

Major General Allan C Murchison AO MC ED

31 October 2005

Roll No.187

Vale MAJOR GENERAL A.C. MURCHISON, AO, MC, ED (1917-2005)

UNSWR Honorary Colonel 1969-1975

Major General Murchison enlisted in the Militia in 1934 with the 30th Infantry Battalion (New South Wales Scottish Regiment) and was a Lance Sergeant when the Second World War broke out.

Commissioned in the 30th Battalion in September 1939, General Murchison was transferred to the 2/3rd Infantry Battalion AIF in November of that year. Promoted to Captain in March 1941 he was awarded the Military Cross for actions at Bardia during the Western Desert Campaign. The citation for his MC reads as follows:

During the attack on BARDIA 3 Jan 41 the Coy to which Lt MURCHISON belongs was held up in front of a very strongly defended enemy post by artillery and M.G. fire. Lt Murchison led his Pl, across very open ground under heavy artillery fire and point-blank M.G. and rifle fire, capturing a section of the enemy defensive position thus enabling the rest of the Coy to advance and capture the whole post with 500 prisoners. This officer showed outstanding gallantry and leadership throughout the whole of the fighting and was an inspiration and outstanding example to his troops.

General Murchison remained with the 2/3rd Battalion until November 1942 when he was posted to the 2/6th Infantry Battalion. Subsequently he was promoted to Major in January 1943. In December 1944 he was posted to the Pacific Islands Depot Battalion. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on the 1st January 1945 he commanded the Depot Battalion until March 1945. On 28th March 1945 he was given command of the 2nd New Guinea Infantry Battalion (the first native unit to fight as an entity), and held that post until demobilization in April 1946.

On the reorganisation of the Citizen Military Forces in 1948, General Murchison returned to the 30th Battalion as its Second in Command. He then commanded the Battalion from August 1949 until August 1952 when he was then attached to the 2nd Division Staff Group, remaining there until 1956.

Promoted to Colonel (Temporary Brigadier) in July 1956 he was given command of the 8th Infantry Brigade. From September 1960 until November 1963 he commanded the Command and Staff Group, Eastern Command from September 1965 until November 1966.

On the 1 December 1966 he was promoted to major general and given command of the 2nd Division, a post he held until 30th November, 1968. After a period on the Unattached List, Eastern Command, he was appointed to the Military Board as CMF member on the 1st January 1971. At the time this posting terminated on 27th October 1974 General Murchison was CMF member of the Military Board and Inspector General, Army Reserve. He had one of the longest tours of duty in the post for senior reserve officers.

He was Honorary Colonel of UNSWR from March 1969 until October 1975 and has been Representative Honorary Colonel of the Australian Cadet Corps (now titled the Australian Army Cadets) and President of the National Council of the CMF (Now Defence Reserves) Association.

He was a director of several companies including Cleveland Engineering and Welding Coy Pty Ltd and a director of Budget Plant Hire Pty Ltd and associated companies. He was Mayor of Woollahra for three terms, 1960-61, 1962-63, 1966-67 and President of the Imperial Service Club from 1966-1971.

General Murchison was named as an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 1977 Australia Day Honours List for his service to local government.

Sadly, General Murchison passed away on 31 October 2005 and a Service in celebration of his life was held at the Garrison Church, Millers Point, Sydney on 8 November 2005. As the Service was part of a military funeral, the casket was carried into and out of the church by six Warrant Officers Class One with Pipers and Drummers playing a tune (*Road to the Isles*) and a Captain carried General Murchison's medals and decorations on a cushion.

Many of General Murchison's former comrades attended the Service and the Eulogies were led by the Commander 2nd Division, Major General R.P. Irving, AM, RFD.

Before departure from the church precinct, the casket was placed on gun carriage and three Rifle Volleys were fired by a Guard to honour General Murchison's passing.

University of New South Wales Regiment Association Newsletter.

Major General Allan C Murchison resigned from the League of Ancient Mariners on 21st July 2001