



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Editorial

A Little More Interest

The last three get-togethers lab-
oriously organised by your branch
of the Association merited a much
better show of interest than was
evinced by members as a whole.
Reference is made to the Annual
Re-union Dinner, the Annual Com-
memoration Service and the Annual
Sports Night. Speaking on general
terms the attendance was not at all
what could have been expected.

All who have served in any man-
ner on the executive side know
just how much time, brain power,
organisation and plain hard work
goes into the holding of these func-
tions. They are the culmination of
months of planning by a committee
who spare no effort to provide the
best in the way of entertainment of
the particular type appropriate to
each occasion.

It practically amounts to an open
insult to the men who do so much
that the main body of members treat
their efforts with disregard. The
show of such minor interest is most
disheartening after all the work en-
tailed. Surely it is not asking a
great deal to hope that members
take sufficient interest in their own

Association to come along to the
Annual Re-union and especially the
Commemoration Service. This ser-
vice is prepared at great pains by
your President and to stay away in
droves adds insult to injury to your
own main executive.

Even admitting that the Sports
Night does follow fairly rapidly on
the heels of the other functions
surely a better roll up could have
been expected when it is realised
that the winner of that night's
sporting round is your champion
sportsman for the year.

Many a time and oft it has been
pointed out in these columns that
any organisation is only as strong
as the interest taken in it by the
main body of members. We are
aware that members do want the
Association to live by the many let-
ters that accompany sweep tickets
and also the wonderful way mem-
bers support the sweep. But this is
not quite enough. More is required
and if you don't want to break the
hearts of your organisers become
aware of the necessity to take a
greater interest in your Association
affairs and attend the various func-
tions a little more often.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Ladies' Night—Tuesday, Oct. 6th
Crawley Bay Tearooms

West Australian Whisperings

Committee Comment

Your committee met as usual on third Tuesday at Monash Club and a terrific amount of business was transacted.

The whole of the detail for conduct of Ladies' Night at Crawley Bay Tearooms was completed and the various jobs allocated. This will ensure a wonderful night will be had by all.

The sub-committee appointed to look into Children's Christmas Party submitted their report and Mr. Varian produced to the meeting a big range of sample toys which would make preferable gifts for the coming year. After much discussion it was decided to hold the Children's Party on Sunday, Dec. 13, if the hall was available on that date. Arrangements for purchase of gifts, etc., was left to sub-committee.

The report by the sweep organiser showed that sweep had been the usual success. This report provided many conclusions for the conduct of future sweeps.

The sub-committee who dealt with Kings Park were empowered to deal with the calling of a working bee at an early date to implement their ideas of future development of the area.

It was decided to have Mr. F. W. Tydeman as guest speaker for November meeting if he is available. Much discussion took place on ensuring a big attendance at this meeting if Mr. Tydeman was available.

A long planning discussion took place on a trip for Legacy children to Mr. Don Tarton's property early in October.

It was decided that if a Country Convention was held this year that it be in the early portion of 1960 as programme to Christmas was very full.

Meeting closed at 11.30 p.m.

"LEST WE FORGET"

SEPTEMBER

Doyle, L/Cpl. C. E., killed in action New Guinea, Sept. 20, 1943.
Age 22.

Association Activities

The Annual Sports Night took place at Monash Club on Sept. 1. Those participating were way below average in numbers but made up strongly in enthusiasm. Table tennis, darts, quoits and penny, on the line comprised the four sports and each provided a different victor. Ron Kirkwood won the table tennis; "Spriggy" McDonald the darts; Percy Hancock the quoits, and Fred Napier the penny on the line. On a count back Percy Hancock took out the belt for the second year in succession and we heartily congratulate him on a good effort.

This sports night is a great evening and it is a pity that more did not come along and make the competition just a little keener. Possibly the fact the school holidays fell at the same time had something to do with the poor attendance.

A word in season about our next function which is Ladies' Night. This will be held at the usual venue Crawley Bay Tearooms on the bank of the Swan at Crawley on Tuesday, Oct. 6. This is the Tuesday of Royal Show week, Peoples' Day being the following day. A good night's enjoyment is guaranteed. It is hoped that many of our country folk will be down for the show and will make a point of attending. City folk should by now know their commitments and be able to book up the wife and make a grand success of the function. As usual catering and refreshments will be provided so all you have to do is come along.

THE EMPIRE GAMES

As most people already know the Empire Games will be held in Perth in 1962. The actual date of the fixtures has not yet been fixed but it's dollars to doughnuts it will be in the late spring and at a similar time to the Olympic Games held in Melbourne.

The fixtures will be spread over about a fortnight and will provide wonderful spectator attraction.

The W.A. Branch has decided to act as hosts to any who may travel interstate for these games and of course to act as hosts to our own country members.

To date only the broad acceptance of the fact that the Branch will provide entertainment and will act as hosts has been decided. It is considered much too early for any detailed planning but you can be assured no stone will remain unturned to make your trip (if you can make it) to W.A. a most memorable one. We will be able to draw on the experience of our Victorian Branch in dealing with this matter as they did a marvellous job of handling the Olympic fixture.

This is being written largely with the view of bringing the Empire Games to your notice and advising you that a big something will be done by the W.A. Branch and allowing you to start and make plans with regard to attending. This will enable readers to start saving both money and leave to make the effort to attend.

This matter will be brought to your attention many more times as the months roll by so just regard this as the opening salvo in the campaign to get YOU to Perth for the Empire Games Convention.

Personalities

Congrats. to Reg Harrington on the birth of another child, this time a girl after five boys. Think you must be leading the field in the Stork Stakes, Reg. Anybody doing any better?

As mentioned in last issue we would attempt to bring you some of the personalities seen at the Annual Re-union.

Ron Kirkwood comes to mind first for an excellent job of host to this show. He replied most ably to the toast of the President, and complimented all who had done so much to make the evening tick.

Arch Campbell worked like a trojan as toast master and general M.C., which was asking plenty of him after using his voice most of the afternoon as a football announcer. Arch as always looks in the pink of condition.

Nobody worked harder or enjoyed himself more than Tom Nisbet who seemed to think that as he had done so much toward providing the venue that he had to work twice as hard to make the evening a success.

Ray Aitken looking as big as a

bull and swearing that he had lost two stone (nobody believed him) was in good form and his constant chuckle could be heard most of the night.

Geoff Laidlaw certainly had a great time. I don't know if there was one person present who didn't manage to have a chat with Geoff during the evening. He is the readiest of mixers.

Always a pleasure to see the country folk and it was especially pleasurable to see Jack Denman looking so well and enjoying himself with his old 9 Section boys, who, I think were probably in greatest numbers this time.

The whimsical grin of "Wendel Wilkie" made one think of days of yore when that same grin and ready quip did so much to lift morale.

The "Menace" Crossing of course just had to be there. Every time I see that face light up with a big smile I look around to see if he has planted a great double banger just under my tail. He just seems to radiate mischief and like Peter Pan will never grow old.

Alf Hillman never seems to get a minute older and seems to be always in a happy mood as if he reckons the world is a good place to live in.

Stan King still looks as shrewd as ever and eager to tell us what a good Association we have. Says it would take quite a large upheaval to keep him away from the Re-union.

Nice to see Eric Weller who also appears to have mastered the art of eternal youth despite the fact that he is very much a family man.

Big Merv Ryan still looking fit. Nobody makes a Re-union or Anzac Day last longer than Merv. He generally is the last to leave.

Fremantle as usual was well represented with Mick Morgan, Ning McCaig, Arthur Smith, Alby Friend, Mick Calcutt, "Curly" Bowden, "Ping" Anderson, Merv Ryan, all present.

Joe Poynton was there also looking extra well. This reminds me there was a big photo of Joe in the "West Australian" the other day receiving a silver tray from his rugby team mates at Nedlands on his retirement after 18 years. He first played for Nedlands in 1940. A very nice record to a very nice

bloke who not only played but worked for his club. There is no bunce in playing Rugby Union in W.A. and it costs a chap plenty in money and energy to play the game and Joe is to be congratulated on his herculean effort.

Another real regular was Len Bagley who rarely misses a Reunion.

The night would not be complete without those two stalwarts Jack Fowler and Don Turton who seem to reckon it a point of honour to attend.

Fred Napier and Jack Carey doing more than their fair share of working raking in the cash and generally seeing all was well.

Clarrie Varian, "Slim" Holly and Alf Walsh seemed to be affronted if you had an empty glass and proceeded rapidly to fill it.

Bill Epps more than pulling his weight and providing the name tags and serviettes which were just the necessary touch to set the evening going.

Random Harvest

BLOSS LAWRENCE, of Fire Station, Fremantle, writes:

After reading Ron Trengrove's kind remarks in the July "Courier" I can only say how wise that fellow was who said: "It is a long lane that has no public house".

My family, who are avid readers of the "Courier" and other journals of note, accept as gospel anything they see therein and so it was barely in their hot little hands when up went the shout, "Look, Daddy is going to be a film star in Hollywood." The effects were many and various.

1. I bought a larger hat.

2. Gave a written agreement to the Taxation Dept. that I would not do anything rash such as a sudden departure without notice.

3. Gave a public denial from the speaker's rostrum at John Curtin High School (the largest High School in the southern hemisphere, situated at Fremantle which is, as you all know, rated as the cleanest port in the world). I could go on for ever telling you of events associated with my entry into films. The baker thinks I leave tonight, that is him (sorry, he) that is he you can hear knocking on the door

There are possibly people who were present and who were not mentioned either last issue or in these columns and I apologise if you have dipped out but the old editorial brain has to give out sometime and afraid I can't handle the grog as well as I used to.

A letter to hand from Tony Adams. He said he looked in that cheque book and the gremlins gave him a real big surprise. Says he and his wife had had their projected trip to Mt. Isa and Mary Kathleen and the roads had to be seen to have any idea how bad a trip it could be. He was most impressed with the expansion of Mt. Isa where buildings are going up rapidly. Mary Kathleen is a new well laid out town showing bundles of progress. Tony hopes to have his holidays shortly and is heading for the ocean area of the red dust of Longreach. Thanks for the donation Tony, and thanks for the letter. Hope you will be able to do it good and often.

with an axe. However my turn will come Trengrove, wait until I get you out at Cabramatta, you won't know which way Snowy Went. Here is something for you to chew on. As well as being unable to spell Fata Cuac you cannot spell Jean English. There is no "u" in Jean. Sort of non "u".

I took up my pen, Mr. Editor, not to tell you of the pitfalls ever ready to trap the unwary. (I know you're not the Padre!) but to tell you of the recent trip I had to Sydney and the closest thing to a Royal Tour I'll ever see. If the characters over there were as big in stature as they are in hospitality, man, they'd all be 12 feet tall.

From the time I arrived at Mascot to find Jimmy English and his offspring Ted Buck there to greet me until I left Jack Hartley in George-st. almost three weeks later there was never a dull moment. To say that I had the time of my life would be an understatement, it was so good in fact I needed the few days in Melbourne afterwards to recover. Had I gone home direct from Sydney mother's first reaction would have been, what in the world have

they done to my boy? And I would have let them take the blame.

Jim, Ted and self made our way into town in Ted's car, gathered in Jack Hartley thence to the Wentworth for a quick round and home to Hartley's at West Pymble for an outside lunch. That night the clan gathered as you know from Ron Trengrove, that old mispent misspeller, so I won't reiterate here, suffice to say we, Jack and I that is, pushed the last one down the steps at 2.30 a.m. or maybe it was 3.30.

Some random quotes I heard on occasions throughout the evening I present, Mr. Editor, for your edification and possible comment.

1. Snowy Went. Some like it hot.
2. Ron Trengrove. I like a black with my coffee.
3. Jim English. Who brung you?
4. Anon. Put it in your pocket Jim, if it hurts your throat.

End of quotes, sorry, unquote! (The attendance roll you have already and it was good to see them all again. Don Woodhouse I missed last year as well as the old Sinn Feiner, Patrick John Kenneally himself, they were both there looking shiny bright and bushy tailed. More of P.J. anon. The rest of the gang I had met last year but not their wives and I must say they improved the gathering. Maria Hartley, our charming hostess, I got to know better than any because of the time I spent with them and a real gem. She looked after me like I was a king. You have a real find there Jack, so look after her, not that you don't, but they don't grow on trees, boy, and a good girl is hard to find as Sophie Tucker will tell you. A good night was had by all and so to bed.

I could not let the opportunity pass without mention of Jack and the maior effort he put into organising the show he turned on. Truly a mighty performance plus the fact that he put up with me under his roof, carried me about in his cab to wherever I wanted to go, in short he did everything in his power to ensure my stay was a happy one and it truly was.

The next day, correction, later that day, I checked into Chowder Bay and began soldiering on Monday.

Saturday night out to Arncliffe for a few ales with Drip then back

into town to collect O'Neill, then home to Narrabeen, stopping part way to admire the scenery. Spent the rest of Sunday with Betty and Frank with lunch at Oxford Falls, a spot to note for future reference if you have a yen for the out of the way picturesque place and I do.

Back to the Ranch Bar None, via Warriewood to see that old master builder, Merv Jones, with his supervisor Marge, complete with knotted lash for driving the staff to greater efforts. When completed the house will be something to see but I think the greatest hurdle Marge has to overcome is getting old Merv to bend his back. He is like me in that he thinks the boss should work too and so at present, stalemate!

O'Neill then returned me to Chowder at great risk of life and limb (mine), there to resume the grind. I might add I passed the course thereby giving me one more subject for major's qualification. I mention this in case anybody should think I spent all my time looking through glass. However back to O'Neill or rather Betty O'Neill. This girl must have the heart of a lion to put up with him. After he proposed to her O'Neill then pushed this courageous lady down a 40 foot rock slide and didn't offer to dust her down. "It was reaction," he said. "I was so happy I did not know what to do." Three weeks later, after she left her wheel chair, they were married and lived happily thereafter. Courage, thy name is Betty.

End of Part 1

For the next and final gripping part in this enthralling serial read next month's "Courier". Read how our hero made a long and perilous journey to Calramatta. Read what happened when the egg hit the fan.

P.S. In a serious vein, I have just received a letter from Jim English who is in Concord again. I will answer at earliest, Jim, and I wish you a speedy recovery. Yours, too, Wilma. I have almost finished and you will have it by the time you read this.

So long for now.

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DON TURTON, of West Pingelly, writes:

It's a hard old world having to settle down once more after such an excellent break o'er yonder but I guess such is life. After meeting so many of our old associates and their families, and viewing again the old stamping grounds, it gives one an irresistible urge and desire to see more of the Double Reds and where and how they are making out in this "God's Own Country". During wartime association we met one another under such vastly different conditions that in many cases we didn't really get to know the entire make-up of each other, it was an impossibility; we viewed one sometimes under field stress, or at training or at play and sometimes just "under the influence"! Now however we have open to us; and made so easy through our Association get-togethers, the new experience of meeting one another and one another's families in Civvy-st. And speaking personally for myself, my wife Vida and my children, we are finding this every bit as enjoyable as the companionship we knew of old.

As for our trip over East time was the enemy all of the time and prevented us from seeing so many. One suggestion, and I know you already have it under consideration, would be the convenience of a complete list of names and addresses for any would-be traveller. All along the line and since return we have learnt how easy it would have been to call in for a minute or so on Tom or Jack or Bill who lived practically en route. I can hear you saying: "Lazy B—! Why not take it from the 'Courier'." but with human nature as it is I can advance a reason or two.

Generalising we had a wonderful break with only two wet days in Sydney—and were they wet—prevented any Sydney engagements on the way north and as I came by a bait of sorts at Brisbane which laid me low, we were forced to by-pass Sydney on our return and detour through Orange. The trip over the Nullabor is far from being a worry or bore, we found it at this time of the year most relaxing after city traffic and a grand feeling of being hundreds, nigh on thousands of miles, from telephones. As a matter

of fact and this is going to earn me much displeasure from the New South Welshmen and Victorians, nearly two hundred miles of the Murray River basin 'tween Eucla, Swan Hill, Mildura and Renmark is not quite up with the overland desert—where there is vegetation it's lush and cross the boundary fence and it is sub-desert with a vengeance.

In Adelaide both going and returning, we had the great pleasure of indulging in the Williamson hospitality. Bob and Claris and members of the family made Vi and I feel much at home and conversation soon overtook the last 19 or so years. Bob himself has not enjoyed the good health that we could wish for him, but don't think for a moment it has affected his old personality and good humour. Claris too, is just as we Sappers remembered her on her wedding day, but then that may not be fair comment for my recollection of that particular day after such hospitality was. will I say, "a little dimmed".

In Bendigo we missed the old Curran but did have the good fortune to strike his wife, Gladys, who was holding the fort in his absence. I might add we spent a very pleasant hour or so and certainly felt much refreshed before we departed.

At Melbourne I was fortunate to be able to step in for Blossom Lawrence at a get-together arranged for him. He was delayed in Sydney. A noggin or two was bowled over in the pleasant company of Bernie Callanan, Campbell Rodd, Max Davies, Bert Tobin, Gerry O'Toole, Bluey Southall and Bruce McLaren. I didn't know until it was too late to retrace my steps that Smasho was in residence near Melbourne—would indeed liked to have renewed acquaintance.

At Sydney as mentioned earlier, the weather put finis to visits, however I did ring Bill Coker, Jim English and Curly O'Neill. I could not hear a thing Curly said after finally tracking him down, the hail storm created such a din.

After a run through Surfers Paradise that fabulous place on the Gold Coast, and remembered so well by 2/2nd wanderers, we arrived at Brisbane to meet our old friend Mrs. Adams. Although not 100 per cent nevertheless she was on her way to

see Tony at Longreach. Over the phone Peter Hearle sounded bright and cheerful and assured me his wife Clare was as beautiful as ever. Ian and Peg McPhee drove over to our location and it was so nice to see them for a natter again. On our way home we hindered production at the irrigation farm of Howard Marks or as you'll remember 'Carl'. He and Dawn certainly have a lovely family and farm. The few minutes we were staying developed into many more than a few hours. I do hope our sales talk will coax them over West for a trip.

The only other Unit mate we were able to see was Jimmy Veal at Pirie. He wasn't carrying the condition I expected in fact could have been a little down from what I remembered. At the moment he is secretary of a local union and president or vice president of another. Being in working hours and our running so late we couldn't accept Jim's kind invitation to stop over night.

Well, that's it, and I can certainly recommend the trip to anyone. We are planning our next already.

GORDON ROWLEY, of 20 Hospital Ave., Mangimup, writes:

This letter is a long time overdue and when you read the letters that I have enclosed you will heartily agree with me. The truth is I just don't seem to have time these days to turn around. Regarding the letters that I have enclosed, I would appreciate any information that any of my old Section No. 8 can send in to me. Could you have these letters in the "Courier" and let me have the originals back?

Ever since the war I have always wanted to contact the old credo and see if I could do a bit of something for him if he is still living, to make up for a little of what he did for me, and now if one or two of my old Section could let me know there credo's names there is just a chance that we may get somewhere.

I have gone into the chain saw business full time now and am kept really busy with the selling and servicing of the machines. At present I am working in my back yard workshop and am doing all my own paper work. On top of that I am doing a book keeping course at the

local high school and am trying to fit in two courses at the Perth Tech through correspondence. So you can see that I haven't too much time to spare.

The saw that I am dealer for is the McCulloch one man chain saw and is one of America's best. It is certainly the best we have in the West by far. I hold a good range of spare parts and do all repairs here in Mangimup. When I sell a saw I deliver to the client and instruct on the operating of the machine and also on sharpening and maintenance. This is done free of charge to the client except for a small delivery fee to cover petrol. I deliver anywhere within reason. My saws are spread from Harvey to Denmark so you see I cover a wide area.

I did have hopes of attending the Re-union with Rowan Robinson but that has gone by the board now as I have more work on hand than I can handle tomorrow, even now.

Please find enclosed butts and a cheque to cover. These were sold for me mainly by friends, so I hope they have luck.

Before closing I would like to commend the committee on the job they are doing in keeping our Association going and I for one would like to be in a position to be of more assistance. This Association of ours is a marvelous affair and is being held together by a marvellous gang of fellows and although I do not do anything towards it I do appreciate the efforts that you chaps put in.

My regards to any of the gang and if any are down this way please pop in and to No. 8 Section, let me have a bit of information regarding credos and our movements. This means you Mr. Tom Coyle as well as any others.

From Mr. F. J. A. Whittaker, H.M. Australian Consul at Dili, to Mr. Rowley,

Further to my letter of March 13, 1959, I attach hereto copy of a letter received from the Army Chief of Staff, at Dili, which is self-explanatory.

You will appreciate that the task is no easy one, but you will also see that the authorities here are very willing to do their best.

They hope to be able to let you

know that he is alive and well. But, as you know, some of these creados were killed . . . let us hope that he survived.

From Herculano de Carvalho, Chief of Staff, to Mr. Whittaker,

I am really interested to do my best to help Mr. Rowley, though I am afraid we are starting, may be, an endless job.

A long time has passed since those days of fighting in Timor: people have died, others have changed living places and some have even changed their names.

Nevertheless we must try.

I dare say that the first thing to do is to get some more detailed information from Mr. Rowley, for example:

If Mr. Rowley was known by any tetum or Portuguese nickname;

If Mau Pelo was known by any Australian nickname.

Names of people in Mr. Rowley's team, including creados.

Places where the team has been. (Very important) if Mau Pelo has followed the team to the south coast.

After having collected this information, and some more Mr. Rowley has available, we may try to contact some people like:

Chief Jaime, of Casa Branca (Lau ana).

The planter, M. Americo, at Lete Foho.

The Chief Dato Soco, of Hatu Lia. Other native and administrative authorities in that area. I am really willing to find that boy, and to meet Mr. Rowley too. Awaiting for further news from Mr. Rowley.

ALAN BROWN, of 26 Scadden St., Wembley, writes:

As usual in haste and full of apologies, but had to get these tickets in. Truly wish there were a lot more hours to the day. Still doing night duty, that is why you don't see me at the meetings and reunions. Still my day will come soon and hope to get a change. Congratulations on the wonderful job you boys are doing with the "Courier" it is truly wonderful reading and am always watching for it.

Well must away, so hope you have every success with the sweep. Regards to all the boys.

ERIC THORNANDER, of 8 Venn St., Collie, writes:

Find enclosed sweep butts and a couple.

After much ear bash from the better half I have eventually got around to posting this. Heaps of time up my sleeve, but I couldn't tell her that.

I wish to report the arrival of another house boss, Jillian Faye. A little beauty even if I say it myself. I am told she is the dead spit of "yours truly". Slap, slap.

By the way there seems to be some confusion re my little lot. Last year they all received girls' books, much to the delight of our little daughter. However I am attaching a complete list. Perhaps I could impose on your generosity to hand it on to the responsible authority.

I am at present on three months' long service leave, but will not be moving far from the old homestead. I am the only one on deck here. Only seasonal complaints but they can be miserable enough.

Might possibly make Kalgoorlie for the cup. If so I should run into a few of the lads in attendance. While up there I may have a go at prospecting, so if you should see my name in the mining news as managing director of a gold mine you will know I have hit it.

Give my kind regards to all the boys you see and the very best to your good self.

RIP McMAHON, of 43 Kooyong-rd., Rivervale:

Enclosing £2 with sweep butts, also £1 for subs, and best of luck with the sweep.

Have been running into Terry Paul on quite a few occasions lately and he said though the timber game is hard work he is progressing favourably.

I saw Don Hudson a few weeks back and he was just about due to go north again with the P.M.G. Huddy had just finished the refresher course in the linesman's school and was looking fit and well and with as much bounce as ever.

Also met Wok Crossing in town last week and had a couple of noggins. It was a short encounter as Wok was on the square and drinking squash. Still in the sheep game and reckons it is not so bad.

BOB PALMER, of Cowaranup, writes ("?"):

As usual I am running late with the sweep tickets but hope they reach you before you send a reminder to me. As you will notice we have taken the book ourselves again. I am not a "Dusty Studdy" myself I'm afraid.

Am afraid also that I will not be able to attend the Annual Re-union again this year. Wrong time of the year for me at the moment. Another year or so and it may be possible for me to go any time as my young fry will be able to handle the cows by then—I hope. May have been able to this year but fate deemed otherwise as we had another increase in the family last March, giving us five in all, two boys and three girls.

As for the details of the Unit activities you asked for, I contacted Norm Wallace and he has a diary of the doings over there and told me he would write them up but as yet I have heard nothing. I will get at him again and see what I can drag out of him. I'm afraid I also missed out on sending that roll book of mine as that was about the time things happened and I clean forgot all about it until too late to be of any help to you. Very sorry.

Having quite a good season down this way and the herds are doing their duty for once. Need to after last season as it was very much on the nose.

Still find time to play a bit of golf. Am captain of the club this year which takes up a lot of my spare (?) time. Have managed to get down to a 16 handicap after three seasons which is not bad for me.

Well that is about all I will tire your eyes with for this time.

Will enclose cheque for £2. If I am behind with subs the extra £1 can go in that direction, otherwise put it to funds in general. I just wouldn't know how I stand as regards subs.

JACK HASSON, of Box 46, Ballidu, writes:—

Please find enclosed cheque for £1 and butts of sweep tickets.

We've had the rain we wanted and seeding is well under way—the end is in sight and 'tis a good feeling.

REG HARRINGTON, of "Ainaro," Wyening, writes:—

I must first apologise for my lack of correspondence over the last couple of years, with no really water tight excuse to offer. Every time I read a 'Courier' I get good intentions to the extent a couple of times of starting a letter but not completing it. However you can rest assured it is not lack of appreciation of what you chaps are doing. I think "Historically Yours" is a gem and if it could be put up in book form would find a place in most ex-2/2 homes. Unfortunately, as most likely happens in most homes, one is fortunate if he gets to the papers before the kids have them torn up, let alone save them. Reading of the night of the stampede at Katherine and the retirement of certain bodies to the cellar brings to mind the fact that I happened to be the guard on the cellar (a teetotaller at that) and was approached with the suggestion that it must be a terrible ordeal to stand for two hours on guard without passing water, but of course no self-respecting guard would pass water at his post. A distance of some two or three chains at least would be considered proper, and of course it would be most unlikely that anyone would be so base as to rob the cellar. If one saw forms moving from that distance on a dark night they would not necessarily be recognisable as human, but possibly figments of the imagination. If I had reported to the M.O. and gave as the symptoms the number of trips away from the cellar I'd have been discharged on the spot with a blown out bladder.

I'm afraid the Re-union is going to be beyond me this year. I am committed to play the first round of the championship on that day (golf) and would lose face to forfeit as my opponent is a five handicap player. Needless to say had it coincided with the second round I would have been free. Family ties also make it difficult. The round half dozen now. We have a girl two months old after five boys.

The season is still holding us in suspense the past few days have been a little damp with about 40 points of rain, but we could do with a good soaking inch. Boy could we use a good crop too, having just spent a fair whack on a new house

and to make matter worse had to spray 900 acres for web worm. At 15/- an acre that works out at a lot of schooners of beer. However as the old parable says should a man hit you on one cheek turn the other cheek, but it didn't mention that if he was a very big man it would be wiser to snow him the other two cheeks and a pair of heels.

I will be enclosing the sweep butts with this, but will have to get them from my off-sider who took them to sell some to the footballers.

Cheerio for now with regards to all the boys. Sorry to miss the big do.

FRED McKEOWN, of 4 Jubilee St., Mackay, Nth. Queensland, writes to Arch Campbell:—

I'll bet you never imagined that you would be receiving a letter from one of the Queenslanders who happened to be attached to your crowd on Timor.

I ran into one of your chaps from W.A. (Dickie Doran by name) around last January and since then he has passed on to me his copies of the 'Courier' and I think you fellows should be congratulated on the spirit that has let you stick together, the camaraderie that has survived the peace years and also for your fine journal.

Alas for my mob, the 2/11 Field Coy. Engineers. They've just gone out of circulation and I doubt if I would be able to recognise more than a couple if we passed in the street.

I know that they were not very favourably impressed with B. J. Callinan's "Independent Coy," especially the part about being sick and unarmed on arrival in Portuguese Timor, in fact we like to think that we blew the wireless station in Koepang and two bridges on the way through, on orders, after the main force had surrendered and still carried five cases of .303 ammo with us into the hills. Somehow or other, a lot of our chaps got the idea that Queenslanders were just with your crowd on sufferance, especially after Dr. Dunkley gave us a broadside of what he thought of us and especially our officers at Koepang within a couple of minutes of our meeting up with the 2/2nd on the border.

I would like to thank your crowd for the remembrance of one of our chaps amongst your own, Les Moule, he was my mate.

Just for the record Arch, the photograph in "Independent Coy" under the caption "Looking For Food," is not of Cpls. Sparkman and Luby, but was taken of Pte. Butters, 2/40th, and myself as we brought D. Parer up to H.Q.

I took a trip south after selling my farm a while back and met Kev Curran in Bendigo and a fellow named McCallum, in Victoria, but although I tried to contact your branch in Melbourne I failed to meet anyone I knew.

I often run into Col. Spence, who is the proprietor of the Proserpine newspaper, a sugar town about 80 miles from Mackay. He looks fit and well.

Give my regards to Dookie and the rest of the boys and should any of your chaps come to our part of the world, both D. Doran and myself would be pleased to show you our district which is a tourist centre in its own right as well as a gateway to the reef.

If there's anything I can do to aid your club in our region let me know and it will give me pleasure to assist you in any way possible.

Well, I'll have to draw this scribble to a close wishing yourself and association the best of luck.

JOHN FOWLER, of Box 73 Wangan Hills, writes:—

Just hope I am not late with the sweep tickets. So I am enclosing the two butts and cheque for the two books and also another book if you would be kind enough to fill in another book for me. Just scribble Box 73 on the butts, as I want to be in it. If all goes well, I will be down to the dinner. We are having a lovely rain at the present time and everything is looking beaut, so just hope the rains continue for this and next month.

I have finished my shearing and a very good clip. We only have one brother's shearing to do in my shed as soon as the rain stops and then the other brother at his place, so are hoping to finish this week, but will be no shearing tomorrow, rain is still falling, and we never get too much, so we don't complain about too much rain.

HENRY SPROXTON, of 52 Roberts Street, Bayswater, writes:—

Herewith ticket butts and my pro found apologies for my absence from annual general meeting last month. I had nearly three weeks of bronchitis and then lined up for another three weeks of pneumonia so I was chair bound for a while. It's the second lot of pneumonia in two years and the left lung is showing signs of wear and tear so I'll have to watch it from now on.

With a bit of luck I'll make the dinner alright as I've been nosing about the job for nearly a week and the rubber is getting out of the knees again.

MAL HERBERT, of Box 41, Nunagarin, writes:

Herewith enclosed butts and cheque for £2. Sorry I am so late but the excuse is the usual one—forgot.

Seasonal prospects are much brighter up here now since having a good fall of 1½ inches of rain last week. Have bought myself a new tractor on the strength of it.

E. HOFFMAN, of Porphyry P.O., writes:

Sorry for such a short note owing to the mail running ahead of time. I must compliment you all the way you and your crew carry out things.

Please find enclosed cheque for raffle, subs, and what have you.

Thanks for everything. Regards to all.

C. CRIDDLE, of 124 Nansom St., Wembley, writes:

Please find enclosed 45/- postal notes covering sweep butts and member's fee, trusting it's a success and you, the organiser, a job well done.

My apologies for not attending last Saturday's annual dinner. I know how much work goes into these functions and how much depends on us being present, but through sad news, re my mother, who is in hospital, I was in no state for having fun. Sorry, but will make up for it somehow.

I wish sincerely, a successful year for yourself and committee, and the Association blooms into something beyond all expectations.

J. C. PENGLASE, of 18 Queen St., Bentley, writes:—

Please find enclosed sweep butts and £1 for same. Sorry I haven't replied to your note before, but there it is. 'Couriers' received O.K. also the last one, thanks a lot. All being well I expect to be at "The Do" next Saturday. While I am in a bit of a writing mood has anyone heard of one Harold Francis Newton? Have not seen his name mentioned among the Sydneysiders for a considerable time. Relatives say he is the "side of a house". Hard to believe. I remember an incident at Remexio which the same H.F. was partly responsible for. If I can put it together it may be useful to you later.

Where is Fred Wilkes, alias "Brunswick Blue" these days? Never hear of him. What about it Blue? For anyone who maybe interested I am a leading hand with the British Metal Corporations Copper Milling Works. We grind up low grade copper ore, approx. 8 per cent copper, to a powder in ball mills. This is sent to the phosphate works where it is mixed with superphosphate and other necessary trace elements which have turned the Esperance Plains and parts of the north coastal plain from so-called useless sand plains into good pasture land carrying thousands of sheep and cattle.

Well I think I've run down, so until I see you, regards.

CHARLIE GORTON, 138 Marmion St., East Fremantle, writes:

Please find tickets and P.N. for £1 enclosed. Hoping the sweep is a success. Glad to say everyone is in the best down this way, only thing is the house is a bit of an uproar just at present as we are having a girl from the Adelaide Training College staying here with our daughter Carole, and she arrives today so you can imagine how things are.

Sorry to say I won't be at the Reunion as I will be working Saturday midnight and it's not the best taking off for work after a night like that. Hoping you all have a good time. I may get along to one of the monthly meetings one of these days

**Address All Your Correspondence:
Box T1646, G.P.O. Perth**

Historically Yours!

CHAPTER 4

PRELUDE TO BATTLE (continued)

Fast and furious was the activity around Penfoie drome as the various companies of the 2/40th Battalion took up their positions and proceeded to dig-in in the practically solid coral.

Our Company was left out of these activities and once again we started to wonder what was to be our role. Major Spence and other officers took off in a plane, destination unstated, and came back again within 24 hours. This plane was one of those old three engined Fokkers which were the commercial plane of the day and as hardy as they are made. The pilot was none other than Capt. Moll who became famous with another Dutchman named Parmentier for their part in the great Melbourne Centenary Air Race by flying a Douglas from London and nearly stealing the show. You may remember it was this pair who landed at Albury with the aid of headlights from cars to show them the landing ground. Moll was an absolute perfectionist as a flier and many times he would come in to land only to fly off again so that he could make the perfect three point landing when he did touch down. He was to be one of the early victims of the Japanese Zeros being shot down at sea off Timor while on a flight to Java.

The going and coming of our Commanding Officer was soon to bear fruit as we were ordered to pack up and prepare to move.

Before the Unit could move tragedy was to strike and Driver Swift was accidentally shot by one of the officers and he died practically immediately. He was to be the first of our many casualties. This cast a gloom over the move from Koepang.

This time the move was to be by Dutch gunboat and the old "Sourabaya" was pressed into service to take Head Quarters, "A" and "C" Platoons on board at Koepang, destination Dilli, capital of Portuguese Timor. "B" Platoon was to move a day or so later as there was insufficient room on the Dutch gunboat to accommodate the whole Company.

Nobody was at the time fully aware of the reception that would meet the Unit at Dilli. Portugal was still neutral at this time and furthermore considered that she was quite capable of defending her possession without outside assistance. Col. Leggett and Major Spence had not had a very wonderful reception from the Governor of Portuguese Timor when they flew to interview him with reference to our Company and a Dutch force taking up positions in the area.

It was quite expected that resistance from the small Portuguese army in the area would happen. Everything was so nebulous, nobody really knew, nobody was prepared to take a risk and nobody was prepared to be the first with aggression!

So with tin hats at the alert, gas masks at the ready and rifles and Bren guns at the high port, the Unit entered the ships long boats and prepared for the landing. Nothing but cocoanut palms could be seen. Did these secrete an unknown enemy? Was this to be our Anzac Cove? Someone, "Boyo" Hewitt I think, asked Major Spence: "Will I ram one up the spout?" The answer was: "No. But look as if you were prepared to meet a challenge."

The Company waded ashore expecting at any moment to hear the dreaded rattle of machine gun fire and much to the relief of all it did not occur and here our first action was to be bloodless and was to be heralded over the A.B.C. news as "Australian units take Dilli in Portuguese Timor". What a laugh!

The Unit rapidly took up positions on and around the Dilli strip prepared to keep it from any invading army.

In Dilli at the time was one David Ross, an air force officer who was Australian Consul to Portuguese Timor. Mr. Ross is now Director of Civil Aviation Dept. in Perth, W.A. He had been sent to Dilli some many months before ostensibly as a normal trade Consul and of course to show our flag to our near neighbours, but his real role was that of eyes and ears of the

Australian Government. Well founded rumour had it that the Japanese had been consistently infiltrating this area and great publicity had been given to the fact that they were about to start an airline to this area using Dilli drome and were going to spend some fabulous sum of money to modernise both the drome and the harbour. The Australian Government reckoned it was time that they got into the picture and found out just what was going on and Dave Ross and his staff were to be the men who were to do it. His staff at the time comprised one Whitfield and one Bryant who Dave had recruited in Timor because of his great knowledge of the island. Bryant, uncle of one of our cooks, Fred Bryant, had been on the island for over 25 years and knew the place like the palm of his hand and was reputed to speak more Porto Timor dialects than any other living man. He had been caretaker of an oil well that had been drilled and abandoned at Alianbatta on the south coast many years before by a subsidiary of Shell Oil Coy. These were the men who were to keep Australia informed of Jap movement in the area. Actually it was a great waste of Ross's ability as at the time he was one of the few men who had any great knowledge of aircraft production and for a man like this to be ensconced in Timor when his services could have been so valuable to Australia on the aircraft production side seemed a case of a square peg in a round hole.

Dave was to prove a great friend in need to our Unit.

The remainder of the Company moved from Koepang on the "Canopus" a large yacht-like vessel which was actually the Governor of Koepang's yacht which he used to visit his various islands which were his domain. The whole Company settled down to camp life in the near precincts of Dilli drome. This was to prove one of the major blunders of our war campaign. The drome and Dilli itself were situated on the marshy coastal plain which was a great breeding ground for the anopheles mosquito, harbinger of malaria!

Although Capt. Dunkley had put the Unit onto a daily dose of five grains of quinine a day to be taken every evening this was, I'm afraid to

say, honoured to a large extent in the breach. The "know it alls" had reckoned that quinine ruined your teeth, affected your sexual organs, and other rubbish, but among the susceptible youths who comprised the major portion of the Company, it was a good story and many a good ounce or so of quinine was ground under the heel instead of finding its way into the stomach.

Time was not long before this ill-sited camp and failure to take normal precautions against something they knew nothing about, was to pay an evil dividend! Without much warning the malarial ague struck! The lads went down firstly in tens, then scores! Fevers reached unprecedented heights! Capt. Dunkley and his R.A.P. staff worked feverishly to quell the outbreak which was accompanied by dysentery as the water available at the drome camp site was far from pure. This camp site was at once a hell hole. The hospital in Dilli itself was pressed into service to take the large numbers suffering from malaria. Men dropped in condition and chaps who had been a picture of sound bronzed condition on arrival looked like skin and bone as they battled with the ague. It was to have a telling effect for the rest of the campaign especially on the older chaps who did not recover as quickly as the more resilient younger lads. It was a morale destroyer to these older chaps and was to greatly affect their usefulness in later campaigning.

The luck of the Unit held good or the lucky star which guided our fortunes must have been well on our side as if the Jap had landed in Timor at this time nothing but token resistance would have been possible as a very high percentage of the total muster of the Unit went down in a couple of weeks.

Meanwhile work had to go on and the Sapper Section under Don Turton prepared the Dilli strip for demolition and mined it most effectively if the mining and blowing of any vast area like an air strip can be called effective.

Dilli itself was not a bad little town, the dominating feature being the big cathedral built not so many years previously and a beautiful edifice judged by any standards. The Hotel Portugal dispensed a fair

line in grog mostly wines and a light lager type beer. Streets were narrow and most of the better type housing was in the near foothills. The Governor's residence and administrative headquarters was an imposing building of the Portuguese type, very ornamental and white-washed with a crazy paved entrance.

Afraid the "red light" area had its attractions and was promptly put out of bounds by Major Spence but of course who ever took any notice of the sign "Verboten"? A raid by a town piquet under the Orderly Officer nabbed quite a few who were smartly scampered back to the Unit lines. On parade next day Major Spence called this gang out and asked the assembled parade what they thought of them. One exuberant cook on his way to the "Q" store to draw rations, yelled out: "Bloody heroes." He rapidly found a red line in his pay book.

There were other incidents of this nature but afraid they cannot be related here.

Christmas came and a more dreary unlike Christmas spirit pervaded the lines. Most of the gang were still in the throes of malaria and those that weren't were working overtime carting water, doing camp chores and tending the sick. I think most of the lads hardly noticed that Christmas had come and gone.

As the Unit started to get on its feet again it was realised that a shift would have to be made from the fever hole that was the drome. Reconnaissance had been made into the near area and it was decided to move in a westerly direction away from Dilli to new camp sites. "A" Platoon was to be encamped at Cactus Flat, a matter of an hour or so march from Dilli, with one Section detached to guard the drome, and the first section being No. 1 under Sgt. D. Dexter.

The rest of the Company took up camp at Three Spurs, so named because of the three spurs jutting out from the main ridge. This was an excellent camp site and far removed from the fetid stench of the low lying drome. The area was forested with white gum like trees for all the world like an Australian bush scene. Health was quickly restored in this better atmosphere and training went on apace.

It was quickly discovered that available maps of the area were most inaccurate and as an initial task it was decided to traverse the area with a view to making a new master map which would provide the basis for future operations. Sections were given various areas to traverse and quite a large slice of the near precincts of Three Spurs was covered and plotted on this particular map.

All this while the air had been alive with rumours that the Portuguese were going to bring a force of their own from either Mozambique or Angola in East Africa and take over the task of policing their own area. Daily the talk of this move grew stronger until it impressed itself quite strongly on everyone's mind. Events were to prove how falacious this was.

A lamp signal station operated between Company H.Q. at Three Spurs and those on duty at the drome. This was considered essential to provide instant knowledge of any surprise movement from the sea.

The C.O. warned all to be most circumspect in their dealings with the natives as they were reckoned to be unreliable and potential enemies. Great talk of head hunters and cannibals went the rounds and it was a case of "Beware the black man." How stupid it was all to prove!

Once away from the low-lying areas of the coastal belt and the high savannah grass of these low areas it was surprising just how open the country was to be. Nothing like jungle was noted except a few areas where great bamboo grew and made for some density. The topography encountered on traverses was just a mad "throw up". No real range of mountains could be made out as the mountains ran in all directions with precipitous razor back ridges. The streams were short and turbulent, made a swift torrent to the sea. What we had seen to date all headed to the Arafura Sea on the north coast.

The monsoon season had not yet set in and generally the area was a bit parched, not at all like the verdent green we had thought all tropical areas must be. Dry electrical storms used to loom up in the late

afternoon and were truly terrifying in their intensity. Great streaks of vivid lightning of every type with bangs of thunder such as we had never experienced previously even in the worst Australian thunderstorms. Not a drop of rain would fall.

Our allies, the Dutch, a force of some 400, provided the main defence force for the Dilli area. This force was mostly native troops from Java and were under the command of Col. Van Straaten. Van Straaten had previously been Professor of Tactics at Bandoeng Military Academy in Java, the principal staff training centre in the N.E.I. Naturally we looked to such an outstanding personage to provide us with a great tactical skill and shrewd leadership if battle was to loom in the near future. This force manned a couple of heavy pieces of artillery capable of firing a mile or 20 to sea.

This was the position in early January, 1942. Our Unit mostly in the near hills patrolling and traversing, map making and learning the terrain. A section with a couple of saps and a sapper attending to matters on the drome ready at an instant to blow it heavens high. The Dutch providing the main static defence in the Dilli area.

Victorian Vocal Venturings

Last Committee meeting held Wayside Inn, August 11. Present: Harry Botterell (in chair), Bert Tobin, Jock Campbell, Bruce McLaren, John Southwell, Johnny Roberts, George Humphries, Phil Bennett, Max Davies, Jim Wall. Apology received from Bernie Callanan (away on business) and Capt. Fletcher. Welcome was given to Major Phil Bennett, Officer Commanding 2nd Commando Co., who had been invited along to our meeting and has been made an honorary member along with Capt. Fletcher, also of 2nd Commando Co.

Major Bennett responded and hoped that we would have a very happy association and that we would take an interest in his company and put the drill hall and facilities at our disposal, which could be a big help to us in the future.

The 2/40th Bn. with attached troops, a section 2/11th Engineers, and the Heavy Battery looking after Koepang and Penfoei aerodrome.

This skeleton force ready to do battle from whither it may. What had the future to hold for us terribly raw and unseasoned, far from sure of ourselves, only just over the terrible effects of malaria and men still having doses of the disease every couple of days or so? Would those Portuguese troops arrive and take over? If they did where would we end up? All question marks in everybody's mind as the days and weeks went on. This was the prelude and calm before the storm. When would it break?

(End of Chapter 4)

(Geo. Boyland brings up the point of when did we leave Katherine and Darwin? He is sure we did not leave Katherine until Dec. 7, 1941, and Darwin about the 10th or 11th. Can anyone who has a diary assist by bringing these dates into the correct perspective?

My thanks to Paddy Kenneally who through Joe Poynton has supplied a pretty comprehensive list of our first reinforcements who arrived on the Koolanna. Will appreciate further advice from you Paddy, as the History meanders on.—Editor.)

The Cup Sweep was the main topic under discussion and this was thrashed right out and decided to hold a working bee at Bert Tobin's office on Wednesday, 26th, at 7.30.

Annual Meeting was discussed and subject to suitable place being found will be held Sept. 22, and decided to provide a little refreshment afterwards.

Picture night was under discussion and tentatively arranged for Nov. 13 or 20 subject to hall being available but details of this event will come later.

Meeting closed 10 p.m.

Working bee at Bert's office was well attended. Johnny Roberts, Phil Bennett, George Humphries, Jock Campbell, John Southwell, Max Davies, Harry Botterell, Bert Tobin, were present and we very smartly got the sweep tickets addressed and

sent off and now the result of this effort is in the hands of you blokes and we ask you all to make an all-out effort to sell your tickets as this sweep is the life blood of the Association as far as funds are concerned.

Bumped into Bill Gilchrist the other day looking particularly fit. He is still with Tele-Communication and likes the job. Mentioned that he has not been getting the "Courier". His address is 13 Harry St., Thornbury. Also saw Bill Tucker looking very well. He is still with the Turner group, and is Victorian Sales Manager.

Bruce McLaren informs me that

Curly O'Niell was down a short while ago on a quick reporting job for his paper. Went to Bendigo and hoped to see Kev Curran while there. Curly has certainly been moving about on his job, been up to Darwin, also did the Stuart case in Adelaide. Unfortunately Curly never stays long enough to meet the boys, but we will catch up with him one of these days.

News is very hard to come by and I appreciate a line from any of the boys who may have some news to impart. My address is 19 Baldwin St., Hightett S.21.

Cheerio for now.

—HARRY BOTTERELL.

New South Wales News

Last month's effort was not great I fear and as I start this month's I can't see this being any greater.

First, let me say that Jim English at least up until a week ago, has been out at Concord Hospital for at least six weeks. Eric and I went out the week before to see him and as well as puzzling Jim the doctors seem to have little idea as to what is causing his pains. However he was as perky as ever and no doubt the rest will do his ulcers and nerves good. A man who never drinks is always well, Jim. How would you know?

Well I seem to be getting it in the neck about remarks I made in my news reports. One lady says her nose wasn't red, another says she never had 10 pink gins, another says she didn't have her eye on Silent George. I guess I had better stay out of that Cabramatta area. I might get scalped or even worse.

Last month Doug Fullerton came down to see me at Q.V.B. after ringing Dorothy and checking on his navigation to find me. I hadn't seen Doug since 1943 and I doubt if he remembered me as I never had much to do with his particular section. However we talked for an hour (it was my morning tea break) then I rang Bill Bennett and handed Doug over to him with the information that he would like to see Bob Fields and John Rose and as Bill is not fettered by bundies or restricted to certain areas of work

I knew Doug would be in good hands and that he and Bill would have a lot to talk over. Seeing Doug the following evening I gathered he saw all the above gentlemen and broke his rule not to drink. Jack Hartley was informed by smoke signal of illustrious presence in town. Dashed out to Curly O'Niels (no doubt Curly will write one long letter to the "Courier" and tell us all about it). Like hell. I had four noggins with Doug at his hotel as before said the following evening whilst waiting for the boss's daughter (excuse me sly grin from writer behind hand) to take him out to daddy's home for dinner (ahem, cough, cough, more sly grin) to discuss timber prospects, etc., etc. (Gercha, anyone would think we didn't know hey what).

Well I guess that's all I can do you for this trip. Cheers and beers all you lot.

Heard This?

"You down there." shouted the irate father from the top of the stairs. "It's 2.30. Do you think you can stay all night?"

"Er, thank you," said the earnest lover, "but I'll have to run home for my pyjamas first."

★
He: Darling, I'm groping for words.

She: Well you won't find them there.