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2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Editorial

THE FINISHING TOUCHES AT KINGS PARK

Readers need no reminding of the great length of time or the tremendous amount of work that it has taken to get the Honour Avenue in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, into its present reasonable shape. Heart-break after heart-break has occurred in our efforts to bring this area to the standard where it becomes a fitting memorial to our glorious war dead.

Too often too much has had to be done by too few to get grass growing in the Park. The magnificent response for cash to reticulate the area is one really outstanding feature of our efforts and the successful working bee that laid the reticulation pipes stands out in memory. In recent times Bill Epps and his family and Bob Smyth have been outstanding in their efforts to make the Avenue presentable. Success in the grassing of the area has been largely achieved although certain small portions still require some effort. The provision of the rustic signs at each end of the Avenue have to a

large degree provided the necessary demarkation and bring to the public notice what the area commemorates and who is looking after it.

At present the grassed area looks up to standard but unfortunately the rough stone kerbing makes it well nigh impossible to keep the roadside edges in proper shape. As always the couch grass and weeds grow more lushly around these rough stones than anywhere else. Consequently even after the area is well mowed the overall effect is completely lost due to the tall grass on the verge.

The Association has approached Kings Park Board to have that body provide the usual concrete kerbing for the area to allow us to give the whole of our Avenue that finished look. The Board is quite sympathetic to our request but unfortunately like so many such bodies are starved for funds and cannot in the foreseeable future assist us with the necessary kerbing.

It now appears that if the Association wishes to add the finishing touches to our Honour Avenue the ball is back at our feet. The estimation of the capital cost of purchasing the required kerbing would be in the order of £200. This of course would not include the cost of laying as it is confidently expected that Kings Park Board would be able to do this with their normal day labour force.

The point now arises: Are we as

OFFICE BEARERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

PRESIDENT: R. McDonald
SECRETARY: J. Carey
TREASURER: R. Geere
EDITOR: C. D. Doig

a body sufficiently interested in our Avenue to see a job through to conclusion? I think we are.

After all the sweat and toil of past efforts is added up the final provision of kerbing is definitely not beyond us and would cap all those past efforts with the final touches that makes for the completed job. The sum mentioned is

not a lot of money and represents very little in excess of a £1 per member of our W.A. Address List.

The Association will be opening a special appeal for this project and you, the reader, are asked to give what you can towards the completion of this long task of beautifying our bit of God's Acre in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park.

West Australian Whisperings

Association Activities

FEBRUARY MEETING

The usual monthly meeting was held on Feb. 5 at Anzac House Basement and this was the first meeting since the Games Re-union due to the fact that it was not possible to book the hall for a meeting in late December and we always skip January due to the Christmas and New Year holidays. Considering everything it was a well attended meeting and was in the nature of a go as you please. Firstly a lot of natter about the Games Re-union then a game or two of darts followed by a rifle shoot.

Probably the fact that Jack Denman was on holidays from Geraldton and was able to attend, added to the enlivening of proceedings as Jack was in definite mood to enjoy himself and this proved to be infectious. The rifle shoot was the result of a challenge by Jack to prove that he was as good with the rifle as his old colleague, Merv Cash. As a matter of fact Percy Hancock proved too good for every body but Merv Cash was runner-up with Jack Denman and a bundle of others in the near vicinity. Jack was most impressed with the small bore facilities and I wouldn't be surprised to see the Geraldton R.S.L. in the small bore business as a result of Jack's evening. He was good enough to compliment everyone on the standard of there shooting which just shows how easy he is to please these days. It was a terrific night with nice warm weather to make a good thirst and I'm sure everyone went away more than happy with an evening well spent.

MARCH MEETING

Just four weeks later we had another meeting at the Basement, but can't say that it was a resounding success. Probably due to the fact that it followed hard on the heels of a Monday holiday and there was no issue of the "Courier" o jog memories, the attendance was very small and comprised mostly members of the Committee. Nothing really organised took place but the opportunity was taken to discuss at length several matters of importance, such as future events in the way of Country Conventions and also what to do in the way of making our area in Kings Park more attractive.

A working bee was arranged for Sunday, March 10, to clean up the area. Needless to say that those who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

APRIL MEETING

The usual meeting for April will be held on the 2nd at Anzac House Basement and at present it is scheduled for a guest speaker, probably Mr. Bill Lucas, who will talk on his experiences in the various yacht races in which he has managed to build up such a terrific reputation as a skipper. You are urgently requested to make every effort to be present as there is nothing worse than arranging for a good guest speaker, especially one from outside our Unit activities, and then have him talk to a sparse audience.

You will all remember the impact that guest speakers had upon our Association in the early years and how they helped in a major way to lift attendances to high

proportions. The time is again approaching when it is necessary to try and lift attendances at monthly meetings and possibly a good speaker or two might once again be the answer, but if one is invited to speak and the roll up is small then the Committee are going to be very wary before inviting another along.

Please do your utmost to be there on April 2 and show your Committee that you do appreciate what is being done for you.

KINGS PARK AREA

A couple of small working bees have been held in the area during the past couple of months and these helped to get the area in ship-shape condition as much as is possible under present conditions. Bob Smyth has put in a tremendous amount of work in our portion of the Park and great credit is due to him, and of course to Bill Epps and his family for the present good condition of the Memorial.

Committee Comment

The Committee met on Feb. 19 at Anzac House and an excellent muster of Committeemen attended, especially as it was about 150 deg. in the water bag.

The Treasurer was able to advise that our finances were in a nice healthy position considering the expense of the Re-union and he advised also that he invested £300 in Commonwealth Special Bonds leaving a balance in the working account of £175. You will remember that it was necessary to redeem a bond of £350 to finance the purchase of tickets for the Games venues. With most of the heavy expenditure for the financial year behind us this is a very excellent position.

The Secretary reported that the Kings Park Board had advised that they were unable to meet the Association's request to kerb our area due to lack of funds. The Board would favourably view any effort we made ourselves to kerb the area. It was decided that the approximate cost of the actual kerbing be obtained and the position reviewed from that standpoint.

Mr. Smyth suggested that provision be made in the area for the

erection of two flag poles, that could be easily erected and removed, to be used for Commemoration Services. This was voted an excellent idea and will be complied with at the appropriate time.

The Treasurer reported that he had tentatively booked the Cottesloe Surf Club Pavilion for Oct. 1 (Tuesday of Royal Show Week) for the proposed Commando Cabaret. It was resolved that this function should be publicised in the "Courier" on every possible occasion to ensure a top grade roll up.

The Secretary brought to the notice of the Committee the suggestion by the Victorian Branch that our sweep be held at a different time of the year so that it did not clash with their Melbourne Cup Sweep and the issue of tickets to other States. It was decided that for this year the sweep be conducted as usual on the Kalgoorlie Cup but next year the sweep be held around Easter on a major race held at that time, probably the New market or Sydney Cup.

The President brought forward the matter of a Convention this year. He said that Mr. Denman had indicated at the February meeting that he would like to see the Association hold a Convention at Geraldton, preferably at Easter. After discussion it was agreed that Easter was not suitable but once again the long weekend in November was thought to be best. The Secretary undertook to find out further particulars and the matter would again be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

Meeting closed at 10.30 p.m.

Personalities

Since going to press last and in fact before the last "Courier" had reached readers, we were unfortunate enough to lose one of our members in the person of Herbert (Boyo) Hewitt. "Boyo" will always be remembered as one of the most popular members to join the Unit at Foster. His droll way of putting things always brought a smile to those in his near vicinity. From the time we got onto Timor he did not enjoy good health and probably suffered more than most to the ravages of malaria. After being demobbed he returned to

Kalgoorlie and went back to his game as a miner but mostly preferred surface jobs. His great recreation was to train a race horse or two and he had considerable success in minor races at Kalgoorlie, but never did realise his ambition to win a Kalgoorlie Cup. "Boyo" in his day was a good footballer and a most staunch follower of the game until his end. His stentorian voice urged the team of his choice on for many long years. It must be said that he led an enjoyable life of his own choosing practically right up to the end although a stroke some months before put him in hospital from which he was never to come out.

Our members in Kalgoorlie organised by Steve Rogers and Eric Thornander, paid the last respects to a beloved member on behalf of all the Unit. It is left only for us to say "Vale Boyo. Hope the next life brings you as much happiness as you so obviously had in this."

So much have I written about Jack Denman in the February meeting notes that it is probably superfluous to mention him again here, but have seen so few this last couple of months that must fill in a line or two. Jack is looking extra well and very proud of his family both for their doings in sport and also in their schooling.

Percy Hancock is a very proud father at the present time as his daughter, Maxine, won both the sprints events for juvenile girls at the recent State Athletic Championships. Probably dreaming at present of being the poppa of a future Decima Norman or Shirley Strickland. Our congrats, Percy. Hope Maxine has a bundle more success.

Saw "Robbie" Rowan-Robinson a couple of times recently and on one occasion managed a noggin or two. "Robbie" hits the city occasionally for meetings of Westralian Farmers Co-op., of which he is a director. His boy is attending school in the city and doing extra well too. "Robbie" reported Jack Denman had called in to see him while Jack was on holidays and the same day Joe Burrridge had called on him but unfortunately the visits did not coincide sufficiently for a minor re-union.

Jack Denman reported seeing Tom Crouch at Manjimup and says

the old Crouch is still battling along well. Jack thinks it's time the Crouch went into double harness to get the cooking chores off his back. Good idea Tom. Better give it a lot of thought (about another 20 years thought, I reckon.)

Arthur Marshall was once again down for the Country Week Cricket and had his usual success with both bat and ball. Did not see the lad this time as he apparently was not playing in the near vicinity. Keep up the good work, Marsh, and you will wind up the oldest cricketer playing in Country Week.

The "Courier" extends to Mick Holland its sincere sympathy on the loss of his father recently. Mick's father was well known to a lot of the boys and especially to those who attended the barbecue at Mick's place during the Games. He was of most cheery disposition and endeared himself to a wide circle of friends.

Haven't had any nibbles yet regarding that suggestion of Geo. Shields' printed in the last "Courier" in which he envisaged chaps sending in a picture of themselves and their families with a short write up of their activities, etc. What about it lads? This could be a winner if you co-operate.

Dick Crossing has recently sold out his farming interests at Goomalling and he and wife Norma, together with family, are headed off on a tour of the Eastern States where they expect to meet up with quite a few of the gang as he is going armed with the Address Book.

Saw a picture in the press the other day of the one and only Harold Brooker playing nurseman to one of the new baby elephants acquired by the local zoo. He looked as though he was enjoying the fact that he towered over the little bloke but look out "Brook", these animals grow up and if legend be believed have a long memory and at this moment the creature is storing up for future use any misusage that occurs while you are big enough to bully it.

Quite by chance saw Jim McLaughlan the other day and he was looking on top of the world. Jim sends his regards to the gang wherever they be.

Had word from Harry Botterill the other day sending me information of our friends of other days—the No. 1 and No. 2 N.Z. Companies. They had a recent get-together at the Christ Church International Airport and among those attending were chaps well known to those in Cadre at Foster, namely: Charlie Saxton, Albert Veart, Jack Sutherland, Johnnie Johnston, Rae Farnilton, Wilf McArthur, Bill Ellingham, Paul Barcham, Charlie Chatfield, Colmore Williams, Charlie Caldwell and Brian Rawson. The photos taken at this re-union indicated that, like ourselves, they are aging gracefully and look a picture of health. The menu

which also accompanied the photos included such items as "Tidal River Seafood Cocktail", "Lilly Pilly Cream of Mushroom", "Fried Fillet of Sole, Fish Creek Special", and "Filet Mignon a la Trobe". It would be a great idea if further contact could be made with these grand blokes and we put them on our mailing list to the mutual benefit of our Association and theirs, especially with so much interchange of travel these days between Australia and New Zealand. It would be great to be able to walk in on or be walked in on by such good chaps as these, especially that Charlie Saxton or Paul Barcham.

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Random Harvest

BERT TOBIN, of 51 Northernhay St., Regent, N19, Victoria, writes:—

It has been on my conscience for some time that I must put in writing my thanks to the many people who did so much to give myself and the other visitors to Perth such a wonderful time during the Empire Games period.

In the meantime the January "Courier" has been published and others, less tardy and more eloquent than myself, have already expressed the appreciation of the visitors. Nevertheless I must add my endorsement and ask all in the West to accept my grateful thanks for such a wonderful time.

One could commence with the trusting folks who made us such welcome guests in their homes, pass on to the Honorary Organiser who was ready always to place his all at our disposal and on to the President, Secretary, Treasurer and Function Organisers and then to numerous individuals but it becomes an impossibility to adequately put into words the thanks that is due to each person.

I even find myself wishing to thank an "unknown warrior" of a lady who made me get off the train at Perth feeling 20 years younger than when I got on at Melbourne by asking the ridiculous question of whether I was competing at the Games and, on being advised of the purpose of my visit, following up with the statement that I was much too young to have been at the war!

Some of us in the East have been under the misapprehension in the past that the Association was run in the West by one or two overworked Association officers. While we find that the one or two are definitely overworked but nevertheless dedicated to the job, it is an eye-opener to see what a large amount of time and effort is put in by so many others in one way or another.

As a bludger who joined the Unit after the Timor campaign was finished and who never did anything then to enhance its reputation,

it amazed me to find myself so well received. Others who may have felt some misgivings about their worthiness to belong to the Association should not be diffident about coming forward. It is obviously sufficient to have been a member of the Unit for only a short period and it might truly be said that herein all men are equal and meet on the same level.

After such success at the 'Games' functions one might ask where the Association goes from here. It was probably true to say that the Victorian Branch was at its strongest in 1956 when planning for the Association functions to coincide with the Olympic Games. It would seem obvious that the W.A. Branch was never stronger than at the time of the Empire Games. It is obviously desirable that that strength be maintained rather than allow our enthusiasm to wane.

Do we need to have the Olympic or Empire Games to enable us to stage another Grand Re-union of Association members? I do not think so myself and so I wish to suggest that we start immediately to think about our next one.

We have such a wealth of talent and brains among our members that I am sure that if everyone threw in their two bits worth we could come up with a sure-fire scheme. The "Courier" could perhaps be used as an "Open Forum" to air everyone's views. This could serve another purpose in providing the Editor with the "copy" he is usually starved for.

Perhaps in the past we have regretted the fact that our members are scattered over the whole of Australia and it is impossible to get them all together again. But the fact that they are so scattered can also give one the nice feeling that wherever one ravelis in the Commonwealth there is a friend not far away. It would be interesting to take the Address Book in one hand and place a pin on a map of Australia on the town in which each member lives. I was privileged in being able to participate in a round trip from Perth to Albany and my greatest regret was that the three days did not allow a call to be made to everyone of the many members living near the route.

With such thoughts in mind I humbly make the following initial suggestion for criticism both constructive and destructive. Suppose we said that a motor convoy would assemble in Adelaide on March 1, 1968, for two days, go on to Mildura for one night, to Bendigo for one night, to Melbourne for three days, to Foster for one night, back to Melbourne, on through Albury, etc., to Sydney for three days and back to Adelaide through various N.S.W. towns including Broken Hill.

One would hope that the members in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney would arrange major functions (suitable for men, women and children) in their capital cities and minor functions in the country towns. Few would be able to complete the full round trip but one would hope that many, including Sandgroppers, Taswegians and Banana Benders, would be able to pick up the convoy for some of the time.

There would be many problems but I think proper planning would overcome these. One major problem would be accommodation but perhaps we could make it a caravan convoy for most to meet that one. Which year and the time of the year to hold such a project would depend on the most suitable time for the majority of members. They would have to think forward on such matters as when they could get away from farms, when they could get annual leave or long service leave, when children would be old enough to leave home, or, alternatively, free of schooling to be able to go too.

Guess I have raved on insanely for long enough. Who will now write something sensible on the matter?

(Bert, This is a gem of an idea and really is something to get the teeth into for the future. Perhaps it is only a start and somebody might come up with a better idea, but in the meantime his will serve as "the carrot in front of the donkey" to get us on the move. My most sincere thanks for your suggestion and it has all my support. Ed.)

PETER MANTLE, of Box 120, Biloela, Queensland, writes:—

Our town of Biloela in Central Queensland has a population of not much more than 2,000. At present there are 23 building contractors in the district, and most of them have work for months ahead. I doubt if there are many places in Australia—away from the seaboard anyhow—where such a building/population ratio exists.

They are just starting on a huge dam a few miles from town, mainly to provide water for cooling at a big new powerhouse alongside, that will use open-cut coal that is won at possibly the lowest coal price in Australia.

About 20 miles away is the Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui Moura open cut mine with orders for millions of tons of coal for Japan, and where a huge walking dragline walks whenever the workers stop striking. It was reported that the man who washed out the wash-rooms was getting £43 a week—and now he and his pals are on strike.

A half-Olympic swimming pool opened in town this year; and we are getting close to sewerage. And Biloela is the first town in Queensland to have fluoride added to the water supply—it has just begun.

There is a pure-water mob that has been bitterly opposing fluoride, and I've published quite a few of their outbursts in my paper though I'm all for fluoride. Any minute now I'm expecting letters to the Editor from people who say that since fluoride poison has been forced (it's marvellous how often the word "force" gets into letters to the paper) on the people, they have

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10% Your Way on All Purchases
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suffered from enlarged spleens and reduced overdrafts.

A private company, Amagraze, has taken over the uncompleted co-op. owned abattoir near town, and expects soon to be killing in big numbers and chilling for export.

When I came here 6½ years ago, there was one blacksmith-welder. Now there are four general engineering firms.

None of this is very impressive by Perth standards perhaps, but I thought it might be of interest to know that though many country towns have been losing population for decades in the drift to the city that has turned the average Australian, statistically, into a suburban dweller in one of the capital cities, one little town, 80 miles from the sea, and 100 from the nearest city, is doing very nicely, thank you.

(Thanks Peter. Hope to hear more from you in the near future.—Ed.)

Heard This?

DOCTOR'S GAM-BIT

Even though he was a practicing doctor, old Doc Horner was a hypochondriac and lived in constant fear of the paralytic stroke he was sure would carry him off some day.

One evening the crusty old bachelor M.D. was entertaining a pretty young nurse in his apartment where they were playing chess. Doc Horner suddenly fell back in his chair with a frightened look.

"My time has come!" he moaned. "I've had a stroke and my whole right side is paralyzed!"

"How can you be so sure?" asked the little nurse as she tried to calm him down.

"I've been feeling and pinching and tickling my leg for the last hour and there's no sensation there!"

"Cheer up, Doc!" said the little nurse with a grin, "that was MY leg you were working over!"

* * *

RESTRAINED TO BE SEEN

An eye doctor I know is highly in favour of mixed sun-bathing in the raw as a healthful occupation. When asked why, he smiles and answers: "Did you ever see a blind nudist?"

Historically Yours!

The time has arrived to get cracking once again on Historically Yours! Most of the important details of earlier shows on Timor have now been related and the time has come to tell the story of the "August Push". There was nobody in the Company who did not at some time feel the potent effects of this Japanese thrust to finally oust us from our foothold in the better eating areas of the island, and drive us to perdition or capture. Everybody had their own personal experiences of this monstrous Japanese drive and most thought that this could have been the end. All of us were being pushed and each thought the "thrust" was against him personally, but there was an overall picture to the Company fighting that was much more organised than most thought.

Who better than Major Bernard Callinan to tell the overall story of this most important event in the Timor campaign? This story was specially written by Major Callinan many years ago now for the Australian War Memorial publication "Australia at Arms", and gives a most graphic account of the "August Show".

Come in Bernie.

THE AUGUST SHOW ON TIMOR

This was neutral territory as Portugal had remained neutral in this global war. But some court-eesies still lingered, so the Japanese Commander in Dilli sent his compliments to the Australian Commander and told David Ross, who was British Consul there, that if the Australians would not come into Dilli and fight the war out to the last man, he would go into the hills. In reply to Ross's shrewd remark that there were not sufficient Japanese available to round up the Australians, he answered, "No, but I shall get them", and added that his experience in Manchuria and his reading of the South African War had convinced him that he would need ten to one superiority to deal with a guerrilla force.

On a brilliant sunny Sunday

morning two months later the "August Show" started. The natives with their fowls under their arms, with their eggs, betel nut, salt, honey or tobacco in little woven grass baskets, were collecting for the weekly bazaars in the posto towns. Clustered around the white walled posto residence and the few Chinese shops, they spread out their goods amid a feast of talking, gabbling, arguing, laughing and splattering the ground with the scarlet betel nut juice. But this morning there came the uneven pulsating drone of the Japanese bombers, and throughout the morning they leisurely and methodically bombed all the towns we had been using. It did not require many or heavy bombs to disperse the natives, to wreck the Chinese shops and to tear the white washed mud plaster from the posto's walls. Before the afternoon rains descended to conceal mountain peaks and valleys, all the villages along our front had been blasted.

Next day, August 10, 1942, the Japanese land attack began with columns driving over the southern part of the border from Dutch Timor against the Dutch force with its headquarters at Maucatar, and across its centre against the Australian section at Memo; two more columns drove southward out from Dilli, another started south westward from Manatuto and to complete our decimation, two troopships with a destroyer escort came from Koepang and landed a column behind us on the south coast near Beco. Over all were the droning bombers and the Zero fighters strafing any moving troops. Force Headquarters, which co-ordinated the activities of the Independent Company, and the Dutch, was forced out of Mape by the continuous bombings and its contact with both was lost for over a week.

During the months from February, 1942, after the enemy had landed simultaneously at Koepang and Dilli, an allied force had been built up around the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company and a well organised guerrilla warfare had been conducted from bases in the central part of this lozenge-

shaped island. From east to west it stretched for something over 200 miles. From north to south the average width was barely 30 miles, but the country rose from swampy marshes on both coasts through tangled and tortuous spurs and ridges to a mountain range reaching 10,000 feet.

There was little rain forest or what is usually called jungle upon those precipitous slopes and where we had established ourselves, the natives had cleared large tracts of land for grazing their buffaloes, and pigs, and for their crops of maize, rice and sweet potatoes. In some parts there were eucalypts with their friendly twisted white trunks and in others, rubber, coconut and coffee plantations. We had lived and fought through these areas and among a native population of almost 200,000 who had been in contact with their Portuguese masters for 400 years.

Against the enemy columns I had four platoons, Dexter's, Boyland's, Laidlaw's and Turton's, spread along a line of 60 miles, stretching from Memo on the west near the border to Remexio on the east over looking Dilli, each platoon about 60 strong with its three sections commanded by lieutenants.

The normal organization of an Independent Company was three platoons, but we had formed a fourth, Turton's, from those of the main force at Koepang who had escaped before the surrender.

From Company Headquarters at Bobonaro I had communication with the platoons by native runner, by using the Portuguese party line telephone system and by newly arrived wireless sets; but I had no communication with the Dutch commander, Captain Braemour, who had with him about 200 troops mainly Javanese.

As the enemy columns drove into our 60 mile front, the platoons drew their sections together. Laidlaw, the broad shouldered, ex-surf champion from New South Wales, lived up to his nickname "The Bull", and hit the enemy at Remexio, before falling back towards Lilitai to await them again. Boyland, the bank teller from W.A., harassed the column that moved along the well graded track linking Aileu with Dilli. At Atsabe, Turton, the chunky fair haired West Australian with an inventive

mind, waited with his eyes towards the west where Dexter was fighting to keep the enemy away from Bobonaro. From the Administrator's residence in Bobonaro were controlled the 100,000 natives and the food resources of the province. With our complete dependence upon the natives for food and shelter—and information—the holding of Bobonaro was important to us and the enemy knew it. They bombed and strafed the town until the telephone switch was wrecked and the gallant Administrator, Senhor Antonio Sousa-Santos, his wife, young daughter, and staff were forced to leave.

Dexter, the school master, with stocky frame and ready laugh stood his ground and made the enemy fight their way from Memo to Maliana, but he was pushed back relentlessly by the greater enemy, by their mortars and mountain guns, but mainly by the scores of hostile natives that they had brought with them. Outside Bobonaro one of his sub-sections was almost surrounded and Private D. C. Waller, one of the Company's three sets of brothers, was killed whilst holding off the attackers.

Company Headquarters remained in Bobonaro through the bombing and then moved out a short distance to set up the wireless control. This was all that remained now of the communication system, but this met every demand made upon it. Except at night, when atmospheric conditions were impossible for reception, I knew hour by hour where all the platoons and sections were, and each platoon knew what was happening in the adjoining areas, so that each unit was able to move as part of the company.

We had spent a lot of time training and testing our signal organization; each platoon headquarters had its signal team complete with stunted Timor ponies and reliable natives to move the set, the batteries and the battery charger with its supply of petrol. Each team was a careful selection of personalities, competent operators and cipher men. They triumphed over all difficulties; even when a pony slipped off a track and rolled over on the set, they repaired it and were back on the air within a few hours.

The platoons continued the fight

against the enemy with characteristic short sharp bursts of firing against the approaching columns, holding them until the inevitable outflanking forces were on the move. Then our troops melted away to reform farther back. This was the fighting we had perfected during months of harassing guerrilla raids. It had been successful also it had been necessary; we could not leave our wounded to be killed, and we could not carry them along those jagged mountain tracks that dropped and climbed thousands of feet in a few miles. We had to have only the fighters and the dead.

This time the enemy had turned the odds against us. He had brought with him natives who had been suborned into acting as a screen out in front, giving warning of the Australians. They moved amongst the bewildered native villagers and completed the demoralization started by the widespread bombings. Truly the *matu bubu* were the stronger now; truly all the Australians must be killed this time, and no sensible native would side with the losers.

So we fought in a hostile land. We could not rely upon the natives for food. We had never carried food; we had never had any of our own; we had just relied upon getting to a village in the evening and soon a meal would be before us. If we were fortunate it might be fried goat or pig with rice, and probably a mug of coffee; sometimes it might be only a couple of hard corn cobs and some water. Another meal in the morning and the rationing problem was solved for that day.

The strain of fighting always against overwhelming numbers, and of knowing that every piece of ground lost left us less to manoeuvre in, pervaded us all and was absorbed by the local *creados*. These were the native boys, some not more than eight or nine years old, who had attached themselves to us. Everyone, whatever his rank, had his *creado* who carried the few remaining possessions of his *tuan*, collected his meals for him, and generally looked after his comfort. Our men were thus left free to concentrate on the enemy; they could carry the maximum amount of ammunition, move quick

ly into the attack, and disperse rapidly to meet again at a rendezvous to prepare for the next action. At the end of the day each man would meet up again with his *creado* to eat, if there was anything to eat, and to roll up in his blanket if he still had one. The *creados* enjoyed the life, and were proud of the prowess of their *tuan*s; now they realized that we were forced back, that the Japanese were winning, and their eager faces showed their worry.

The enemy occupied Bobonaro when the column that came through Memo and Maliana, and the other that had been landed at Beco, reached it almost simultaneously. Dexter fell back to join Turton at the narrow saddle through which the road and track from Bobonaro passed to reach Atsabe. Boyland was pushed back beyond Aileu. Laidlaw was forced out of Liltai after a strong attack by two enemy columns; we had been watching the one from Dilli throughout the campaign, but the other appeared unexpectedly from Manatuto on the right flank of Corporal Loud and his sub-section just north of the village. Loud skilfully extricated his troops and, in the confusion, the two Japanese forces engaged each other hotly across his abandoned position. There were 30 enemy dead left to mark the action.

The appearance from the north-east of this additional column made me think the overall enemy plan was to trap us in the Ainaro-Same area, and there to force us into a set-piece action in which their superiority in numbers and firepower would permit them to annihilate us. The net was tightening around us, but through the daylight hours there continued the sharp clashes at short range followed by the heavy deliberate return fire from the enemy mortars, mountain guns and machine guns.

Even if we did escape to the east the country was less mountainous and more open and would not suit our type of fighting nearly so well. Nor did we like abandoning the area we had occupied for so many months, and from which we had carried out raids that had accounted for more than a thousand enemy. Although there was a great risk that the enemy would drive

southward to the coast from Aileu and so cut off our retreat, I wanted to hold our present positions as long as possible, so the order went out to the platoons to hold every ridge and spur until forced from it, and Company Headquarters remained in the foothills not far from Bobonaro close to Dexter and Turton. The enemy drove out from Bobonaro towards Atsabe and unexpectedly used the old road instead of the well defined and graded track. This made headquarters the most forward part of the company in the area, and we were almost enveloped by the screen of hostile natives from Dutch Timor. We drove these off but both the track leading to Atsabe and one to Mape were cut and behind us was the mighty Ramelau Range rising to 10,000 feet in Mount Tata Malau. The only escape was to make a track up and over the range and I hoped to be able to cross it at a height of not much more than 8,000 feet. Movement was difficult; there was no track and we had to carry our weapons and equipment our few possessions and wireless set complete with battery charger, petrol and spare batteries.

The struggling climb went on in short stages, each of about half an hour; then the wireless was set up and the signallers maintained their scheduled call-up of all stations to receive reports and to issue orders. We reached the top of the range as evening was falling and followed an animal pad along its knife edged top, seeking a way down the steep eastern side. Darkness came quickly and with it a mysterious shaking of the trees, although there was no wind, then the whole mountain range rocked under us in a severe earth tremor. Everyone reached for something solid to steady himself physically—and mentally; we all became silent as even the earth seemed to be revolting against us. Then it was over and we returned to our less uncontrollable worries. We spent the night on the narrow mountain ridge some 8,000 feet up and it was exceedingly cold. We had very little food and even less water to nourish the nine Australian and 11 natives. There were no villagers here to help us and we spent a miserable night.

The next morning the reports

from the platoons came in and with them the bad news of Dexter and Turton being forced from the saddle. The way was now open for the enemy to move on Atsabe and orders were issued to deal with the situation. Dexter and Turton were moved back to positions above Atsabe to harass the enemy as he approached the village; Boyland was moved back to Maobisse; and Laidlaw swung eastward to sit on the flank and rear of the enemy if he continued southward beyond Liltai. As soon as these orders had been transmitted to all sections, I moved the headquarters along the ridge looking for a way down towards Ainaro, and soon we started the sharp descent.

Throughout the day we slithered and slipped, then halted to set up the wireless to receive reports. By mid-afternoon we had reached the foothills and could see the white wall and red tiled roof of the church at Ainaro standing out amid the green of the rice paddies. But I did not know if the Japanese were there or not; I thought that they would have moved from Beco up to Mape, because the bombings showed that they knew that Mape was important to us, and it was less than a day's travel from there along a good rack to Ainaro, so it was quite likely that they were there. Since Force Headquarters had been forced out of Mape I had had no reports from this area at all.

However, we had to get into Ainaro because there was the only chance in this area of getting food. During the afternoon we moved towards the town, but it was almost ten o'clock at night before I led the headquarters along the cobbled streets, with the creados well to the rear under Corporal Brown. If we bumped into the Japanese the creados would be well back clear of the fighting, and eventually we would find them again when the fighting was over. I was pleased that there was no moon to reveal us to any sentries who might be about. The Chinese shops were shuttered and deserted; there were no natives; there was no sound. Then I saw a dull light coming from the open doorway of one of the shops ahead, and inside was a half-caste Chinese with a shallow iron cooking pot over a fire, and the

light came from a wick standing in a tin of pig fat. I spoke to him and learnt that he had been there throughout the day and had seen no one else in the whole town.

I told him that we wanted him to cook a meal for us; he agreed, provided that we would be satisfied with rice flavoured, with a few very small tomatoes. About midnight we partially filled our stomachs for the first time in two days. The meal was interrupted by the arrival of Capt. Baldwin and Sgt. Smyth who had remained behind at Mape after the headquarters had left; although I had not known it, they had been virtually the rear-guard of the company. It was a role that fitted Baldwin the schoolmaster from Corio, who months earlier had stood with his platoon to inflict heavy casualties upon a much stronger force. It was a great relief to me to learn that the Japanese had not occupied Mape and my big gamble had come off; I had decided to do nothing about a possible enemy drive up through Mape to Aileu except to watch for it and do what I could about it when the time came. The main reason for this decision had been that I had no troops to deal with it anyway, and now it was pleasing to know that the enemy had not made this attack.

But the reports coming in told of relentless pressure against which the platoons could not hold out. The Japanese commander had his ten to one superiority and he was using it well. We were inflicting casualties, but the screens of natives made it difficult for us to strike hard at the vital parts of the enemy columns. Our whole method of operation was collapsing; we could not rely on the natives; under the effects of the bombings and the propaganda of the hostile natives with the Japanese, the villagers amongst whom we had lived were becoming sullen and even actively hostile. Food could not be obtained, and the sections were fortunate to get one meal a day; but the ceaseless patrolling, prodding and skirmishing had to go on—we had to remain offensive.

The reports told me that Dexter and Turton had been forced beyond Aatsabe; Boyland was pushed back beyond Maobisse and there was nothing now in front of the

Japanese driving down from Liltai.

The whole of our front had to be reorganised and I moved Turton over to strengthen Boyland in the saddle, through which the tracks from Maobisse passed to Ainaro and to Same. Dexter was brought down to Ainaro to watch for a move from Aatsabe to Ainaro, and also to assist Boyland and Turton should the enemy move from Maobisse towards Ainaro instead of towards Same. If the Japanese occupied Same from Liltai or Maobisse, it would be difficult to extricate Dexter. Our front was contracted and I could feel the enemy net drawing around us.

The troops were feeling the strain of a week's continuous fighting; the food had been poor, and transport of our few vital pieces of equipment was difficult to obtain. Petrol for our battery chargers was almost exhausted and the number of remaining servicable batteries was dangerously low. I had established Company Headquarters in the hills to the east of Ainaro, and a runner took a message through to Force Headquarters which was located at Same. Accurate positions of the platoons were sent now to Australia with a request for money to coax food and transport from the natives, and for batteries to maintain our vital communications. The same day the gallant Hudsons of the R.A.A.F. were over us dropping the vital supplies. This magnificently prompt and effective help cheered us and the three short bursts from the plane's guns as they passed over our headquarters on their way back to Australia was a salute we returned in our hearts.

The Company was in a desperate position and it seemed as though the enemy was poised for the final drive. Now seemed the critical stage that occurs in all battles, when it can be turned in favour of whoever seizes the initiative. The order was sent out to all platoons to prepare to concentrate for a drive against the enemy column poised above us at Liltai. We would abandon the area to the west, try to disorganise the enemy by a heavy attack by three platoons on the enemy in the Liltai area, and by Laidlaw on their flank. This was a type of fighting that suited the enemy better than it did

us, but a bold attack might overwhelm him. • Rallying areas were allotted in the eastern end of the island, in case it was necessary to disperse. The final orders for the attack would be issued the next day—the nineteenth.

That night a green flare was seen near the saddle above Same; it was fired by the enemy but we used it as a rallying signal. The hospital was moved out of the town and everyone who could walk and fire a rifle was sent up the track to reinforce Boyland and Turton. The whole Company stood to, awaiting the final struggle, throughout the night we remained tense and at dawn the patrols were on the move seeking to discover the enemy moves, whilst behind this screen we stood to take the blow which must assuredly fall. It seemed as though the enemy had beaten us to the punch. The patrols push-

ed out but could not find the enemy and the strain on everyone grew through those clear fresh hours after the dawn. Then the reports came in and with them the unbelievable news that the enemy had retreated just as he had success within his grasp. He had fought us to the point of exhaustion; his losses had not been light, but the unequal fight had all but worn us down. Now came the call for a still greater effort from each platoon, section and man as we hurried after the retreating foe, harassing the stragglers, and telling the natives that we were still there and still able to give retribution and to reward loyalty.

The Company had held at bay for ten days a regiment of two and a half thousand with its mortars and mountain guns and its natives.

That was the "August Show".

SPECIAL MENTIONS :

APRIL MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 2nd, at ANZAC HOUSE BASEMENT

Guest Speaker

Come along and show your interest and appreciation

Don't Forget ANZAC DAY Is Only Just Around the Corner

Get those Medals and polish them up

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ANZAC HOUSE BASEMENT

TUESDAY, JULY 2nd

For the Near Future

COMMANDO CABARET

COTTESLOE SURF PAVILION

TUESDAY, 1st OCTOBER, 1963

(Royal Show Week)

Organise Your Party

Advise any mates you have in other Squadrons

Victorian Vocal Venturings

Committee meeting was held at Bert Tobin's office on Monday, March 4, at 8 p.m. Present were Bruce McLaren in chair, Jock Campbell, Jim Wall, Bluey Southwell, Bert Tobin, George Humphries, George Robinson, and Harry Botterill. Apologies were received from Johnny Roberts and Bill Davidson.

It was decided to have a barbecue on March 24 in the You-Yangs Mountains. This is in Baldy's territory and we are to meet on the Geelong road where Baldy will pick us up and take us to a selected site. A notice will be going out to all members.

Anzac Day arrangements were also made and it will be held in the same venue, Commando Drill Hall in Ripponlea, after the march. This is the big event of the year and we want a big roll up. I have a tape taken at the annual Re-union Din-

ner in Perth with messages from the boys over there to our boys, so come along and hear it and we will send one back to them. Catering arrangements are the same, refreshments available both in solid and liquid form. All we want now is you to come along and make it the best Anzac Day yet.

Bert provided some liquid refreshment at the meeting and our thanks to him also for providing the venue. It made it a very enjoyable meeting.

Jim Fenwick is down at Balcombe doing a three weeks course. If he gets through this he will attain the rank of Warrant Officer, so all the best of luck, Jim. I hope to see Jim off next weekend when he goes back to N.S.W.

Also in the army news is Alan Mitchell who has been promoted to Corporal. Good luck Alan and all the best. Alan is a stalwart of ours particularly during the Melbourne Cup Sweep when he disposes of lots of tickets.

Bernie Callinan is going abroad for six months. With his good wife Naomi, he leaves on April 1 and sails to Japan then flies via the Middle East to England and comes home via America. A combined business and pleasure trip. Should be a beauty and our blessings and wishes for a good trip go with you both. Bernie couldn't make the meeting but now we understand why. He is really busy getting ready for his trip. He is disappointed that he will miss Anzac Day.

Went up to see Ken and Margaret Monk and family last Sunday. There are big things afoot on their farm. They are building a new home. Had to pull down the old place as the only bit of flat land was where the old house was. Made a good job of it too. The footings of the new house are in and it should be finished in about three months time. It's a nice big home and they will be very comfortable in it. Ken and Margaret and family are all well, and I showed them the slides of the films I took in the West.

Johnny Roberts is not getting his "Courier". His present address is 57 Nicholson St., East Co-

Heard This?

I DON'T WANT TO GET WELL

Young Wolfish was due for an operation, and while he was waiting for the big day he found himself being taken care of by a very beautiful young nurse.

"Nurse," said Wolfish, on the morning before his operation, "I'm really crazy for you . . . I don't care if I never get well!"

"Maybe you won't," answered the nurse. "The doctor who is going to operate on you is my fiance, and he saw you kissing me this morning!"

* * *

Method in Her Badness

Millie: "I've got a terrible headache!"

Dillie: "When I have a headache my husband soothes all the pain away; all he has to do is to rub the back of my neck then caress my forehead lightly then plant a little kiss on my mouth and before you know it: no more headache! Why don't you try it?"

Millie: "Think I will. When's your husband get home?"

burg. You must be sending it to the address shown in the Address Book, so please note everybody and change it in your respective books.

I really must get in a plug in here for the Address Book. It proved a wonderful help to us over in the West and both Happy, Bert and self really proved its worth when we made our three day trip down to Albany and back through Manjimup, Harvey, etc., and I only hope that everybody keeps their book up to date when changes of address are printed in the "Courier", because if and when anybody makes an interstate trip it is going to be worth its weight in gold. This is truly one of the best ideas yet and whoever is responsible for it gets my sincere thanks.

I am enclosing a copy of a statement of our Melbourne Cup Sweep drawn last year, and should be of

special interest to members in N.S.W. who gain something from it and it will give them new heart to go harder at it this year, as the more tickets they sell the more they get of it for their own use.

John Sheldrich who has been Adjutant of the No. 2 Commando Co. and has been a very great help to us in the past, has been posted on to another show. He wrote us a very nice letter of appreciation wishing us all the best, and to you John we wish you all the best for the future and have enjoyed our association with you and we are very grateful for all the help you have given us. Harry Smith takes his place as Adj. and we look forward to meeting him and to a very happy association.

Well, folks, that's all the news for now so until next issue all the best. —HARRY BOTTERILL.

2/2 Commando Association of Australia — Victorian Branch

**STATEMENT OF NET PROFIT 1962 MELBOURNE CUP SWEEP
Drawn Thursday, Nov. 1, 1962, at McWhae Avenue, Ripponlea**

	N.S.W.			Vic.			Total		
No. of Tickets sold	1377			3894			5271		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Ticket sales, Cash received	68	17	0	194	14	0	263	11	0
Less Expenses as per Summary below	28	17	8	81	13	6	110	11	2
Net Profit	£39	19	4	£113	0	6	£156	19	10

Summary of Expenses — 1962 Melbourne Cup Sweep

	£ s. d.			£ s. d.		
1st Prize	50	0	0			
2nd Prize	10	0	0			
3rd Prize	5	0	0			
29 Horses at 10/- per horse	14	10	0			
						79 10 0
Printing of 12,000 tickets						20 0 0
Postage, stationery, stamp duty	11	2	11			
Less Stamp duty added to cheques		2	3			
						11 0 8
Total Expenses						£110 11 2

Apportionment of Expenses on Basis of Tickets Sold

	£ s. d.			£ s. d.		
New South Wales	28	17	8			
Victoria	81	13	6			
						£110 11 2

J. P. Wall, Hon. Treasurer

Heard This?

Whenever a lass gets to be putty in a man's hands, she usually ends up in pretty bad shape.

* * *

The Once Over Twice

"Doc," said the chorus girl, "I thought I'd drop in for a thorough check-up. Can you tell me what my symptoms are, if any?"

The doctor smiled gently.

"Well now, Miss," he said, "you look pretty healthy to me but looking at you off-hand I'd say you have two things wrong with you: your slip is showing and you need glasses. That sign on my door says Doctor of Veterinary Medicine!"

* * *

ROYALTY RETAINER

The lease broker had worked hard deep in the heart of Texas getting an oil lease straightened

out for an old coloured woman named Mandy. Finally when the papers all were signed and it was certain that Mandy was to be on easy street for the rest of her life the broker said:

"Well, Mandy, in view of all I have done for you, how about letting me have a little of your royalty?"

"Why, Mister Lease-Man," replied Mandy. "I ain't done nuttin' like dat for ovah 16 years!"

* * *

She's the kind of girl who ripens best under glass, especially if it's full of champagne.

Write to Your Editor:

Col. Doig,
Box T1646,
G.P.O., Perth.

Paste These In Your Hat

ANZAC DAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 25

ANNUAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 2

COMMANDO CABARET

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1

NO -