



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Editorial

The following piece of writing, contributed by one of our readers, so thoroughly covers the objects, ideals, desires and requirements of our Association that it is printed in this space without further comment.

KEEP THE OLD UNIT ALIVE

Remember the days down at Foster, back in the year 'forty-one,
To have failed in our duties as soldiers, would mean that our future
was done.
We were called upon daily to suffer, and give nothing less than the best,
To prove to the world we could take it, and cared not how stiff was
the test.
Then on through the years in the islands, the tropics that knew no release,
The stench of New Guinea and Timor, then on to New Britain and peace.
Those times proved the worth of each member, and welded a resolute team
That won the esteem of Australia, and regard from McArthur supreme.
There was a job to be done and each did it, regardless of effort or pain,
We went hungry, barefooted, unshaven, and pushed on through the
tropical rain.
There were nights when patrols were demanded, and sleep was impos-
sible then,
Guard duties and tracking and listening, the ambush with rifle and Bren.
Each grizzled and growled and grumbled, but never can it be retold,
That a man of you ever defaulted, when mates your assistance extold.
'Twas the comradeship forged in the islands, in that struggle of violence
and hate,
That made each man value his brother, and taught him the value of mate.

And so with the peace came rejoicing, each man has returned to his trade,
Let us foster the ties of that conflict, and value the friends that we made,
Keep alive that same spirit of mateship, that welded the Unit of yore,
The "Association" needs all its members, your support as you gave it
before,
Make sure that you stay quite financial, your committee all work without
pay,
There's a Christmas tree function held yearly, it needs helpers and effort
to stay.
The "Courier" calls monthly for copy, write a story or letter, or dream,
Do your part to help those who contribute, to keep the old UNIT supreme.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — TUESDAY, JULY 7, 1959

West Australian Whisperings

Committee Comment

The Management Committee met on Tuesday, June 16, at Monash Club and considerable business was transacted.

The President reported that the meeting held on May 26 to welcome Kevin Curran proved to be most satisfactory and the roll-up excellent.

The Treasurer reported that the books for the financial year had closed and were now in the hands of the Auditor. The financial position showed that leaving out the result of the project by Don Turton the Association had only just held its own for the year and possibly a small deterioration would result. This was brought about by the added cost of the "Courier" which was published on 12 occasions this year.

President reported that Mr. Nisbet had booked the Irwin Training Centre, Karrakatta, for the Annual Re-union. Much discussion took place on a review of the toast list to further streamline this to cut down the time factor on speeches.

President also reported that the special sub-committee to prepare a case for claim of Theatre and Battle Honours had met and the case had practically been completed by Mr. Laidlaw and this would be sent direct to Dept. of the Army.

Much discussion took place on recommendation of the Committee to the Annual General Meeting of Life Members. Eventually it was decided to make a recommendation of three.

Prior to commencement of the meeting members rapidly handled the despatch of tickets in the annual sweep which will be conducted this year on the Kalgoorlie Cup run on August 29. Members are requested to sell these tickets as rapidly as possible.

Meeting closed at 11.30 p.m.

(Printed for the publisher by "The Swan Express", 10 Helena Street, Midland Junction, W.A.)

Association Activities

WELCOME EVENING TO KEVIN CURRAN

As Kev Curran was over in W.A. for a holiday it was decided to change the date of the June meeting and make it a week earlier to enable as many as possible to meet "Tuan Bort" while he was in the area.

Something like 40 of the gang turned up and had a pleasant night's fun bashing ears in a big way with "The Curran". By the time the function closed at 1 a.m. the hall was literally knee deep in dead Japs and strong with the odour of the jungle. Chaps we hadn't seen for ages turned up and had a great time.

Ron Kirkwood, our President, welcomed Kevin and his friends, Cecil Lapsley and Jack Knight. and then Herby Thomas presented Kevin with a Jap sword as a memento of his visit West. Herby said he hoped he would hang this sword in his bar at Bendigo and if the occasion arose could use it in the unlikely emergency of a too exuberant drunk proving too much for "Tuan Bort". Kevin said he appreciated this gesture very much and would certainly give the souvenir an honoured place in his hostelry.

Bill Hollis and Jack Carey between them turned on a scrumptious supper and Fred Napier dug up a pianist from the neighbouring R.S.L. do and he helped us to pass a memorable evening. Many and varied were the "stories" told by all and sundry and it was really like old times back in the army.

Kev made a thumping big donation to the funds to assist in defraying expenses for the evening and also as a contribution to the King's Park Memorial Drive.

Seen there were Bob Smyth (with a friend Geo Geddes, lately returned from South Africa), Herby Thomas, Jack Fowler (Kevin had been up to Jack's place the previous two days meeting the Sadler boys and seeing the country), Jerry Haire, Henry Sproxton, Geo Strickland, Fred Napier, Jack Carey, Ken Bow-

den, Keith Hayes, Slim Holly, Bill Hollis, Mick Holland, Jim Ritchie, Mick Morgan, Ning McCaig, Ping Anderson, Percy Hancock, Col Doig, "Spriggy" McDonald, Ray Parry, Len Bagley, Wilf March, and many others that escape memory

Kevin, Gladys and Dennis had a wonderful time here and have asked to express their thanks through these columns for the hospitality shown to them while in our State.

Geoff Laidlaw took charge of them one Saturday for a day out at the races and trots. Geoff also arranged an evening in his office to meet John Burrige, Tom Nisbet and Ron Kirkwood and a couple of others.

Jack Fowler took Kevin and family up to Wongan Hills and there met Stan and Charlie Sadler. They went up via Northam and returned via Bindoon and there saw Boys Town which impressed Kevin very much.

Mrs. Haire took Gladys out through Perth and its environs including a visit to Kings Park.

Col Doig attempted to take them to the footy but that day had a jinx on it and they finished up in different parts of the same ground.

Quite a number of the boys turned up on Thursday, May 28, to see Kevin and family off and make certain he caught the plane and a good state of "hospitality".

Kevin got his fair share of publicity while here finding his name in articles on four occasions and has the honour of appearing in the three leading newspapers in this State — twice in the "Daily News", once each in the "West" and the "Sunday Times".

Personalities

Real pleased to see Geo Strickland at our last meeting. He looks extra well and said he had lost about a stone in weight. He is now an owner-driver of a "Ready Mixed" concrete truck and states he is managing to keep the wolf from the door.

Keith Hayes, looking well, and says his job travelling throughout the State for E. C. Stott & Co. keeps him on the move and mainly unable to get to many Association affairs.

Col Criddle sent a wire to say he was unable to attend as he works at nights.

Merv Ryan was also a working man but met Kev next day when they were photographed together by the "Daily News".

Dick Crossing rang from Goomalling and hoped to be able to meet The Curran at Wongan but apparently time was all too short in that area for the meeting to take place.

Jim Ritchie has heard from Doug Fullerton and hopes to make it for Borneo in the near future.

Mick Calcutt another of the victims of the flu and couldn't make our last meeting.

Arch Campbell back in town as Public Relations Officer for Ampol and hopes his new job will give him a bit more time for Association activities.

Geoff Laidlaw has been on a flying business trip to Sydney and was unavoidably absent from the last meeting.

John Burrige on one of his many business trips to Singapore and Malaya. Judging by the tone of things in that area not a good place to be right now.

Pleased to hear once again from Bert Burgess. Bert is quite a force in the wool business in his area and in a later edition we will give an article of his on the wool selling side of farming.

Geo Boyland has been on annual leave and visited Jack Hasson at Ballidu, also Ted Monk and the Sadler boys (some notes from Geo. elsewhere).

This is a good moment to remind you of the Annual General Meeting to be held at Monash Club on July 7. Make a point of being there, will you?

Saw Lew Thompson in the street the other day and the old blighter doesn't look a day older. Says he is now the local postman at Wannamal and will be leasing his property for a while.

Good to see Gerry Haire and Alf Walsh at our last meeting. Both looking much as of yore and evidently enjoying themselves.

Kev Waddington was another whom we hadn't seen for a while but as he plays a bit of bowls and is interested in his local R.S.L. he finds his spare time fairly well taken up.

Our thanks to Wilf March for a slick job of printing a change of date for our last meeting. It must have been good as it had the desired effect of getting a good muster.

Jim Smailes and wife over in W.A. for a brief holiday leaving the children to attend boarding school at Armadale, N.S.W. Jim was looking extra well and seemed very

happy in the service. Was pleased to report that he was able to make the antimony mine at Guyra pay after four or five years in the red. The directors were sufficiently happy to give him a bonus and many promises for the future. Jim has promised to keep me posted on events as occurring to him in the future. It was real good to see the big man again and have an odd noggin.

Random Harvest

H. A. BURGESS, of "Burlands," Broomehill, writes:—

Whilst we are awaiting a good general rain we have had sufficient here to allow some seeding to be done and a very good start of pastures. Our main concern at present is the increasing numbers of foxes and the already prevalence of red mite.

Alf Hillman's parents celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at Broomehill last Saturday. Will get from Alf and the paper report a full story for you next month. They (Mr. and Mrs. Hillman) have a wonderful record of service to this district.

The number of shipping disasters of recent months seems to me a little too queer to be funny and calls for a full enquiry. Perhaps our Association could approach Mr. Lonnie on this subject.

I am enclosing a cutting from a February issue of the "Great Southern Herald" which you can use if you wish as I think it will be of interest to our readers. If you can have a copy printed and return me the original straight away it would be appreciated.

The selling of our wool affects and should interest everyone in Australia. I have taken a great interest in this matter and have endeavoured to look at it from a national as well as a growers' angle. It is admitted that anomalies and manipulations are occurring in the present auction system and as no one seems inclined to do anything effectively about them some alternative voluntary method is imperative if we are to safeguard our national industry.

As a member of a committee

from the Kal. Zone Council and afterwards personally I had the opportunity of reading much confidential correspondence addressed to Mr. Addis but am not at liberty to quote this as leakage at this stage could be detrimental to the plan and readers are asked to take my assurance that here is a plan worth supporting. Registration is now the only thing holding up operations and that is now in the final stages.

I have the satisfaction of knowing that this report was welcomed by Mr. Addis and his committee, used, and in parts, acted upon.

Kindest regards to all.

ARTHUR MARSHALL, of 7 Peet Street, Harvey, writes:

I thought it was time I penned you a few lines. Things being reasonably quiet tonight, I'm going to have a go. I had only just a fair season on the bulk super top-dressing. That was caused through having to get it out of rail trucks. Before the season started I reckoned it was a step backwards, and now I know, it is. With a change of government I might get back to road transport next season. My spreader worked well, and even though I say it myself, I think it is about the best spreader anyone could buy, though it was my own idea. I am getting some (20 baggers) made to sell, and any of you farmers who do your own broadcasting, I would like you to have a look at mine.

I am now doing a few days at Bunbury carting bulk oats. During the winter months I just do any job that comes along, mostly home with Audrey. I still take the junior

footballers at training and look after them at their matches of a Saturday afternoon. Had a game myself last Sunday morning. Harvey Old Boys played Brunswick Old Boys, losers to pay for the 18 that was on as a refresher afterwards. We were the victors and the grog tasted all the better being for free.

I had an enjoyable few hours with Bert Burges whilst I was over at Katanning. Also several meals with Eric Weller who was building a house at Kojonup and doing a good job of it too from what I could see. Eric and I went over a few of the Timor trails and we ate again that raw duck and fowl, plus several other crook meals. Don Murray jumped on the side of my truck in Bunbury and we had a couple of words. I was working on an hourly rate and couldn't stop. Also saw Robbie near Waroona on the Highway but my shout wasn't loud enough to stop him. Of course he must be getting on now and I suppose his hearing isn't as good as it use to be.

Cheerio for now and I'll drop in and see you one of these days.

BILL TOMASETTI, of Tapini, via Port Moresby, writes:

Having just finished enjoying the April issue of the "Courier" I hasten to write to you for two main reasons.

Firstly our history has not included a small story well worth preserving. I was not an eye witness but no doubt some other readers were. It concerns the mine already dealt with. After its discovery and complete delousing (to the point where it was merely a hollow and harmless shell) it was left on the beach for several days prior to being moved to one of the camps. Apparently its location on the beach was quite close to the Camp-Foster road. One day Harry Wilkins, already a star of the history, was driving back from Foster to the camp with a large case of currency he had collected for routine pays. As per regulations he was armed with a pistol and carried some rounds for it. When driving along past the mine he saw it was surrounded by a group of our blokes and so stopped and went over. One of our people, with a false show of wisdom and confid-

ence, was lecturing his less knowledgeable brethren. When the master started to deal with the horns Harry showed a touch of genius in anticipation, and unnoticed, backed to the back of the group, drew and loaded his pistol and held it behind him pointing to the ground. As the master said: "And these things explode it," and nonchalantly tapped one of the horns, Harry fired his pistol three times rapidly into the sand behind himself. The master was first out of his holes and Harry was knocked over in the speedy dispersal that followed—it was a first class lesson in taking cover and in other things.

Whilst I cannot remember dates one is tempted to think this happened shortly after the incident of the fuse and privy seat and was thus doubly enjoyable to Harry. Perhaps he was prompted in it by his familiar (the small black dog) which beat him out of the privy in a flat gallop on that day already so well reported.

Secondly somewhere along the line an error crept into my note on Goroka—the population of the Eastern Highlands District is 328,000.

Thank you for bearing with me for so long. Please note my new address for the "Courier" and my best wishes to all those ageing ambassadors of the West who came East in 1941—and then went West again.

PETER BARDEN, of 6GN Geraldton, Box 310, writes:—

I shook hands with Bert Burges recently at Geraldton, but it was in somewhat sad circumstances because I was offering my condolences in the loss of his father, Mr. Lockier Clere Burges, a name which has been associated with agriculture in the Victoria District of W.A. ever since the foundation of this State. Like Bert and the rest of the family he was a keen agriculturalist, but found time to be a J.P. for more than 30 years, be president of the P. & C. Association at Howatharra near Geraldton, as well as be actively associated with sporting organisations.

Another Double Red Diamond type, one Jack Denman, continues to figure prominently in a number

of organisations at Geraldton. In his capacity as Immediate Past President of the R.S.L. Jack addressed the Commonwealth Youth Sunday gathering on "Courageous Living". He was commended on the aptness of his remarks on the significance—both material and spiritual—of the day. Jack's splendid address caused a clergyman to write to the local press on these lines: "The talk given by Mr. Denman was both searching and challenging. Mr. Denman pointed out to the assembled youth the need of obedience to God, and said that if we kept the 10 Commandments then we would keep the law of the land, but if we

broke the 10 Commandments we would break the law of the land."

Bill Drage, of Northampton, had the important job of presenting trophies at the annual rifle club function in that town. Bill is Patron of the Northampton Rifle Club and the name Drage is synonymous with the name of Northampton.

Would appreciate a bit of information about the set-up of the annual Christmas Tree as far as country members are concerned.

(Christmas Party is open to children of all members of Association. If unable to attend the usual presents are sent by post. All we want is names, age, sex of children and address, of course. —Ed.)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — TUESDAY, JULY 7, 1959

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Gentlemen,

I submit your President's Report for the past year. Once again, your Committee carried on the traditions laid down by previous Committees, and have urged our Association's affairs onward. You elected them and I'm sure you will be pleased with their efforts. I am combining the Secretary's Report with mine as we reluctantly accepted Arthur Smith's resignation as Secretary last March; his job commitments left him no time to devote to his duties with us. You each know the excellent work Arthur has done in his three years as Secretary; we were sorry to lose him. This loss was somewhat tempered when Jack Carey took over for the few remaining months.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS. As this report must go to press before the June meeting, I can only show attendances at meetings for the previous 11 months. Ten meetings were held and attendances were as follows: Messrs. Kirkwood 10, Bowden 7, Napier 7, Smith 8, Nisbet 7, Green 8, Carey 5, Poynton 7, Aitken 3, Calcutt 4, Doig 9, Burr ridge 3, Holly 6.

Here is a summary of events and happenings during the past year, with brief comments.

ANNUAL DINNER. This was a success, over 64 members attend-

ing. We hope to hold the next dinner at an even better location, but the absence of Ron Dook to organise the catering as in the previous years, is a problem to be overcome by the next Committee. **COMMEMORATION SERVICE.** Held on the day after the Dinner in Honour Avenue, this was our usual annual tribute to our dead. This short ceremony is a moving one, and one that enables all those who participate in paying public homage to our dead. Your Committee is continually urging you to attend our functions—no one should need any prodding to attend this service.

During the year we adopted an idea of Joe Burr ridge's, that we divide our area between our wartime Sections, each to be responsible for the area allotted them. Those Sections who tackled the job have been rewarded with a fine looking portion; in general, though, the idea has not taken on as we hoped, and more enthusiasm and work is necessary by most Sections. Slim Holly, as our Warden, kept a good eye on the area.

TURTON PROJECT. (I must apologise to Don for the fact that his name has not been deleted from the heading as he requested, but until a decision is reached at the Annual Meeting as set out below, we considered it better to retain the title as everyone refers to it as such.)

This began when Don offered us 10 acres of his land plus seed and machinery, we to supply the manpower, to sow a crop, proceeds to come to the Association. Don's main purpose was to have a social gathering, with a very little work on the side for the good of the Association, and you all must have heard what a marvellous success everything was. I can't enlarge on the "Courier" reports of the two weekends, and, in short, the Association funds should benefit by approx. £140. To Don and Vida, we can only give grateful thanks, both for their hospitality which was wonderful, and for the monetary gain the Association enjoyed. Subsequently, we thought that this money could be put to some specific use, to be put aside with any more monies we can raise by a continuance of the idea. You will be asked at the Annual Meeting to give a decision on whether this project should go ahead, and, if so, to what purpose should the monies be devoted. Please give this much thought, and if you country members who cannot attend would like to comment, please forward your views for us to put forward to the meeting.

HONOUR ROLL. In spite of the most painstaking efforts of past Committees in the initial stages, four names were omitted from the Roll. These have now been added in a manner that reflects great credit on the craftsmanship of Col Hodson, who undertook the job for us. **SWEEP.** By the efforts of Col Doig, and the whole-hearted support of you all, we had another success. A report was published in the "Courier" so I won't enlarge, except to thank Col and you all for the success. The profits from the sweep are our life blood; our programme for the year hinges on its success.

PT. PERON SCHEME. This scheme commenced when the National Fitness Council were given almost the entire Pt. Peron area to be split up by them to deserving bodies, to be used by those bodies as a recreational area. Many conditions were laid down, perhaps the main one being that the land must be improved by the erection of suitable houses and conveniences. We ap-

plied for a portion of the area, but delays have occurred within the N.F.C. organisation, and our scheme is at a standstill until such time as we are granted an area on which to plan. Much thought and discussion has gone into the expenses which we must face in improving any area we obtain—we are anxious to provide members with accommodation right on a beach, and this appeared a golden opportunity to obtain a holiday home. Your next Committee will further this scheme.

LADIES' NIGHT. Once again we had high-jinks at the Crawley Tea Rooms under the M.C.ing of Fred Napier well assisted by our friend-artists, the Whittles. Bill Rowan-Robinson showed some excellent colour slides of New Guinea; there was dancing and an excellent supper. We should have enjoyed much more of each of the above but the night went too quickly. I think this was one of our successes.

CHRISTMAS PARTY—CHILDREN. Unfortunately, we can't find out how many attended this day in the 16th Bn. Drill Hall, but both children and parents seemed to enjoy themselves. A cause for comment was the number of babies still appearing each year; that old soldier's tale that quinine and atebirin deprive one of one's manhood must now be completely refuted. A sub-committee will bring our list of children up-to-date before the next party.

CHRISTMAS PARTY — ADULTS. We thought of changing the venue of this party, but couldn't decide where. Joe Poynton then kindly invited us to hold it at his place. Well, those who attended will bear witness to the welcome Joe and Helen gave us—it rained the entire time but we had a wonderful time in spite of that. This venue is thoroughly recommended to the incoming Committee.

FINANCE. I feel you will be pleased with the Balance Sheet attached. Your Treasurer has again served us well.

THE "COURIER". The Editor is submitting a report on his activities; I think you'll agree that the "Courier" is really doing its job of

Note: Cash in Hand £2/1/3 represents Petty Cash held as follows: President 10/-, W. Epps re "Courier" £1/11/3.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE for year ended May 31, 1959			
RECEIPTS		EXPENDITURE	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Funds as at 1/6/1958:			
Commonwealth Savings Bank	153 13 9	94 1 9	
Commonwealth Bonds	550 0 0	50 13 0	
Loan Account	30 0 0		
Perth Cup Sweep	263 15 0	144 9 9	43 8 9
Less Expenses and Prizes	89 16 7	71 5 8	
			73 4 1
Donations		154 3 2	
Subscriptions		58 9 0	
Anzac Day	55 0 9	79 17 1	95 14 2
Less Expenses	54 16 6	5 0 6	
Bank and Bond Interest		72 18 0	74 16 7
Xmas Party, Joe Poynton's	26 0 0	37 0 0	
Less Expenses	22 10 0		35 18 0
Turton's Scheme	116 8 9		27 10 11
Less Expenses	20 0 0		
			3 19 6
Funds as at 31/5/1959:			
Commonwealth Savings Bank	138 1 5		
Com. Savings Bank Trust A/c.	96 9 9		
Com. Bonds (Face Value)	550 0 0		
Cash on Hand	2 1 3		
Loan	30 0 0		
			816 12 5
	£1,171 4 5		£1,171 4 5

(Sgd.) F. W. E. NAPIER, Hon. Treasurer.
(Sgd.) G. BOYLAND, Hon. Auditor.

keeping us advised of what's happening and Col's efforts are worthy of high recommendation, the added article "The Unit History" being a great success.

MONTHLY GENERAL MEETINGS. These meetings, apart from Ladies' Night, Christmas Party and Welcome-to-Curran Night, took the form of: Picture Night, Guest Speaker, Games Night, Bowls Night, Stump Speeches. Attendances were not very large at most evenings but we think the entertainment we provided was enjoyed by those attending.

And now, my thanks to those **not** of the Committee who actively helped us in our year's work. When we found we needed assistance from any one of our members it was given immediately we asked. Here's an example—we wanted a projector and operator for films to be shown at the Children's and the Adults' Christmas Parties—Alby Friend organised his brother-in-law into borrowing a projector and operating it too. A word is all that is necessary to Bill Hollis to have him prepare and deliver any sort of supper we require. I haven't space to mention the others who have given us their time, labour and money by assisting in the preparation and cleaning up of halls, and busy-bees in Honour Avenue. And, finally, those who help us by attending our functions whenever and wherever we hold them. It's a terrific boost to the Committee to get a crowd to a function. Also the country members who see us whenever they can spare the time, and who keep in touch with letters and with their views and ideas for the progress of the Association.

The Committee itself, has had a busy year—each event briefly covered above, has taken hours of our time and every idea whether adopted or rejected, is very thoroughly debated with, I consider, every possible viewpoint covered. To me, as President, each member has given all assistance in his power—I approached my job with much trepidation but the encouragement they all gave me has meant much, and I now publicly thank them all. I shall not mention any particular names; surely it is enough to say that each one did his job extremely

well, and I leave judgment on their efforts in your hands at the Annual General Meeting.

—RON KIRKWOOD, President.

**AUDITOR'S REPORT
Year Ended May 31, 1959**

I have examined the Books of Account of this Association for the financial year ended 31/5/59. All moneys received have been brought to account and all payments verified.

The financial statement produced is a true and correct extract from the Association books.

Generally speaking the books have been well kept and the Treasurer deserves credit for an onerous job well done.

The only comments I wish to make are:

1. It is desirable that all moneys received and payments made be reflected in the bank accounts. Two amounts paid out for Petty Cash were made from cash received. However, I must point out that this is only a technical point and does not affect the overall result.

2. Petty cash still in hand at the end of the financial year should be brought to account and banked. The amount of £2/1/3 shown in the statement as "Cash" represents unexpended Petty Cash.

The Bank Account has been reconciled and allowance made for outstanding cheques.

—G. BOYLAND, Hon. Treasurer.

**EDITORIAL REPORT
FOR YEAR 1958/59**

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to report on the activities of your journal, the "2/2nd Commando Courier," for the year just past.

Some progress can be said to have been made and although contributions are not yet up to the numbers I would like, they showed a terrific improvement on those received by the previous editor who was badly let down in this respect. The ultimate of course is at least two letters from every member on the mailing list per annum, and although it cannot be said this was gained at least a good coverage of most areas has been achieved.

For the year just completed 12 "Couriers" were printed costing the Association £151/14/-.

Every endeavour has been made to get the "Courier" into hands of readers (in W.A.) prior to the next meeting to act as a reminder and to try and stimulate the readers' interest and hope they will bring news to the meeting when they attend.

The editions of September and December were of eight pages, October 10 pages, June, August and February 12 pages, November 14 pages, and July, January, March, April and May 16 pages. Postage only amounts to between 3/6 and 7/- per issue depending on the size of the paper.

The feature "Historically Yours!" was commenced in October, 1958, with a view to creating reader interest in the writing of a Unit history and also of course, to refresh memories of past deeds. This feature has brought forth quite a deal of favourable comment but to date the response with material has not been outstanding and I hope that the year to come will bring a much greater effort from all readers.

The journal now finds its way to 498 readers made up as follows: W.A. 195, S.A. 16, N.S.W. 131, Queensland 24, Victoria 117, Tasmania 9, A.C.T. 1, and overseas 5, which shows a good over-all cover of readers. There would probably be a few in Queensland and S.A. not yet on the mailing list.

During the year the task of

bringing the stencil mailing list up to date has been completed and the addressing system can now be said to be as good as it ever will be. Thanks for this work is due to Mr. Bill Epps, who not only wraps the journal but also stencils the wrappers and provides your Editor with the necessary alterations, also to Mr. Keith Hayes and Mr. John Burridge who provided typewriter facilities.

I wish to thank Harry Botterill and Ron Trengrove, the contributors from Victoria and N.S.W. respectively, for their outstanding effort in providing news from Eastern Australia during the last year. To be a good journal we must have these contributions regularly from other States.

I would also like to thank those persons who have contributed news with very special mention to Peter Mantle, Peter Barden and Jim Smailes who have assisted so often.

To our publishers, "The Swan Express," of Midland Junction, I would like to say thank you for a really fine effort over the year and for their eager response to our dead-lines for production.

A special word of praise to Bill Epps for all he has done to assist me in the monthly production of this journal both on the printing and despatch side. Without his wonderful assistance (especially in coping with my atrocious scrawl) this paper would not be what it is.

Mr. President, I wish the "Courier" all success in the years to come.

—C. D. DOIG, Editor.

Make the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING to be held at Monash Club on TUESDAY, JULY 7, a MUST. This is your duty to your Association so do it nobly

ANNUAL RE-UNION is to be held this year at IRWIN TRAINING CENTRE, KARRAKATTA (the place where you finally took your discharge), on AUGUST 15. Keep this date vacant on your calendar

Do your best with those Sweep Tickets and return them to Box T 1646 at your earliest

Historically Yours!

A UNIT ON THE MOVE (Cont.)

It was to be northward, ever northward, as we sped away from the joys of Adelaide. The glorious train of the 5ft. 3in. gauge raced along as if on ball bearings. The first stop was at Quorn where the women's committee of that town served lunch. This committee met every troop train and supplied countless thousands of meals during the duration of the war.

The late afternoon found us at Terowie, the head of the 5ft. 3in. gauge and we were to entrain on a 3ft. 6in. job for Alice Springs

We took up temporary residence on the local show ground, a barren expanse of red clay and dust. That evening saw one of the incidents for which the Unit was to become infamous before this journey was over. Some of the lads of "B" Platoon in their wanderings in the near area of the camp had found a sheep "straying (?)". They promptly arrested it for loitering and moved it off smartly to an old tumbled down house. There they proceeded to slaughter it. One report is that one of their number knocked the sheep out with a punch then they hacked it's throat with a small pocket knife and skinned it in rough and ready manner. Using some old timber from the tumble down shack they built a huge fire and barbecued it. Two officers who were wandering around came on the scene and were swiftly offered a chop or two probably with the idea of incriminating as many as possible. The offering was declined and these officers moved off. One, a city type, said to the other, a cockie in civvy life: "What is the chance of the farmer missing that sheep?" The reply was: "Depends on the size of the flock. If a big flock may never miss it. If a small flock he probably knows all his sheep by name." It so turned out that the "flock" comprised two sheep!

The local copper was early on the scene with the sheep owner in the morning. It did not take many enquiries to find the culprits. Paddy Knight acted as negotiator "How much?" asked Paddy.

"Fifty bob," said the owner.

"Cripes, I did not see any gold fillings in its teeth," said Paddy.

There was nothing for it but to pay up. The boys were all gloriously broke after the sojourn at Adelaide so Paddy smartly put the bite on an officer known to still have a few quid left. The owner was paid, but unhappy. No charges were laid. The C.O. was worried and our name not so high.

It was at Terowie that we also lost Pte. Quinn (The Flea). He contacted a not rare disease and was despatched by Capt. Dunkley back to Adelaide for treatment and never joined the unit again. This broke up the long-term friendship existing between Paddy Knight and Quinny. Apparently The Flea's mother had given her dearly beloved boy into Paddy's tender care at Kalgoolie with imprecations to look after him and see he came to no harm in a way mothers will, probably not knowing either her son as well as she thought, or Paddy at all. Paddy had quite a blubber in his voice and tears in his eyes as he put the fangs into the same officer for a "spin" to give to Quinny

The trip from Terowie to "The Alice" was to be in direct contrast with the comfortable jaunt from Adelaide. The line travelling as it did through the dead heart where rain was only seen infrequently and low dust storms raged with great frequency blowing the ballast away from the line and leaving it like a furnicular. The train carried two crews—one on duty, one off. So rough was the trip that on one of the bumps one of the engine drivers fell over a chunk of coal and broke an arm. This meant double shift for the remaining driver till we reached Alice Springs.

The first look at Alice Springs was a real eye-opener. After the ghost towns we had passed on the way north like Maree, Bettana and Oodnadatta, this was a regular oasis. Buildings were quite substantial and well kept. The streets were wide and tree lined. The gums growing in the Stuart River gave a look of lush greenness. A swift appreciation of the situation.

Here were pubs with cold beer, here was the brokest unit ever to move away from a capital city, here was food and drink but where was the wherewithall? A tarpaulin muster among the mob couldn't have brought a breakfast for a grass hopper. For once it was a case of all on the "square".

Next morning we left Alice, which was the head of the rail, in a convoy of trucks. The O.C. convoy would be the most bumptious bird it would be a displeasure to meet. He rode rough shod over everyone. Just as we were due to leave he had a parade of his drivers and found a couple who hadn't shaved so we just waited while he dressed them down and made them go and shave. It was usual for officers to ride in the cabin of the trucks with the driver. This was vetoed and the officers rode in the back of a couple of trucks on their own. The road north at this time was not bitumen. A good earth track granted, but, oh the red dust as you travelled in convoy!

When the Unit left Adelaide and all the way to Alice, the weather had been particularly mild but now we struck the real might of summer. This was the first opportunity to shed shirts and start to acquire a tan which had been denied us since leaving Northam many moons ago. One of the real funny sights of the trip was to see a disconsolate Lt. Gerry McKenzie sitting in the bottom of a truck in a pair of shorts with a handkerchief knotted on his head covered in red dust and with the folds of fat, newly acquired in Adelaide, looking for all the world like a statue of Buddha.

First stop was Barrow Creek, a desolate dump which because bore water was available had been turned into an overnight stopping place. It was here later in the war that Major Love was to command a labour battalion obtaining wolfram for the steel industry to keep the war effort in action.

It was at Barrow Creek that some of the gang noticed a locked refrigerator and smartly reckoned it must contain beer or something, to be locked. It took but a trice after darkness had fallen for a swift commando raid to take place, lock

smartly forced and refrig broached. Off went a lovely turkey. One of the camp staff noticed the forced lock on his nightly rounds, gave the alarm to O.C. Staging Camp who screamed like a stuck pig at the thought of losing his lovely dinner. Midnight saw us on parade. Sgt. Major Craigie said a few words about someone "thieving our next day's breakfast." Pte. Halse said: "Hooray —" (a phrase well worn in those days). The C.O. took over and reiterated the story and asked the culprits to "fessup". Paddy Knight was heard to say: "I can't see anyone picking their teeth." For lack of proof there the matter stood.

Another blot on our escutcheon.

The next day's journey took us to Banka Banka. This was rather a better staging camp. Banka Banka Station was hard by and one of the most improved properties in the Territory. The owner had made a lot of money on the Tennants Creek goldfield but being a cattleman at heart had bought Banka Banka and improved it out of sight building stockyards, etc. Rumour had it that this station was strategically situated to receive stray bullocks who wandered from their home runs in search of better pasture, but rumour was ever a lying jade.

The O.C. Staging Camp showed some of the party stone from the Tennants Creek field. This closely resembled ordinary iron ore but as it was "napped" in a pestle you could see the gold feather immediately appear. We were assured this was specimen stone going 15 ozs. to the ton which bewildered the Kalgoorlie boys as prior to breaking it did not appear to contain gold at all. Stone with a similar assay in Kalgoorlie would look like a jeweller's shop studded as it was with veined gold.

This staging camp saw yet another blot on the copy book. The Unit was still hopelessly broke and there was a wet canteen at the camp. Quite a few managed to "scupper" a few bottles but of course the inevitable happened and one lad who hadn't got a bottle was caught trying to "arrest" one. The C.O. was very decent about it. He tried a tarpaulin muster among the officers to pay the damages (the

O.C. Staging Camp demanding payment for all the "missing" bottles) but it was no go, the officers were just as "free" of cash as the O.R.'s. There was nothing to do but reach for the red ink and put it in the lad's pay book.

Once more we moved on with an odd odour left behind.

The trip this time took us to Elliott, the third and last of the intermediate staging camps. On the way we had lunch at Tennants Creek. We were all eager to see this place of the fabulous gold mine. It was a ramshackle town with little to commend it and certainly didn't look like a prosperous gold town. Elliott was easily the best of the staging camps. It was named after the officer who founded it and was still the O.C. The whole place showed what could be done by the right men in the right job. Everything was clean and creepers grew over mess huts to keep them cool. Flower beds abounded. Food was good and well cooked. The greeting to troops was more of a welcome than met with elsewhere. I believe this officer was eventually awarded an O.B.E. for his wonderful effort and a well merited decoration too. This time we managed to escape unscathed as far as reputation was concerned and headed off in the morning for our destination—Katherine. The trucks took us to Birdum, the head of the rail from Darwin and from there we proceeded by rail to Katherine.

This was a queer train. The crew didn't seem to care a damn whether they went or not. It must have ranked as the most casual railway in the world. The carriages were the most antiquated imaginable but the journey was short and discomfort mattered little and the trip was preferable to red dust.

First glimpse of our new place of abode came from the railway station. Somebody said, pointing in the distance: "There she is!" All we could see were a few tent lines and one hut. These huts we were to find out were called "Sydney Williams" probably in honour of the firm who won the contract to supply them.

To digress a moment. Katherine township was one of the usual run of cattle station-cum railway towns found in the Territory except in

this instance it gloried in the ownership of two hotels (?) or should I say shanty pubs? Besides this there was a store and a general agency business. What few dwellings that existed were for the railway fettlers gang. There was a bakery of sorts and a butcher who was hardly worthy of the name. Some wag immediately said: "She'll be good having leave in Katherine."

The camp site was close to the Katherine River which at this time was a chain of pools all of considerable depth and said to be infested with crocodiles. We did gain some idea of the potential of the Katherine River as we saw the concrete railway bridge over the stream. This bridge was pitched at least 30 feet over what was now the bed of the stream, but we could see adhering to it huge tree trunks which had been washed there by previous floods.

As the Unit trudged into the camp site laden with full packs, kit bags and sea kits we saw figures working on the one and only hut. These were a platoon of the 2/1st Pioneers who were to usher us in. It was fondly imagined that these chaps being a semi-engineering show would build the camp while we trained and played the part of guerillas. We were not long being disillusioned. We would build the camp, we would act as general lackeys for all that was required in the Katherine area.

The very next day saw us started on the task. The lay-out called for between 20 and 30 "Sydney Williams" huts, prefab steel constructions clad in galvanised iron with concrete floors, and all the necessary drainage, cook house facilities, etc., which go to make a "permanent" military camp. The terrible permanency of this camp immediately affected morale. The lads thought they would lie stuck here for the duration. Long and loud were the rumblings of discontent. Added to this the security order went forth: "From now on your address will be A.I.F. abroad. Mail will be censored and no reference is to be made as to where you are domiciled." The lads in general considered this was a traversity and screamed at the nitwittedness of officers in general and the C.O. in particular, never realising that

this order emanated from Army H.Q., Victoria Barracks, and was designated to keep our presence as secret as possible in view of future moves.

The building of the camp was really tough work especially in the early stages as Adelaide had softened us up to a degree not thought possible and added to this it was all done in a blistering sun. Handling steel and iron and mixing concrete is no sinecure at any time but done in the climate of Katherine it was a small slice of hell.

Sections alternated daily on the various tasks of hut erection, concrete mixing, deep drainage, general rouseabouts, cook house fatigues and also loading steel sleepers and rails for use by other units further up the line. (Apparently Katherine must have been a dumping ground at one time for these "commodities" as there was a large supply here and most of the line construction was being done at Adelaide River by the 2/4 M.G. Battalion.) This latter task was one to be avoided like a plague as steel sleepers (heavy U shaped steel about six feet long and 15 inches across) and rails were as hot as blazes and heavy as could be imagined. A day on this task was plenty!

Lt. Don Turton, Sapper Officer, thought up a beautiful line in bastardry. Owing to the poor quality of the bread supplied he decided we would build an outdoor oven and bake our own. This was to be made of ant heap, a commodity which abounded throughout the whole of the territory. Picking down these ant beds, wheel barrowing the clay to the site, mixing it like cement and puddling it into position was about the lowest form of manual labour. If used in prisons as "Hard Labour" it would be a written guarantee to stop all future crime.

For the sake of morale officers and men all pitched in together and all took their turns at the tasks to be performed that is of course, with the exception of the C.O., 2 I.C. and Platoon Commanders, who provided the supervision.

Katherine also proved to us just how poor most of our cooks were once they were taken away from the "best" set ups. Cpl. Jack

"Frying Pan" Smith, who had been a shearers' cook, was probably the best at the form of food to be prepared at this camp. Later on Sgt. Jensen and Sgt. Bryant were to prove outstanding. But generally speaking at Katherine the food was terrible and that served in the Officers' Mess the worst of the lot as Cpl. "Tiger" Jordan who was "Tucker Mucker" to this mess, was not even a trier.

All things considered the camp was in good condition rapidly. The hard work did much to keep the boys' minds off their alleged grievances and although mutterings still went on the worst of the trouble was over proving the truth of the old saying: "Satan finds work for idle hands."

The water supply was drawn from a huge river pool near the railway bridge and was carried in four inch steel pipes over ground for at least a mile to the camp site. The water was always well above blood heat and if a cool (never cold) shower was required mid-night was the only time it was available. The showers erected by the Sappers were floored with steel sleepers and had no roof on them. It was really a funny sight to see chaps kick off their foot wear and stand on a sleeper, turn on the shower and promptly leap off onto the wooden seats as the heat of the floor cooked the feet and the heat of the water tried to drill a hole through toughened shoulders.

The reason is a mystery but this water had wonderful powers for washing clothes. Never have shorts and shirts been washed so clean and easily as at Katherine and even the worst hands at laundry managed what would be said to be an expert job.

Quite early in our stay at Katherine it was decided to start a canteen both for sale of beer and the ordinary things required by soldiers. A terrific edifice erected by the 2/1st Pioneers to serve as a lavatory was to be pressed into service as a beer cellar-cooler. This colossal enthrone had to be seen to be believed. Whether it was built to normal army specifications has never been decided but it stood out like the proverbial Klondike job and anyone who had been lucky enough to use it would

have looked like King Canute. Because someone decided there were better uses for this structure it was never used in its normal capacity. Some of the miners in the Unit reckoned if the double shaft coupled with an underground drive were used the cooling effect of this forced down-up draught would produce the necessary cooling effect for our beer. It was decided to sink another shaft close to the lavatory and connect the two by an underground drive which would be the cellar. Lt. Doig was put in charge of the job (as well as running his section) and had miners Pte. Paddy Knight, Pte. H. "Boyo" Hewitt, Pte. Jim Smailes, Pte. Ken Hogg and Pte. Ernie Evans to assist with this engineering feat. The main task each morning was to get this gang to start work. Both Paddy and "Boyo" were inclined to want to solve the political and military problems of the day prior to commencement and the rest of the "gang" were quite prepared to listen. Doig would start his own section to work then move to the "project" and bullyrag the gang to work. Apparently it must have been one of the better chores or Paddy wouldn't have volunteered and consequently as the "gang" were also the experts on construction it took considerably longer than the budgeted time to complete. It was eventually completed before we left Katherine and the beer put down for cooling and a guard mounted to keep "souvenir-

ers" at bay. The task was only just completed prior to our departure. It can be said that it was a success but we never had a chance to really prove it.

The hard work and hard tucker toughened the Unit in a way that even the rigors of Wilsons Promontory didn't. Working long hours clad only in a pair of shorts and boots and socks soon got rid of surplus fat and fit as we were on leaving Foster we really were in top condition by the time our period expired at Katherine and furthermore looked the real "bronzed Anzacs".

(To be continued next issue)

Bernie Callinan writes to say there have been a couple of odd errors in this feature. Firstly it was mentioned in the March issue that the Engineers attack on the Tarwyn River Bridges was at Fish Creek. This was incorrect as the bridges are between Meeniyan and Tarwin and definitely not Fish Creek.

Secondly Bernie says his only connection with the Militia pre-war was a School of Military Engineering and then he was with other "graduates" both A.I.F. and non-A.I.F. sent off for posting to A.I.F. units.

Sorry for these errors but the old memory can't encompass the lot and it is by getting notes such as these from Bernie that we will keep the facts straight. Thanks a million, Bernie, keep it up.

New South Wales News

Hey, the seed we have cast has shot. I see a letter from Babe Teague in May "Courier". Well at least it is a sign maybe we will get more with any luck. Of course Jim Smailes writes from this State but as Jim has been a contributor many times we can't take credit, however Jim you may get a visit from some of the boys who may travel your way now they know more about you. We would have liked to have seen you when in Sydney. Possibly you have forgotten me as I only saw you twice on Timor, the last time when you

were at Fata Cork (I don't know if that is the right way to spell that) and I can't remember why we came there or where we were going and I am not sure whether it was from Turasia or Mendilo.

I forgot to mention last month that John Darge has now got two shops, one at Kingsgrove and the other out Carringbah way. We all wish you well John and I can assure you chaps that live out John's way that he puts the real McCoy on your shoes. I know.

Alfredo De Santos has now been accepted into the R.S.L. and he gets

full Repat. benefits so at least there is a heart somewhere in that concrete jungle in York-st., but I guess the fight was long and hard. I suspect that Jimmy English knows more about that. Speaking of Jim, he is another good shepherd and although he can always be heard it is not about his own deeds or troubles but someone else's as if he hasn't got enough of his own personal troubles, and I suspect June has her worries with his ill-health as she certainly didn't look as well as on Anzac Day 1958 or as I have seen her. However now they are up in the back blocks of Parramatta them there mountain breezes passin' by might lightin' that worried brow. It's due west from Sydney, fellers, just past the last water hole. What's the name? I don't know. Jimmy was so long getting into Anzac Day march he forgot where he came from.

By the way Snowy Went, I am not building a multi block of flats. It's a small bungalow of 13 squares approx. It's O.K. for you big time men to sling off at us slaves.

When you are reading this Bloss Lawrence will have arrived and gone. Jack Hartley let me know earlier this month and we hope that we can report of a nice little get-together for those that can make it over to Hartley Mansions, West Pymble way. I drove right past the H. Mansions without noticing the Red Diamond on the garage door. How's that? But all I could see was the blue venetian blinds to stop you looking in. Boy there seemed to be acres of them.

Incidentally I have to report about that expected increase in a certain family was a fizzer as it was only wishful thinking of a lonely little boy who would like a skin and blister for company. Just shows you out of the mouths of babes comes some big furphies.

Building progress on Warriewood landscape. A great amount of activity has been going on for the past two months on the slopes of the aforementioned hills.

I called over to see this modern structure and what greets me as I round the bend a figure of a man cringing on the ground with a very attractive woman standing over him with a piece of 4x2 hardwood up-raised and bringing it down on this

poor unprotected back of a man saying at the same time: "Now will you promise to work more and talk less to get our house finished?"

At this stage I gave a discreet cough and while Marge turned round to greet me with tears in her eyes, Merv Jones (the cringer) scuttled back up on the scaffold and tried to paint the end of the house with a brush in one hand and hold the fibro in place for Ocker to nail in place and at the same time greet me as if nothing was happening and he was working hard.

Merv is getting a lot of encouragement from various people, a brick carter commented: "Got a lovely view of the southerlies here, mate." Encouraging character.

However, to be serious, in two months (thanks to O'Niel staying away) Merv has made a really good job and as he has been the labourer, billy boy, painter, run and fetch this, get that, do this, where are you, what have you done, why didn't you do that, take this out, put that, hold this, where's this, why didn't you get that, feller about the place he looks like being in it by the end of June. It's got a lovely basement for grog parties or something similar. By the by Marge and Merv, we called over again last Saturday and we liked your contrast in fibro it certainly was a good idea.

Once again I have come to the end. Thanks for ringing me Jack and for those who haven't seen it before here is my phone number: XX3629. Should anyone wish to see me during the day if and when they are in the city, I can be contacted at the Sydney County Council showrooms, Queen Victoria Buildings, York or George-st. entrance. Ask for me and say that I work in the garage and there to your amazed gaze if I am there I shall appear out of the floor.

My deepest sympathy goes to the Hilliard family in their recent bereavement and I know that all members of the 2/2nd in New South Wales will agree with me and send their sentiments if not by mail well through these lines.

Words at times like these are cold comfort and perhaps meaningless to you who have lost but as we also have known them we feel the loss deeply. —RON TRENGROVE.