



# RUSIA Defence Update

*A weekly e-newsletter relating to our security & defence*

## 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneer Battalion



The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneer Battalion was first formed in May 1940 in Victoria. Pioneer battalions were originally intended for basic engineering works for the armed forces in battle areas with the members also trained as infantry for "emergency" fill in. The reality was that there was always an emergency and the pioneers performed both roles, often at the same time.

The battalion served in the Middle East during the Syria-Lebanon Campaign against the Vichy French in mid-1941, fighting mainly as infantry. In 1942, the battalion was committed to the defence of Java, fighting against the Japanese and was all but destroyed or captured following the capitulation of the defending garrison. Rebuilt in 1943, it later took part in the Salamaua-Lae and Finisterre Range campaigns in 1943-44 and the Borneo campaign in 1945 before being disbanded. It was awarded battle honours for: Syria 1941, Merjayun, Damour, Mazaraat ech Chouf, South-West Pacific 1942-1945, Lae-Nadzab, Lae Road, Liberation of Australian New Guinea, Ramu Valley, Shaggy Ridge, Java 1942. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup>'s casualties during the war amounted to 394 killed in action or died on active service, and 121 wounded.

The illustration is the program for the unit's farewell concert held at Melbourne Town Hall in November 1940.

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Library Catalogues:  
[RUSINSW](#)  
[RUSI London](#)

### Forthcoming Anniversaries

**20 April 1941:** Anzac Corps withdraws to the Thermopylae Line, Greece  
**22 April 1941:** Evacuation of Anzac Corps from Greece begins  
**23 April 1918:** Eleven volunteers from HMAS Australia raid Ostend and Zeebrugge, Belgium  
**24 April 1918:** Australians in Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux  
**24 April 1944:** Australians occupy Madang  
**24 April 1951:** 3 RAR in Battle of Kapyong, Korea  
**25 April 1900:** Naval contingent returns to Sydney from China  
**25 April 1915:** British, Indian, French, Australian and New Zealand troops land on Gallipoli Peninsula  
**25 April 1918:** Lt Clifford Sadlier, 51 Bn, awarded the VC for his actions at Villers-Bretonneux, France  
**26 April 1951:** Cease fire talks between UN and North Korea commence in Panmunjon, Korea  
**29 April 1915:** HMA Submarine AE2 sinks in the Sea of Marmara, Turkey



Key: (M) - magazine or website; (N) - newspaper; (F) - film; (P) - podcast

## Defence

Australian GMLRS: assembled in Australia, but made in America (so far): [\(M\)AspiStrategist](#)  
 Australia's national auditor moves to keep Defence acquisition accountable: [\(M\)AspiStrategist](#)  
 Light speed weapons? Directed energy and the future of the ADF: [\(M\)Aspi](#)  
 Australia names new defence leaders: [\(M\)AsiaPacificDefenceReporter](#)  
 ADF must master the fight tonight before betting on tomorrow's autonomy: [\(M\)AspiStrategist](#)  
**Recommended:** 2026 National Defence Strategy and 2026 Integrated Investment Program: [\(M\)Defence](#)

## Army

School of Military Engineering: [\(F\)Defence](#)

The new Chief of Army is the right person at the right time: [\(M\)AspiStrategist](#)

The Second Australian Army Division: [\(F\)RUSINSW](#)

## Air Force

Meet Corporal Mikhayla Kiem ✈️: [\(F\)RAAF](#)

## New Zealand

Kiwis shine in US LAV comp: [\(M\)Contact](#)

## Asia Pacific

Philippines accuses China of poisoning disputed waters: [\(M\)DefensePost](#)

Indonesia shouldn't give blanket airspace access to the US: [\(M\)AspiStrategist](#)

## UK

How the Royal Navy's budget cuts built foreign navies: [\(F\)Warships&Warriors](#)

UK advances hybrid navy vision with new underwater survey capability: [\(M\)NextGenDefense](#)

## US

US Army creates AI chatbot to support frontline decisions: [\(M\)MilitaryAI](#)

## NATO & EU

NATO revamps air surveillance approach for the 'cost-war' of low-flying drones, missiles: [\(M\)BreakingDefense](#)

Hungary's election: significance and implications: [\(M\)IISS](#)

## Middle East

Trump's Iran threats renew debate over war crimes, illegal orders: [\(M\)DefenseOne](#)

The Iran war took a toll on the Air Force's Reaper fleet: [\(M\)TaskandPurpose](#)

Flurry of Navy minesweepers appear to be heading toward the Middle East: [\(M\)WarZone](#)

US blockade of Iran will be major military endeavor, experts say: [\(M\)DefenseNews](#)

**Recommended:** For Iran, Hormuz is more a weakness than a weapon: how a U.S. blockade threatens the regime's grip: [\(M\)ForeignAffairs](#)

## China & Taiwan

The party's AI: how China's new AI systems are reshaping human rights: [\(M\)Aspi](#)

Outpaced by the US, China's military places selective bets on artificial intelligence: [\(M\)DefenseNews](#)

## Military History

Why did Churchill sack the marshal who saved Britain: [\(F\)BritishCommand](#)

Inside the Royal Navy's most powerful warship: [\(F\)Dibbert](#)

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