounted Infantry from 1 March 1901 to 27 February 1902, of the 2nd Queensland Mounted Infantry and 4th Infantry Regiment from 28 February 1902 to 30 June 1902, and of the 2nd Queensland Mounted Infantry again from 1 July 1902 to 12 November 1905. Forsyth moved to Melbourne, where he served in the usual round of staff appointments that was typical of the regular officers of the day. He became secretary to the Inspector General, Major General H. Finn, from 13 November 1905 to 1 October 1906. He joined the Victorian Instructional Staff on 1 February 1907 and was promoted to major on 28 May 1908. In 1909-1910 he was posted to India on exchange duty with the British Indian Army as brigade major of the Amballa Cavalry Brigade. Returning to Melbourne, he was Deputy Assistant Adjutant General (DAAG) for Instruction from 1 to 31 December 1910. Forsyth was a GSO2 at Army Headquarters from 1 November 1911 to 30 June 1912, became Director of Equipment on 1 July 1907, and was promoted to lieutenant colonel on 1 March 1914. On 1 August 1914, he became Quartermaster General and a member of the Military Board. Just two weeks later, on 15 August 1914, Forsyth joined the AIF as a temporary colonel. Appointed to command the 1st Division's mounted regiment, the 4th Light Horse Regiment, he also took on responsibility for raising the 1st Light Horse Brigade, whose commander designate, Colonel, H. G. Chauvel, was still on duty in the United Kingdom. Forsyth embarked with the brigade on 21 October 1914 and handed over command to Chauvel on the latter's arrival in Egypt in November 1914. Forsyth then concentrated on training his own regiment, who referred to him as "Dad". In May 1915, the light horse were ordered to Gallipoli dismounted to reinforce the infantry. Forsyth arrived at Anzac on 5 May 1915. On 19 May 1915, he became the Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General (AA&QMG) of the 1st Division. From 30 May to 8 June he was acting commander of the 2nd Brigade in the absence of Colonel J. W. McCay, who had been wounded at Krithia, along with most of the brigade's officers. When McCay was evacuated with a broken leg, Forsyth became commander of the 2nd Brigade on 26 July 1915 and was promoted to colonel and temporary brigadier general. He remained at Anzac with his brigade, fighting another battle at the German Officers' Trench in August, until it was evacuated to Mudros on 10 December 1915. The 2nd Brigade returned to Egypt in January 1916, and moved to Serapeum, where it guarded the Suez Canal. On 27 March 1916, it sailed for France. The brigade spent a time in the relatively quiet Armentieres sector before it was committed on the Somme at Pozieres in July. There it was subjected to intense artillery bombardments. Forsyth suffered a breakdown in his health and was evacuated to England. When he was discharged from the hospital, he became commander of 'B' Training Group at Rolleston, England. Ill health forced his return to Australia in December 1916. For his services on the Western Front he was mentioned in dispatches and was appointed a Companion of St Michael and St George (CMG) on 1 January 1917. Forsyth became Commandant of the 4th Military District (South Australia) on 16 February 1917 and was promoted to brevet colonel on 24 September 1917. On 2 July 1918, he once again became Quartermaster General and a member of the Military Board. He was promoted to temporary major general in January 1921 but had to relinquish the rank when he was placed on the unattached list in 1922. He retired with the rank of major general on 9 February 1925. In 1928, Forsyth was selected as a Nationalist candidate for the Senate. While campaigning in Sea Lake, Victoria, he came down with influenza and died nine days later on 12 November 1928. He was buried at Boroondara Cemetery, Kew, with full military honours. Sources: *Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1899-1939, Vol 7, pp. 555-556; AWM 183/20; Bean, C. E. W., The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. Volume II: The Story of Anzac, p. 869*

## President's Report

Hello Members,

I hope this newsletter finds all our members in good health with a spring in your step as we welcome the warmer weather. Saturday 8th November is fast approaching and we would welcome any WW1 memorabilia or stories etc. about your family for the Forsyth Day at Willoughby.

Please come, even if you do not have any servicemen in your family. It is a good day of getting together with other Forsyths and their descendants and of course afternoon tea is served. It is sad that once again our servicemen have headed overseas soon to be in conflict. We wish them a speedy and safe return home.

Looking forward to seeing you on 8th November.

Judy Forsyth. ([jaforsyth@ozemail.com.au](mailto:jaforsyth@ozemail.com.au) or 9634 2749)



March 7, 2114.

The Newsletter Editor,  
Clan Forsyth Sydney Branch,  
PO Box 396,  
ROSEVILLE NSW 2069.

Dear Sir,

We enjoy getting the Newsletter and I was interested to see in the last edition about the Forsyths who served in World War 1. I spoke a few days ago to Judy Forsyth and said I was going to let you know about my father's service in that War. My computer has been playing up for the last few months and I haven't been able to receive or send any e-mails so she said she would tell you I would post the information about Dad to Roseville.

My Dad, Robert John Bowden (always called Bob), was born at Hartley Vale, NSW on December 6, 1881, the son of William Chellew Bowden and Mary Bowden nee Forsyth. My grandmother was born in Sydney in January, 1856, to Robert Forsyth and Margaret Forsyth (nee Hamilton) who had arrived in Australia in June, 1854. After leaving school at Mt Victoria about 1897 Robert came to Sydney and joined the Public Service and was appointed to the Education Department where he became Registrar of the Appointments Branch after a few years.

Robert enlisted in the Army on February 27, 1915, at Liverpool. He was appointed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian General Hospital where all the men were chosen on the basis of their pre-war occupations. He was appointed Chief Clerk on May 1, 1915, and Orderly Room Sergeant on May 15, 1915, the same day the 3<sup>rd</sup> AGH left Sydney for England on the "Moolton".

Robert served in Lemnos, Cairo, and Abbeville, France, and was transferred to 1<sup>st</sup> AGH on May 16, 1918. He was mentioned in despatches in June and July, 1916, and awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in June, 1918.

He became a Staff-Sergeant on July 8, 1915, a Warrant Officer on May 16, 1918, (having been three years as Chief Clerk), Second Lieutenant on September 25, 1918, and First Lieutenant on January 23, 1919, these last two appointments presumably because the AIF Education Scheme was formed in September 1918. This was to educate men to resume peacetime occupations. Robert was appointed first of all Temporary Registrar of the Education Service, then on April 14, 1919, became Assistant Director of Education while continuing as Registrar which position he continued to do until leaving England.

On November 15, 1919, Robert left London on the "Ypringa" arriving in Sydney on January 8, 1920. His appointment was terminated on May 4, 1920, his discharge certificate saying he was discharged with a "disordered action of the heart". Prior to the war he had been an A grade tennis player playing particularly in doubles for NSW but he wasn't allowed to play tennis after the war so took up golf which he enjoyed until he reached 70 after which he was unable to play.

Robert returned to being Registrar of the Appointments Branch of the Education Department in Sydney until December, 1947, by which time all returning teachers were satisfactorily employed. Robert died in April, 1955.

Dad didn't talk much about his war experiences but most of this information is from the thesis our son did for his MA a number of years ago. I don't suppose you really want all this information but I thought it might be of interest to you.

Yours sincerely,

*David R. Ball*

## We need NEW Members!

If you know of any Forsyths that are not members, please ask them to make contact with us so we can welcome them into the Sydney Branch:

[clanforythaustralia@hotmail.com](mailto:clanforythaustralia@hotmail.com)

**Plus here's a reminder to pay your membership fee if you haven't already.**

Also email your articles, photos and anecdotes for inclusion in future Clan Newletters.

Another option for contributions: email the Newsletter Editor's email address:

[cwlee@optusnet.com.au](mailto:cwlee@optusnet.com.au)

**We are also looking for someone to become Clan Secretary and another person to look after our Facebook Pages. Email us if you are interested.**

## Forsyths that were born, died or married between October

<b>Births, 100 years</b>	Forsyth, Lawrence, James	19/10/1914		
	Forsyth, Freda Aileen	27/10/1914	Chatswood NSW	Forsyth Tanners, NSW
	D'Arcy, Flora Marjorie Stuart	30/10/1914		Forsyths, Hamilton
	Forsyth, George, David Thomas	31/10/1914	Willoughby, NSW	Forsyth Tanners, NSW
	Sharrock, Kathleen, Agnes	19/12/1914	Temora, NSW	Riverina, NSW
<b>Births, 125 years</b>	Forsyth, Edith	03/10/1889	Noradjuha, VIC	Forsyths, Horsham, VIC
<b>Deaths, 100 years</b>	Craig, David Powell	15/10/1914	Bright, VIC	Forsyths, Bright, VIC
<b>Deaths, 125 years</b>	Forsyth, Agnes Lillian	12/12/1889	Omeo, VIC	Forsyths, Bright, VIC
<b>Marriages, 100 years</b>	Forsyth, Eliza Manville	10/10/1914	Masonic Hall, Ryde, NSW	Forsyth Tanners, NSW
	Thompson, Charles , Augustus	As above	As above	As above
	Lockyer, Agnes, Adelaide	24/10/1914	Congregational Church, Petersham, NSW	Forsyth Tanners, NSW
	Forsyth, Charles, James, Gordon	As above	As above	As above

## and December 100 or 125 years ago

Photo of Reginald James Forsyth. When he left he was in sergeant's stripes, but reverted to corporal when he arrived in Egypt.

Harry Raymond Forsyth, grandfather of the Clan Commission, David Forsyth AM



*a Sergeant in the 7<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement  
reverted to the rank of Corporal*

Reginald James Forsyth



Harry Raymond Forsyth