

2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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West Australian Whisperings

Committee Comment

The Committee met at Monash Club, King-st., on Tuesday, March 15, at 8.30 p.m.

Present were: Messrs. Calcut, Dook, Holly, Bowden, Willis, Smith, Green, Pendergrast, March, and the secretary. Apology received from Mr. Boyland.

H.A.W. Scheme. The Warden, Mr. Pendergrast, reported area was coming along but it definitely required more grass. It was decided to bring the matter to the attention of members at the next general meeting with a view to arranging a busy bee in the near future.

In the Treasurer's absence, Mr. Dook reported there was approx. £70 in the current account. The President said he had received an offer from the Mt. Lawley Cricket Club for us to sell tickets on a lottery they were conducting on the basis of 50 per cent commission on every 1/- ticket sold. As the Association needed all the money it could get, the President urged that we accept this offer and take 50 books. After a short discussion this was decided on. Secretary to distribute books as soon as possible. The suggestion previously put forward by Mr. Green as to the possibility of the Association running a stall at some of the local shows was still being investigated.

'Courier'. Members expressed concern at the delay in the publishing of the 'Courier'. Mr. Dook said Mr. Burrbridge's job as Editor had been difficult through pressure

of business. Mr. March offered to help out and with the Editor's consent, to handle the publication until Mr. Burrbridge could see his way clear to do so.

Association Activities

APRIL MEETING

Those fortunate enough to visit Monash Club for the monthly meeting enjoyed a really good night's entertainment. The evening was in the form of a games' night. The belt was not at stake this night and the champ for the night was not decided but that did not depreciate from the fun.

About 18 or 20 battled at the usual hookey, tossing the penny, darts, quoits and table tennis.

Refreshments aplenty were provided.

OLYMPIC RE-UNION

As time for the Olympic Re-union draws close it is high time we made some effort to finalise arrangements for the visit to the Games.

Our Eastern States hosts are feeling some concern in the fact that as yet there have been very few who have nominated their certainty to attend.

Will all those members who have indicated their intention of attending the re-union please contact the Committee and inform them one way or another so as further arrangements can be made.

This is very important and you should not delay.

More about the Olympic Re-union next month.

Herewith is reprinted a letter sent to Jack Servante from Bert Tobin:

Evidently the W.A. Association puts on a pretty good show at the annual dinner and at the Memorial Service. Sounds as though that might be the best time of the year to go—for anyone from over this way with ideas of making the pilgrimage one of these days. Pleased to hear of you catching up with Arch Campbell again. Is he coming over for the Games?

You have certainly had some heat over there and trust you are not all grease spots by the time the cooler weather comes. Our heat has been mild by comparison but I bet we have moaned about it just as much as you have. Fortunately it has cooled off quite a bit over the last week and I can imagine that I can smell the first hints of autumn in the air.

We (the Tobin family) have had a few aches and pains lately but nothing very serious and on the whole are pretty good. "Moomba" has hit Melbourne and we look like going in to town to see the floats tomorrow. Yesterday we all went to Olympic Park to see the Australian Athletic Championships and John Landy in particular. He is certainly a mighty sportsman.

The Association had a committee meeting on Feb. 28 and has another one scheduled for March 20. We have disbanded our Olympic sub committee and its functions have been taken over by the full committee. I think this is a good step and I really think a drive has begun on all the necessary work and detail to make the Association Games functions a success.

We have received our 200 tickets for the Opening Ceremony but will not begin to allocate these until we know who is staying with whom. Two other important decisions reached last meeting were to spend £500 "or more" on our Games activities and to combine our annual kiddies Christmas Party with the function to be held on Sunday, Dec. 1, which is at present listed as

a picnic to Maroondah Dam. We anticipate going "broke" as far as our general account is concerned but will be happy to do so if we get sufficient interstate visitors.

Getting chaps to say, "Yes, definitely coming", is still the biggest trouble. For instance the only acceptances we have from the West listed so far are Wilf March, Alf Hillman, Bert Burgess, Jack Fowler, Pidgeon Pearce, Vic Swann and Eric Weller with their wives and children, in some cases. Don't want to land you with a job in the midst of your private worries, Jack, but if you can encourage anyone else to say they are coming you will earn our thanks. In particular do you know whether Col Doig is coming? From the Association point of view I feel things will fall a little flat without Col.

At our meeting it was decided that Anzac Day would be "D" day for marrying up guests with our members offering accommodation. This day should be best from the point of view of most members being on the spot to indicate their friends and preferences among the visitors. You will therefore see the advantage of visitors advising that they are coming, before April 25.

Bruce McLaren had another bad turn recently, this one being his worst yet, apparently. Will mean three or four months of complete rest—most of it probably at Heidelberg.

Max Davies seems to be fairly well at present. Harry Bot is a ball of muscle, he missed our meeting for the excellent reason of a fortnight's holiday at Rosebud which went extremely well according to a phone call the other day.

Gerry McKenzie is on the job again with the Association and attacking Olympic Games problems. It is very good to hear that Mrs. McKenzie has made a splendid recovery from her operation. Gerry had been very worried about her.

Very sorry to hear that the sergeant killed in Malaya a week or so ago turned out to be Charlie Anderson.

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Personalities

Geoff Laidlaw has been hitting the headlines of late. Recently Geoff made a whirlwind trip to Adelaide to play in the Ampol O.K. Cup. He tied for first place. The O.K. Cup is a staff tournament played annually. Geoff and his partner Gerry Barnard were unlucky in that they lost by one stroke the Bill Walkley Shield, a trophy presented for the interstate teams match.

In a recent publication of the Weekend Mail Geoff was pictured in a feature article on what are the old soldiers doing today. The navy, army and air force were represent-

ed in the photographs. Both of the photos of Geoff were well reproduced. The first a well-known one of a bearded giant—the beard as black as night. The second, a present day one of Geoff planning a country sales campaign. The years have dealt very kindly with Geoff as bespoken by his athletic prowess and still youthful and vigorous appearance.

Fred Napier, that grand stalwart, is in Hollywood Hospital having treatment to his leg. Fred has suffered with a dermo type of ulcer on the leg for years and I'm hoping that he will get some relief in the near future.

Random Harvest

Frank Freestone, away with P.M.G. Line Party, Watson, S.A., writes:

I could give you dozens of reasons why I have not written before. I have always been a bad correspondent preferring anything to writing, and I'm a damn sight worse now. The wife's letters keep me occupied, answering these most of my spare time.

Just now it's dust and flies. Everyone is waving their arms and jabbing their eyes. I'm sure the passengers on the express must think it's a colony of half naked nuts or the blokes have been on the grog for a month and waving their arms at the pink and white elephants.

Kwinana Construction Company is working the railway quarry on the south side of the line and of course the brains of the Co. had to put tents, mess hut, and showers on the north side just on a nice line to catch the south easterly wind over the quarry seeing that they only shoot about 80 holes morning and night.

Grabs, seopps and crackers, trucks and breaking down 400 tons of metal a day it's a very pleasant surprise to come back to lunch or tea and find only an eighth of an inch of dust on the table. Don't get me wrong, that is only one of the drawbacks to life in the wide open Nullabor.

The set-up is queer. Kwinana must have a cast iron contract to do

what they are. There are five different areas and I should say roughly 600 of them men spread in these.

The mess is theirs and P.M.G. Dept. of Supply, Security, Combined Services working or carting eat there and it is good food, tons of fresh fruit, fresh water on the rail and they pay a stiff price 1/- a gal.

Watson is the centre and the Kwinana Co. unload all trains and as you can guess there are thousands of quid, in stores and machinery covering acres of ground. They have the road from Watson to Marralinga, 26 miles and on to the 43 mile camp, the airstrip to construct and sundry bits of construction. After the war experience this should be child's play but they are playing around like school kids.

They are using mainly Internationals carting about a barrow load 40 odd mile and half their trucks are in dock with broken springs. They handle their metal two and three times breaking 400 tons a day and carting 200 tons.

Their quarry space is always full up and they dump it anywhere out of the road.

Their personnel is a conglomeration of conglomerites.

The only ones I have not spotted is the Chow and Jap, they even have one of Rommel's Africa Corp, complete with red cap, field uniform and knee boots. He has been surveying the road and taking lev-

els. A proper Hun and speaks to no one.

Some information for any Unit lads that want quick money. Truck drivers 7/6 to 8/6 an hour, bulldozers 9/- an hour, crane drivers, grabs and tractor rollers, compressors, around 9/6 an hour. They are all making £30, £40 and more a week.

Mess men £30 and more a week. The daddy of the lot a plumber £70, oxywelder £56.

Some earn it and some don't, believe me.

An illustration, bowzer operator on duty half the night because of truck drivers shifts collects about six hours a day overtime and half the day he's reading a book, weekends as well, no food to pay for, beer fairly plentiful at 3/1 a bottle, fights easy to get and fairly general but your on the next train if you do.

The P.M.G. job is similar, a trial and error one. They seem to have dug up all the old material they can find to do the job with. Marralinga is the heads village 26 mile from Watson and so far there is not a yard of cable down so I've had to do aerial. We have completed 22 mile from Oldéa to Watson and have nearly completed the 26 mile to Marralinga so I should not be long before I get onto my own job.

Key Curran, of Bendigo, writes:

At long last I have found the energy to write.

Firstly I want to thank you for mailing me your monthly paper as it is a great interest to me. I look forward to receiving it with great keenness. I will enclose a Xmas card from one of the Yanks, a big fair haired fellow and if you could help I feel sure he would appreciate a note with the addresses he asks for. I would be pleased if you would return the card at some later date as I would like to keep it. A Z special officer, Brian Austin, of Wanganella Station, N.S.W., the largest sheep stud in the world would like information of Fred Otway. They were together in Z force and he would like to hear from him. I see quite a few of the boys and only recently had a session with Johnny Roberts and Panchb Humphreys. They were staying with Stan Wefner who has a property near here. He's being

married at Easter, quite a surprise. You will be sorry to hear we lost "Gordon My Brother". His boy Billy last week, aged 17 years, had a heart turn while swimming, which has cast a great sadness over our family.

Things are O.K. in the hotel but the days of making big money in the trade in Victoria has finished, caused mostly by severe taxation in various forms.

I am still playing footy and won the Bendigo league trophy for the best player in the final series. Lost the grand final by one point after being eight goals down at quarter time. Old timers say it was the greatest match in Bendigo's history and easily my best in the league.

Give my kind regards to all the boys over there and we look forward with great interest to meeting quite a lot at the big re-union.

Jerry Haire, on holiday in England, writes:

A more accurate address a couple of weeks back might have been: No 4 Igloo, Icicle Circle, Eskimoland, and this would have been written with a quill made from a seal's whiskers after I'd cut a hole in the ice with my ice-tudic or what have you. But spring is here: the daffodils are in the full glory of bloom apple trees are blossoming, the bare trees are showing signs of bursting buds and everywhere in the green paddocks (sorry 'fields') the young lambs are bounding around. And after the recovery from London's shock tactics during Feb. and up to March 12, we feel pretty sprightly ourselves. It is still only about the 50 deg. mark but the sun is getting a little warmth and we see much more of him. Until March 12 we stayed in London because we felt that by keeping close to the main source of artificial heat we could survive and see something of museums, art galleries, cathedrals, bloody towers, big emporiums, and the like where there was a sufficiency of internal heating. Although we saw a lot about London we were glad to get out into the country and feel the green grass under our feet. Incidentally it is surprising—at least it was to me—that you need only travel about 15 mile from the centre of London to come into wooded country and open fields and there are many fences—I wrongly

anticipated only hedges, of which there are just miles and miles sometimes as on Dartmoor of stone but mostly of hedge-trees. Before leaving London I made a recce of Lords and picked out a favourable spot from which our fellows can launch an offensive that will make the word "Typhoon" practically obsolete. We were the only visitors at Lords that day and we were very well treated being shown the famous Long Room where the players view the play whilst waiting to bat (or field) and the museum to the rear of this building which houses historical bats, balls, records, photos, etc., all appertaining to the Noble Game. As you come in the door of the museum there's a sunny picture of the W.A.C.A.—on a freezing day believe me, this was a warming sight. We moved out into Somerset where the cider apples grow—I'm afraid I'm more partial to mild tuaca but then my tastes have always been queer. Then we moved into Devon and now we are quite close to Glouster. Our travel has been done by rail and bus and we're finding it reasonably cheap and very comfortable. But the highlight has been my meeting with Bill "Scotty" Taylor. I went down by bus from here (about a 2½ hour run) to Bristol on Saturday. Bill had rung me the day before to let me know he'd be in. He looks the picture of health. He is partners with his uncle in a sports store that sells everything from worms to whale hooks as far as I could see; he's just retired from badminton, coaches a college soccer team on Wednesdays, plays tennis in summer, fishes in the rest of his spare time, is a thriving business man—and is still single. Between serving customers (the shops remain open in Bill's part of Bristol on Saturday afternoon) Bill yarned to me and this went on solidly for three hours except for a break during which Bill's aunt gave me the best home-cooked meal I've had in England. I tried to satisfy his curiosity about Col. Doig, Joe B., Alf Walsh, Mick—and countless others. If the families of some are about three more than they should be it's because I wanted to rouse Bill's annoy. But it was a day and a half. We send our best regards to the boys.

Angus MacLachlan, of 37 Arrow-smith, Camp Hill, Brisbane, writes:

I am about to close the stable door. For the last 12 months my wife and I have been thinking about doing a trip to Melbourne. Kept telling myself to write and get a few addresses of boys down south. Finished up going on our trip and did not know a soul. Now I get round to writing. As bad as a woman.

First off the 'Courier' comes to me very regular, though it goes to my old address. I do not know who sends it, seems to be a W.A. postal stamp. I have long since lost Jack Hartley's address so could not send him any money. Will try and rake up a fiver to pay for anything I owe. If there is anything oyer put it to a worthy cause.

The 'Courier' is looked forward to though with my terrible memory a lot of names are clueless to me. I enjoy getting the 'Courier' and my wife has it read before I can claim it. I think she knows more about the boys than I do. It is a case of "Who is so and so, and why do they call him such and such". Then I have to explain how they swiped a keg of beer at Port Pirie, or some other notable feat.

A few details about myself and family. The proud possessor of a wife and two girls. Wife aged 31 and the two girls aged nine and 4½. Shifted into our own brand new home a couple of years ago. Built through War Service and did most of the sub-contract work myself. Damn near killed myself. Was in business for myself in the painting game but went back to a boss about 18 months ago, after spending three months at Winton, in our central west. We own a cat, a dog and a Mayflower car, of which we are very proud.

About the trip we did. Last month we did a three weeks' tour, covering 3,500 miles. Went to Melbourne and spent five days in and around the place. Melbourne surprised me with the beautiful weather it turned on. On leaving Melbourne we went down the Gipps land Highway and spent two wonderful days at, of all places, Tidal River. When we reached Darby we went for a walk down to the beach, past where the ammo sheds were. It is all overgrown but the beach is as good as ever, a few land-

slides along the cliffs. At Darby camp there is nothing but a few slabs of concrete and a bit of barbed wire to show where a camp had been. Made me a little sad to think it was 15 years ago when we had such fun there. The holiday resort is where number two camp used to be. It is well got up with nice lodges and clearings for caravans and tents. Laundries and showers are equipped with hot water and there is electricity throughout. A good canteen and a travelling picture show, once a week, makes it a good turnout. Ranger Sparks is still in command, though he is getting on in years. My wife was a physical wreck at the end of our two days stay. We climbed every hill and visited every beach we could. Viewed through the eyes of a tourist the Prom is a beautiful place. The mountain and island scenery is unbeatable. A few of the cove beaches, such as Tidal and Squeaky, at the end of the rifle range, would make some of our Gold Coast beaches look silly. Coming from a Queenslander, that is an admission. Was very sorry indeed to leave Tidal River. Time was getting on and we had a long way to go. The road from Foster to Tidal is from good to fair, most of the land to Yanakie is taken up by Soldier Settlement. There is no evidence of the air strip, except for a few fences.

From there we went to Boyd-town. What a dump. It is listed as ruins and that is right. After that we carried on to Cooma and Kosioski and a tour of the Snowy River Scheme. What an enormous undertaking. Canberra was next on the list. The War Museum is worth the trip alone. Rather disappointed at the collection of Second War relics. "Winnie" was not on display at the time. We gave the rest of N.S.W. the short shift. What with floods and washouts we were lucky to get through the northern rivers. Sorry to reach home and have to go back to work. Only back a few days and off work with a bad back, an old complaint of mine. Trip must have been too much.

Rarely see any of the boys. Edgar Timmins lives in our street but he spends most of his time working in the country. My wife was doing temporary work at Pennys

and was working with Col Cubis. He has left there, had a ring from him and expect him over sometime to knock over a few bottles. He occasionally bumps into Spud Murphy, who works on the trams. The only other person I hear of is Pat McCabe, though I have never come across him.

Very sorry to see that Charlie Anderson got his issue. He got a very good write up in the Brisbane papers.

My wife just looked over my shoulder and said I talk too much. Being hen pecked I take the hint. My greetings and best wishes to all the boys in the West, mostly to the best section in the gigs—No. 4, of course.

(Thanks so much for such an interesting letter Angus. I can assure you that your next letter will not be so long being reprinted. More letters like yours would brighten up our 'Courier' no end—Wilf March, editor.)

Had a few lines from Bill Drage the other day and he says that everyone in the Northampton area is preparing for their cropping, so in the near future it will be dust, sore eyes, etc.

Joe Brand had the misfortune to lose 140 sheep the other day. Pulp kidney was the culprit. That was quite a lot of sheep to lose, Joe.

Heard This?

The boss, short of help, was urging his secretary to postpone her marriage.

"Can't you ask the young man to wait a few weeks?" he queried.

"No," she replied firmly. "I don't know him nearly well enough for that."

* * *

The doctor was examining the lass who wished to become an air hostess.

Those girls have to be physically fit, so it's a thorough job.

"Heart's all right," he said.

Then later: "Lungs are all right too."

"Now show me that little thing that gets all you girls into trouble."

The lass hesitated.

"Hurry up," said the doctor. "Poke out your tongue."

Victorian Vocal Venturings

This is our big year, and firstly I'd like to wish every member of the various Associations throughout Australia "A Very Happy and Prosperous New Year" and hope we see a lot of you at our Olympic Reunion later in the year.

We had a visit over the Xmas period from George Coulson and wife who were spending a few days in Melbourne. George was one of our members but went up North to take on a pineapple farm at a place called Moomrye which is north of Brisbane.

Also Dud Tapper and his wife came over from Adelaide and stayed with Max Davies and wife.

I had the pleasure of meeting Dud and he is just the same old Dud—doesn't even look any older and it certainly was good to see him. An evening was arranged at the Federal Hotel, to meet Dud and George and their wives, but owing to it being the festive time of the year only Max and wife and their friend Peter, Bert Tobin and wife, were able to make it but they had a very enjoyable evening and we are hoping to see more of Dud and wife at the Olympics.

Max Munro reports that he saw Dave Brown who is looking particularly fit, he is in the steel business now and sends his regards to the boys.

Alan also met Harry Bickerton at Traralgon in Ryan's Pub, and they had a good natter in congenial surroundings.

Jim Kenwick is back in Melbourne again after serving a period in Korea. He is now stationed at Victoria Barracks with the sigs. Still as big as a house according to George Kennedy and Gerry O'Toole who both saw him. Jim has some very good films and has offered to show them to us so we will be looking forward to seeing them Jim.

Peter Krause must be one of the luckiest blokes alive. He has been supplied with a lovely furnished home (at 160 Beach-rd., Sandringham) by his firm—any chance of getting a job there Pete?

Pete will be pleased to see anybody at any time if they are passing his way. He tells me the house is only four doors from the Red Bluff Hotel, so it wouldn't be a dry argument.

Gerry Maley sends word that he spent the Australia Day weekend with Ken Monk at Poowong—had a very good time and reports that Ken's latest member of the family, the bonny bouncing baby boy, is just beaut. Gerry also called on Sandy McNab who is an associate member of our Association. He lives at Athlone, which is near Ken's place, but unfortunately he had finished his milking and had gone out, so Gerry missed him. Also saw Bill Peterson who is doing very well

Rang Jack Servante's brother Harry, for news of Jack and it is all good news—we are all very pleased to hear that Jack is well and about again and is doing a full days work again. He has found himself a home, address unknown as yet, so now Jack will be able to settle down in earnest and become a good citizen of the West. All the very best Jack, keep up the good health and regards to Isabel and Peter and Beverley.

The not so good news is that Bruce McLaren is in Heidelberg Hospital undergoing a course of treatment to try and find out the cause of his trouble which has quite a few heart specialists completely baffled. They believe it is a heart complaint but are still trying to find out what kind. He has been in hospital a couple of weeks already and present indications are that he may be there quite a while yet. This is bad luck for Bruce who is just starting to get his dog business nicely established, so I hope you get on your feet again soon, Bruce.

Harry Greenhalgh rang me up before Xmas from Mouleman (in N.S.W. just over the border) where he was stationed as the local Postmaster, but is now doing relieving job at the Balronald Post Office which is just a short distance from Mouleman. He is very well and sends his regards to all the boys and is hoping he can make it for the Olympics. I did my usual trip to Tassie a few days ago and saw Ivan Brown, who was telling me that he has already received his Olympic tickets he had booked earlier, and to put it in his own words was going to write to his rich aunt in Melbourne and book a 6x6 plot on her front lawn. So Ivan is a definite starter and has his own accom-

modation fixed up. Also saw Vic Pacey who is looking the same as ever and he has no definite plans for the Olympics but hopes to be able to make a quick trip over, if it is only to meet some of the boys.

Joe Loveless was up on the north coast in charge of the P.M.G. party who are installing a transmitter for communications between Tassie and Victoria via the Wilson Promontory and hasn't been seen for a while. Hope you don't have to hike over the rugged country up there, Joe.

Committee meeting held Wayside Inn, Feb. 28. Present were Messrs. McKenzie, Tobin, Davies, Robinson, Wilkins, Roberts, Wall, O'Toole, Williams, Callinan, Maly. Apologies from Bruce McLaren, George Humphries, Harry Botterill.

The committee decided to disband the Olympic sub-committee and have the whole committee working on it from now on—and to allot £500 or a larger sum if necessary for the running of the Olympic Re-union. Also to run the Xmas party in conjunction with the trip to the hills on Sunday, Dec. 2.

It was decided to run the usual Anzac Day raffle, same prize (silver tray, tankards) but to send each member £1 worth of tickets instead of the usual 10/- worth. Melbourne Cup sweep showed us a profit of £173/9/10 which is a very good effort.

Committee meeting held Wayside Inn, March 20. Present: Messrs. Callinan, McKenzie, Maly, Tobin, Munro, Wall, Wilkins, Kenwick, Roberts, Dhu, Robinson, Botterill. Apologies, Max Davies, Bruce McLaren, George Humphries.

Arrangements were made for the catering for the Anzac Day re-union the various chores were handed out to the members concerned and we are looking forward to seeing our usual good roll up at this function.

A letter was received from Norm Tillett at Mildura giving out a general invitation to any member who may be passing through on their way to the Olympic Re-union, and that he would be only too pleased to do anything at all to assist in any way, if anybody wants to take up Norms invitation they could get in touch with him. His address is Norm Tillett, Box 155, Mildura.

Also a letter from Bluey Sergeant at Traralgon, who suggested that

we could have a souvenir brooch or badge with suitable Olympic setting made to help raise a few extra pounds for the funds. This was discussed by the committee and decided to get some information re prices and designs. Thanks Bluey for this very good suggestion.

A tentative date was fixed for the annual general meeting to be held on Monday, June 25, subject to a suitable hall being available.

Many aspects of the Olympic re-union functions were discussed, but owing to shortage of time it was decided to hold another Committee meeting on April 10, and discuss these matters more fully.

It has now become very important that we get the names of all the people who are definitely coming over for the Olympics—so that we can finalise on the billeting and organising, etc., and so make our job so much easier.

I'm very sorry to report that Max Davies is very ill again, having trouble with those legs of his, and hope he will be on the road to a recovery very quickly.

Called out to see Bruce McLaren recently—he had been home from hospital for a week or two, taking things very easily (doctor's orders) and heartily fed up with this treatment. He has to go back to hospital soon to have another check up, so here's hoping they don't keep you in there this time, Bruce. Bruce has shed some weight, about a stone and a half, also on doctor's orders.

Bumped into Charlie Brown recently—still looking the same. He is kept very busy these days with five kiddies in the family (four boys, one girl) he has had to have some extensions put on the house.

Jim Kenziel was at our last committee meeting and he brought along some slides taken in Korea and Japan when he was over there recently, unfortunately time prevented us from seeing them all but he showed us a few of them and we decided that we would ask Jim to bring them along to another of our functions and we would be only too pleased to see them. Our thanks Jim. Jim's new address, incidentally is 100 Llyd-st., Heidelberg.

Alan Munro expects to move into his new home soon at Heidelberg and I believe it is a very nice place.

New South Wales News

Bill Coker writes:

At long last a few whispers from New South Wales, but only a few I can assure you.

On Sunday, March 11, on the invitation of the President of the Arncliffe R.S.L., we attended a ceremony at the cenotaph to lay a wreath in honour of Charlie Anderson.

Our sincere thanks to all the boys of this R.S.L. who made this possible and also attended.

The Unit was represented by Jim English and Mrs. English; Drip Hilliard and Mrs. Hilliard; Jack Keenahan and Mrs. Keenahan; Curley O'Neil, Merv Jones, Eric Herd, Frank or Dan Cahill (ex W.A.), John Rose and self, with apologies from Snowy Went and Jack Hartley. Our apologies to members we were unable to contact at such short notice.

Curley O'Neill thanked the President and boys on behalf of the Company, then read a nice letter from Jim Griffin.

During the day details for Anzac Day were discussed and as usual Mrs. O'Neill and Mrs. Herd offered their homes and services, we felt that owing to what Mrs. O'Neil has just been through and Mrs. Herd being ill, it was only fair to accept Norm Carroll's invitation to hold our re-union at the Arncliffe R.S.L. Incidentally he assures us that all darts will be locked away.

Incidentally we have been a bit concerned about Joe Garland having had a couple of terrific floods and we still do not know how he came out.

Kiwi Harrison has been in Sydney and we wonder who came off best. Sydney did we think. Any rate he has gone back close to Broken Hill, mainly to worry Drip Hilliard according to Drip.

Jim Dent was in town recently. Lost a bit of weight from 17 stone to 12 stone. Still trying to throw the Repat.

Frank Cahill reports seeing Tom Tiernev on Redfern station and Merv Jones bumped into Jack Isles.

Just to let you in W.A. know how the drought has broken here, we have had only eight fine days this year and at times the rain has put it all over what we used to see in the Ramu Valley, in fact I am sure at

times it is the river descending on us.

Well folks, wherever you are, this may be a shock for you to hear from N.S.W. We hope to keep on shocking you.

Heard This?

Our captain of polo was dancing with a haughty and statuesque young woman, and not making a very good job of it.

Presently he said: "I'm afraid I'm not dancing well this evening. As a matter of fact, I'm a little stiff from polo."

And the young woman answered icily: "It's a matter of indifference to me where you are from."

* * *

"That boy of ours has taken some money out of my pocket, Mary."

"Oh, John, how can you say such a thing?" reproved the wife. "You might as well accuse me."

"Oh, I knew it couldn't be you, dear—he left some."

* * *

New approach of the tramp is bound to find favour. They now step up to the front door, smile at the lady of the house and say: "Dear lady, how would you like me to travel about the country raving about your wonderful cooking?"

* * *

"Yes, old man, just a little Rainbow present for the wife."

"What on earth is a 'Rainbow' present?"

"Oh, one that follows a storm!"

* * *

OUCH!

Helen: "What did the first rheumatism pain say to the second rheumatism pain?"

Marge: "I don't know. What?"

Helen: "Let's get out of this joint."

* * * * *

"My wife doesn't understand me. Does yours?"

"Couldn't say. I've never heard her mention your name."

An Australian Hero Died As He Had Lived

(Reprinted from 'Sunday Telegraph', N.S.W., written by Frank O'Neil)

I want to tell you about Cecil Charles Anderson, Australian infantry sergeant. I want you to grieve with me for a moment.

Charlie Anderson was shot dead leading a patrol in the Malayan jungle recently. Terrorists shot him through the chest.

He was the Australian Army's first battle casualty there.

The reports say that he died a hero. And this would have given him a good laugh.

I know how he lived, and how he suffered.

I know how he found happiness at last, and how it died with him in a burst of machine gun fire in the Malayan jungle recently.

At my home are his clothes, his books, and all his other personal possessions.

He didn't have time to amass much. He was only 31 when he died.

There is the girl he loved for nine years, and whom he was going to marry.

He was carrying their wedding ring with his identity disks when he died.

He wanted to marry and have sons.

But he felt what little luck he had was running out, and before he left he told his girl: "This time I've got to put my house in order."

And in his last letter he opened his heart and told us how he felt about us.

"These things," he wrote, "should not go unsaid."

He wasn't emotional. Australian infantry sergeants are about the toughest people the world breeds.

But often combat soldiers feel that the days are drawing in on them.

I'll tell you how they drew in on Charlie Anderson.

He was a depression kid, growing up in Queensland in the days when food and money were short.

He worked on farms, often for

men whose hardness belonged to Dickens' day.

At 16 he joined the Army, and some time later—in December, 1942—I met him.

It was near Darwin, and he had come to join the 2/2nd Commando Squadron just as we had been evacuated from Portuguese Timor.

For five days down to Queensland I lay sick and emaciated on the iron floor of a truck, and he, a stranger, nursed me.

He lifted me about with his powerful arms, bought tins of milk coffee, heated it and poured it down my neck.

And every time I said: "Thanks", he'd grunt.

We kicked on together through New Guinea and New Britain, and sometimes it couldn't get any tougher.

And always you'd hear his great rippling laugh and his deep, strong voice singing.

After the war he came home with me and my parents welcomed him with open arms.

He met his girl and told me: "Some day I'm going to marry her."

He became an ironworker, a brewer's hand, a fencer, a trawlerman with hands torn and bleeding after every trip.

War came to Korea, and one night in 1950 he came to my wife and me and said quietly: "I'm going away tomorrow with K Force."

"Why," I asked. "Why?"

"Why not?" he shrugged.

And later he told me: "You remember when we were kids and used to laugh about the weak ones who wanted rose covered cottages.

"You've got yours now."

"Some day I'll get one and I'll never leave it."

He fought in many actions, then they got him in the stomach with a burst from a sub-machine-gun.

Someone else told me that it knocked him into the air, and he came down swearing and fighting.

Then they got him with some shrapnel.

Mates carried him past another member of the old 2/2nd men go-

ing up into battle with the Third Battalion.

This man replaced Charlie, and his head was blown off the same day.

Charlie came home soon after with a hole in his stomach, but never thought it worthy of mention.

Then he went back and fought some more, this time catching the dreaded Manchurian fever.

Blood flowed from his pores, he went blind, and he dropped from about 14 stone to six or seven.

He was one of the few men to recover from it—and he came back to us.

He became an instructor; then came Malaya.

"This is the last one, Boof," he said.

"I'll save a few quid."

It was on this last leave that all indecision about the future resolved itself, that he and his girl agreed on no more soldiering; that they would marry the minute he came home.

And he went away happier than I've ever seen him.

He was going to buy a block of land near us, and the four of us were going to live happily ever after.

He wrote from Malaya: "The more I see of the world the more I'm convinced that the stretch from Collaroy to Palm Beach is the one on which God did his best job."

Memories of Charlie Anderson hang heavily on the heart.

We're standing by an open grave in World War II, and rain is pouring down, and water is lapping the blanket-covered body.

"You know," says Charlie, "I'd much rather die in Australia."

I'm dying in Yaralla in 1947 with double pneumonia and malaria combined, and he's standing at the bed nearly ever day, asking "What's the matter? Are you getting soft?"

We're sitting in the kitchen drinking sparkling burgundy, and he says: "I wish we had the power to grasp and hold the happiness of this moment."

He never waves flags or sings battle hymns, never wears uniform except in camp.

He is taciturn, saying nothing to strangers, walking away from them—not because of moodiness, but because he walked alone for such a long time.

He is kind, and clean in the house, washes dishes, mows lawns,

speaks to women with almost mid-Victorian circumspection.

We take a walk before he goes, and he says quietly: "Look after her."

We're saying goodbye again, and I tell him, like always: "Keep your head down."

"You worry about your own great skull," he says.

And like always he raises his hand and says: "I'll see you."

He goes, but tragic traces of him remain.

His books are—Remarque's "A Time to Love and a Time to Die", Flaubert's "Sentimental Education", Gallico's "Snow Goose", Richardson's "The Fortunes of Richard Mahony", books of verse.

And Wavell's "Other Men's Flowers", with the Adam Lindsay Gordon lines he used to recite:

"For good undone, and gifts mispent, and resolutions vain,

"'Tis somewhat late to trouble. This I know—

"I should live the same life over if I had to live again;

"And the chances are I go where most men go."

There's the ivory set of chessmen he sent me from Malaya, the wedding and anniversary presents with his simple message, "Words Fail Me".

When the newspapers tell of his death, and before they disclose his name, men of the 2/2nd telephone me and say: "It's him, isn't it? I'm sorry."

Charlie was always thoughtful. He had arranged that we would know as soon as anyone.

Small kids across the street tell you, "Sharlee isn't coming back any more."

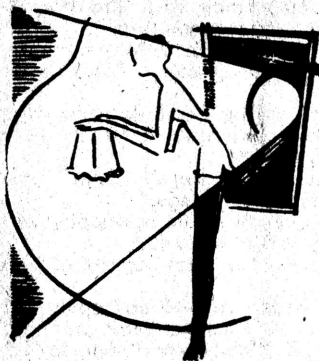
His girl goes through his trunk, finding little messages he's left for her, tokens of a very great love.

She weeps, and there's nothing anyone can say or do that means anything.

The campaign ribbons he never wore are there, lying neatly beside the civilian shoes he had repaired just before he left.

They say that this was the death of a hero, that mortally wounded he placed his section, called up the Bren gunner.

I don't know how he died but I know how he lived, and I'm terribly proud that I knew him.



Headlights

"So the man who first introduced you to your wife is dead now?"
 "Yes, I saw to that."

* * * *

Mother (coming in unexpectedly): "Well I never . . ."

Sophisticated daughter: "Oh, Mother, you must have."

"I wear this gown only when I go to teas," said the sweet young thing to her hard-boiled escort.

The reply: "You're telling me!"

* * * *

English student's critique on modern novel:

Theme—Boy meets Girl.

Plot—Doesn't think much of her in the beginning, finds she's simply marvellous in the middle so marries her in the end.

* * * *

She was peeved and called him Mr. Not because he went and kr,
 But because just before
 As she opened the door
 This very same Mr. kr sr.

* * * *

Scientists have produced a glass that will bend. This is the first real step in giving civilisation a bottle that can be wrung out.

* * * *

"I shot my dog."

"Was he mad?"

"Well, it didn't exactly please him."

* * * *

Speaking of transport, we are reminded of the college boy who dubbed his Model A "The Mayflower", because so many little Puritans had come across in it.

* * * *

Val says she's wondering how the bride is to know who was the best man at the wedding when only the husband went on the honeymoon.

* * * *

Chaste: A chaste maiden is one whom young men run after.

Holly: "The girl I'm married to has a twin sister."

Dolly: "Gosh! how do you tell them apart?"

Holly: "I don't try. It's up to the other one to look out for herself."

* * * *

"My wife puts our money in her shoes."

"So does mine—shoes and hats."

* * * *

Margaret: "Susie was my rival at the beach last year."

Janis: "Which of you outstripped the other?"

* * * *

She: "I'm afraid to go down this street; it's so dark."

He (the cur): "But I'm with you."

She: "That's why I'm afraid."

* * * *

The lads at the Milk Bar were exchanging stories about their experiences with the opposite sex.

"Aw!" sniffed one. "Girls are a penny a dozen!"

"Gee!" sighed a younger lad who had remained silent until now; "and all this time I've been buying jelly beans!"

* * * *

Millie: "Why doesn't Jim take you to the movies any more?"

Tillie: "Well, one night it rained and we stayed home."

* * * *

Employer to beautiful blonde who has just filled out a job application: "Miss Jones, under 'Experience' could you be a little more specific than just 'OH BOY?'"