

~~18-3-1974~~
Russell Casev.

INGLEBURN ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

UNTIL 1972 ANZAC DAY AT INGLEBURN WAS CONDUCTED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:
ON THE SUNDAY PRIOR TO THE 25TH APRIL A SERVICE WAS HELD IN THE COMMUNITY HALL AND A GUARD OF HONOUR, PROVIDED BY LOCAL ARMY UNITS, WAS IN ATTENDANCE. ON THE ACTUAL DAY THE SUB BRANCH JOINED LIVERPOOL FOR THE DAWN SERVICE, THEN HELD AT THE GATES IN MEMORIAL AVENUE. IN THE LATE SIXTIES THIS SERVICE WAS TRANSFERRED TO MEMORIAL PARK IN BIGGE STREET.

ON COMPLETION OF THIS SERVICE, ALL WOULD RETIRE TO LIVERPOOL R.S.L. CLUB FOR BREAKFAST AND THEN RETURN TO INGLEBURN TO CONTINUE ON. WHETHER IT WAS DUE TO OVERCROWDING OR OTHER REASONS, SOME MEMBERS BECAME DISGRUNTLED BY LACK OF HOSPITALITY ACCORDED TO THEM AND STATED THAT THEY WOULD NO LONGER ATTEND THE DAWN SERVICE AT LIVERPOOL. THIS WAS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND SUB BRANCH COMMITTEE.

INSTEAD OF LETTING IT REST THERE, THE PRESIDENT AND HIS COMMITTEE COMMENCED A DETAILED RESEARCH INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF THE SUB BRANCH CONDUCTING ITS OWN LOCAL DAWN SERVICE. CONTACT WAS MADE WITH THE INFANTRY CENTRE, THEN STATIONED AT BARDIA BARRACKS, AND THE COMMANDANT, COL ERIC SMITH, ASSURED THE SUB BRANCH THAT EVERY ASSISTANCE REQUIRED WOULD BE FORTHCOMING FROM HIS COMMAND.

ON THIS INFORMATION, THE COMMITTEE SAT DOWN TO SORT OUT THE DETAILS. COPIES OF DAWN SERVICES FROM OTHER AREAS WERE OBTAINED AND BEST FEATURES SELECCED. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE MARCH WOULD DEPART FROM OUTSIDE THE CLUB, CORNER OF OXFORD AND CUMBERLAND ROADS AND MOVE DIRECT TO MEMORIAL PARK.

THE EXACT TIME OF DAWN WAS OBTAINED AND TIMINGS TAILORED BEFORE AND AFTER THIS TIME. CONSIDERED WAS LENGTH OF TIME OF THE MARCH, DURATION OF SERVICE ETC.. TRAIN TIMETABLES WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO ENSURE THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF DISRUPTION BY RAIL TRAFFIC WAS MINIMISED. AS TO THIS DAY, WE HAVE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE AS ONLY ON A COUPLE OF OCCASIONS TRAINS HAVE INTERFERED WITH THE MOVEMENT TO MEMORIAL PARK.

MINISTERS OF RELIGION WERE APPROACHED, A BAND ENGAGED, A GUARD OF HONOUR MADE AVAILABLE AND A CATAFALQUE PARTY WENT INTO STRICT TRAINING UNDER THE CRITICAL EYES OF INSTRUCTORS OF THE INFANTRY CENTRE USING ITS BEST DRILL SERGEANTS. SOUND SYSTEMS AND LIGHTING WERE TESTED WELL IN ADVANCE. TAPES OF BUGLE CALLS AND THE RECEPTIONAL WERE OBTAINED - EVEN DUPLICATES WERE ON HAND IN CASE OF MISADVENTURE.

ANZAC DAY ARRIVED AND ALL PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF THE SERVICE WERE HOPEFUL RATHER THAN CONFIDENT THAT ALL WOULD GO AS SCHEDULED. THEY NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED.

IT WAS AN EERIE SCENE WHEN THE MARSHALL CALLED FOR MARKERS THEN ORDERED "ON PARADE". THE ORDER "BAND BY THE CENTRE, PARADE BY THE LEFT, QUICK MARCH" RANG OUT AND WE WERE UNDER WAY. NO TURNING BACK NOW. NO CHANCE TO ALTER ARRANGEMENTS. HOPE FOR THE BEST COBBERS.

ARRIVING AT MEMORIAL PARK THE COLUMN OF MARCH WAS DIVIDED AND QUICKLY POSITIONED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE PARK, THE COLOURS OCCUPYING THE AREA BEHIND THE DAIS.

THE ORDER TO MARCH ON THE CATAFALQUE PARTY WAS GIVEN. WHEN IN A POSITION OF REST ON ARMS REVERSED, THE MARSHALL INVITED THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUB BRANCH, MR. DOUG PURSER, TO OPEN THE FIRST DAWN SERVICE HELD AT INGLEBURN. HIGHLIGHT OF THE SERVICE WAS AN EXCELLENT ADDRESS GIVEN BY MAJOR SMITH.

ONE ASPECT OF THIS FIRST DAWN SERVICE WILL REMAIN IN THE MINDS OF THOSE ATTENDING. WHEN THE PARADE WAS ASKED TO FACE THE EAST FOR REVEILLE, A VERY LARGE FLOCK OF BIRDS WHO HAD TAKEN UP RESIDENCE IN THE TREES ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE PARK, DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO VACATE, MAKING CONSIDERABLE NOISE. THE COMMITTEE WAS ASKED LATER HOW THIS SPECTACLE WAS ARRANGED. THEY MAINTAINED IT WAS THEIR SECRET AND WOULD NOT BE REVEALED.

ON COMPLETION OF THE SERVICE, THE PARADE REFORMED ON MEMORIAL AVENUE AND MARCHED BACK TO THE CLUB. THE PRESIDENT WAS RETIRED, THE BAND AND COLOURS MARCHED OFF AND AFTER INVITING ALL TO JOIN THE PARADE AT THE SAME TIME OF THE DAY A YEAR HENCE, THE MARSHALL DISMISSED THE PARTICIPANTS.

EVEN THE COMMITTEE WAS SURPRISED AND DELIGHTED BY THE REACTION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. ALL DECLARED THAT THE SERVICE HAD BEEN AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS, AND TO THIS DAY THE FORMAT HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED. HOWEVER, WITH THE CLOSURE OF THE LEVEL CROSSING IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THE COMMITTEE WILL HAVE TO REORGANISE. I AM SURE THIS PROBLEM WILL BE OVERCOME AND THE DAWN SERVICE AT INGLEBURN WILL CONTINUE TO GROW FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

AN AMUSING SIDELIGHT TO THE FIRST DAWN SERVICE IN 1972 IS THAT THE MARSHALL, WHO HAD CONDUCTED THE PARADE IN UNIFORM, DASHED HOME TO CHANGE INTO CIVIES. ON HIS RETURN HE ENTERED THE FRONT DOOR OF THE CLUB AND WAS GREETED BY A PERSON, OBVIOUSLY ENJOYING HIMSELF, WITH THE WORDS "YOU OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN HERE FOR THE DAWN SERVICE MATE. IT WAS A BLOODY BEAUTY".

Russ [Signature]