

47th INFANTRY BATTALION

The 47th Infantry Battalion had its beginning in 1861 when a troop of 40 men of all ranks was formed at Maryborough and known as the Wide Bay Rifle Rangers.

Commanding Officer was Captain R.B. Sheridan with Lieutenant J. Dowzer and Lieutenant J. Purser.

In 1879 a Rifle Range was provided at Maryborough, and a Drill Hall was built on the present site of the Commonwealth Bank.

The "2nd Queenslanders" (the Wide Bay and Burnett Regiment) was the name gazetted when the Maryborough and Bundaberg Companies were grouped under the command of Major N.E.N. Tooth in 1885. The Motto "Defendare Non Provocare" and the Badge with its five pointed star were adopted by the Regiment.

The original Colours were worked by the ladies of Maryborough and were presented by the Commandant of the Queensland Defence Forces, Colonel French, on behalf of the Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave on the 26th August 1887 at the Maryborough Show Grounds. The Consecration Ceremony was performed by the Reverend Canon Eva. These Colours were laid up fifty years later, on the 29th August, 1937 in the Warriors Chapel, St. Paul's Church, Maryborough after the Presentation of the second set of Colours.

The Warriors' Chapel, St. Paul's Church, Maryborough was the Regimental Chapel of The Wide Bay Regiment.

In 1901, when the Commonwealth Government took over responsibility for Defence, the Regiment then became known as "The Wide Bay Regiment".

In February 1916, the 47th Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces was formed at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt following the evacuation from Gallipoli. The Battalion comprised selected Officers and men from the 15th Infantry Battalion and reinforcements from Australia. The reinforcements comprised mainly volunteers from Queensland.

Service in Egypt and France resulted in heavy losses. Lack of reinforcements caused the disbandment of the Battalion in June 1918, and the absorption of the men into the 48th Infantry Battalion.

The 47th Infantry Battalion strength was 126 Officers and 2682 other ranks. Casualties comprised 24 Officers and 637 other ranks killed or died. Wounded comprised 79 Officers and 2146 other ranks.

During the 1914 – 1918 War, men from the 47th Infantry Battalion won at least 170 Decorations including 3 Foreign Decorations and were "Mentioned in Dispatches" 20 times. Included among the men decorated was Sergeant S. R. McDougall, "Military Medal", who won the Units first "Victoria Cross".

Three men won "Distinguished Service Orders" plus one a "Distinguished Service Order and Bar". Fifteen "Distinguished Conduct Medals" were awarded. Fifteen "Military Crosses" were awarded and one "Bar to Military Cross". Ninety-seven "Military Medals" were awarded and seven "Bars to Military Medals". One man was awarded an "O.B.E."

In reorganisation after the War the Title became the 2-47th Infantry Regiment as part of the 11th Infantry Brigade, 5th Division. The Territorial Title was again allotted in 1927 and the Unit was designated 47th Battalion (The Wide Bay Regiment).

The second set of Colours was presented to the Regiment in 1927, by Brigadier General C.H. Foot. They were Consecrated by the Reverend J. Elliott. On these Colours were blazoned the Battle Honours awarded to the 47th Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces, which was raised in Egypt, that of the 15th Infantry Battalion which consists mainly of personnel from the Wide Bay District. They were paraded at the opening of Parliament House by H.R.H. The Duke of York in 1927. These Colours were laid up in the Warriors' Chapel, St. Paul's Church, Maryborough by the 47th Infantry Battalion in 1953, the Commanding Officer being Lieutenant Colonel R.H. Marson.

The third set of Colours was presented by Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, Governor of Queensland on the 2nd October, 1958. They were Consecrated by the Reverend A.E. Taylor. The Commanding Officer was Major E.E. Patterson.

The Battle Honours won by the 47th Infantry Battalion, Australian Military Forces in the Second World War were blazoned on the Queen's Colour in 1958.

These Colours were laid up in the Warriors' Chapel, St. Paul's Church, Maryborough by the 9th Battalion, Royal Queensland Regiment on the 17th November, 1968. The Commanding Officer being Lieutenant Colonel P.P. Smith.

From 1939 to 1941 the 47th Battalion was engaged in training National Servicemen in a series of camps of three months duration. The 47th Battalion of World War 11 was formed from Militia and C.M.F. and after training in Maryborough transferred to Townsville for experience in jungle warfare.

The School colours of the Maryborough State High School reflect the colours of the 47th Infantry Battalion.

