



# 2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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## *Editorial*

### ON PULLING TOGETHER

The Annual General Meeting has come and gone and once again the Association in W.A. embarks on another year. Each year the Committee starts out with high hopes, only to be frustrated by lack of co-operation before many months are passed.

This is a plea to ALL members to make 1964-65 the year in which they get really behind their Association and make the show really tick. It is most galling to the Management Committee to arrange function after function only to see meagre attendances. There comes the time when through sheer fright at the possibility of a small turn up that guest speakers, etc., from outside the Association are not programmed and so the show as a whole loses a great opportunity for betterment.

The work programme in the coming year could be a very onerous one and will require the complete co-operation of the greatest number of members. For sure during this year the area in Kings Park will be kerbed at the road edge in concrete and at the rear in timber. This will be no mean effort and will require many man-hours to be efficiently carried out. If this task is to fall to the few then they are going to sicken off and the job either half done or good hard working members are going to give the show away. We have sufficient members to make

all our tasks light if all will put their shoulders to the wheel and not leave it to the willing horses.

While it is conceded that members do an outstanding job in fund raising at sweep time this is only a small part of an association's activities and does not really reflect the members' interest in the organisation.

It should not be too much to ask all members to show up at meetings or re-unions at least once a year and metropolitan members should not find it beyond their capacity to attend on at least three or four occasions. It is all a matter of interest. If you are interested it takes a lot of bad weather and other minor interests to keep you away.

Another avenue of assistance is to your journal and its long suffering Editor. Surely it is not asking too much to expect some small contribution from each member per annum. This year could be most awkward for the Editor as it is not planned to run a sweep before next Easter and therefore the inflow of correspondence usually associated with the sweep is not expected to have an effect on the "Courier" in this year.

This is where you, the member, can step into the breach and help the "Courier" to bring to members the news and views of all and sundry.

The Association as such has now

been in operation 18 years and is proceeding into its 19th year and although we can point with pride to an organisation quite the equal of any in Australia we cannot sit back and live on past results. Let history look after itself while we

strain ourselves to formulate the future.

Give your new incoming Committee all the backing you can to make this the greatest year in our history.

## West Australian Whisperings

### Association Activities

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Anzac House Basement on July 7 and despite one of the worst rainstorms on record a satisfactory attendance was noted.

The reports of President, Treasurer, Auditor and Editor revealed that the Association had had a good year. Financially we have never been in a better position, thanks largely to a wonderful effort by Dick Geere as Treasurer. The President's report was comprehensive in the extreme and is published below. The Editor also reported progress as you will see by his report published below.

Much to the sorrow of those present our Secretary, Jack Carey, informed the meeting that he was unavailable for that office this year. This is a big loss to the Association and he will be hard to replace. It is sincerely hoped that he will again be available in the years to come as secretaries of Jack's ability are as rare as rocking horse manure.

The election of officers resulted as follows:

President: Mr. Arthur Smith, re-elected unopposed.

Vice President: Mr. Bill Epps.

Secretary: Mr. Fred Napier.

Treasurer: Mr. Dick Geere.

Editor: Mr. Col Doig.

Auditor: Mr. John Burrridge.

Committee: Messrs. R. Smyth, J. Carey, J. Hason, R. McDonald, B. Lawrence, J. Smailes and G. Fletcher.

During the meeting the President proposed that Mr. Fred Napier be made a Life Member of the Association. Mr. Smith extolled the work that Fred had done for the Branch over many years in his

capacity as Committeeman, Treasurer and private member. The Life Membership was bestowed un-animously.

The matter of having members of other Commando Squadrons as Associate members was debated long and bitterly and eventually the motion was withdrawn by the mover when points of constitutional validity were raised. Eventually it was decided that the Committee have power to invite any of these persons to our functions as guests.

The matter of Australia's defence policy was raised and it was decided that the views of the meeting be conveyed to the R.S.L., pointing out the dissatisfaction of the meeting with the preparedness of Australia's defences and requesting that National Service Training be re-introduced as soon as possible.

It is pleasing to see quite a few new faces on the Management Committee as apart from a new Secretary, who has been a Committee man of long standing, we have absolute new blood in Barry Lawrence, Jim Smailes and Geo. Fletcher, who should bring a wealth of talent to Committee discussions as each in his way is a brilliant man.

Unfortunately both the Treasurer and Editor served notice that this could be their last year of continuous office and members must start and look for replacements next year.

This was probably the best Annual General Meeting for many years and it is hoped that it is a portend for the future that these meetings are at a long last taking their proper place in the members' thinking of Association affairs.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Gentlemen,

This past year has been, for our

Association, a very good one. Much has been planned, and a lot of hard and good work has been done.

Owing to the running of two sweeps during the past year, we are in a happy financial position. Great credit is due to Colin Doig, who, amongst the many other things he does for this Association, organised and conducted these two sweeps. The financial side of our Association has been very capably handled by our treasurer, Mr. Geere.

Our Annual Re-union and Dinner was satisfactory but the attendance was lower than the previous year. We were unlucky in that we held this function on what was probably the wettest night of the year.

As we had purchased our own Union Jack and Australian flag, we flew them along with our own Unit flag, in Honour Avenue, during our Commemoration Service. Seating was provided for the ladies, but the attendance at this service still leaves a lot to be desired.

A change of dates for the service and our Annual Re-union has been discussed in Committee, and the first week in September has been mentioned.

A special committee was appointed to liaise with the 2/5th Association and organise a Ladies' Night. This committee, and co-opted members of our Unit, did a terrific job of organisation and a lot of hard work and time were put in to make this function a success. Once again numbers were against us, and the attendance was not what was expected. A change of date and certainly of venue, is recommended for this function.

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Peter Barden and the co-operation of the Unit personnel at Geraldton we held a very successful Convention in that town during the long weekend in November. We were honoured as the guests of the Northampton Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. at their annual dinner, this being brought about by the efforts of Bill Drage, Joe Brand and Brus Fagg, who are members of this Sub-Branch. On Sunday, during the two minutes silence, we had the honour of laying a wreath on the Memorial in the Geraldton War Cemetery as guests of the Geraldton Sub-Branch of the R.S.L.

Our Children's Christmas Party was revived this year and was held at the Zoological Gardens, South Perth. This was well attended and a good time was had by all. The special committee appointed to deal with this event was well pleased with the results.

Once again we were the guests at a very enjoyable bowls evening at the Maimed and Limbless Association Club. This is an event that surely no one can afford to miss.

We had a nice roll up to our own Bucks' Night and along with our guests we had a very enjoyable evening.

Organised by Arthur Marshall was a cricket match, Town vs. Country, played at Harvey. This surely must become an annual event as those who made the journey from Perth voted it one of the most enjoyable days ever. Clarrie Turner and his wife and family were present, and assisted Arthur Marshall and his wife to keep things going smoothly.

#### **Anzac Day:**

A wreath was laid on the State War Memorial at the Dawn Service and our flags were raised to half mast on Honour Avenue. The main march was well attended, the Unit marching under its new flag, and the usual refreshments and get-together took place after the march.

Attendances at our monthly meetings have been of a fairly good average. During this past year we held one picture night, had guest speakers on two nights, a rifle shoot, a couple of sports nights, and some discussion nights.

#### **Honour Avenue:**

Great credit must be given to Mr. Bill Epps for the amount of work he has carried out here over the past year. Not only does he keep our lawn nicely mowed, he attends to any damaged sprinklers, and informs the Committee when a busy bee is necessary or any other work is required. There have been five busy bees in Honour Avenue over the past year, and the area has been top dressed on two occasions. The sign boards have had the lettering coloured, and a general air of improvement is evident in this area. Through our Vice President, Mr. Bob Smythe, negotiations for kerbing our portion of Honour Avenue are pro-

ceeding, via the Kings Park Board. We hope soon to have something definite on this subject to tell this Association.

The "Courier", as you all know has appeared regularly, and is of the same high standard that we have come to expect and always get from our Editor, Mr. Doig. This "Courier" is truly the lifeblood of our Association.

Now it is my unhappy duty to report the death of Jeff Williams (better known to us as Rocky), early in September of last year. His widow and family are being constantly visited by members of this Association, who are keeping a watchful eye on their wants and cares.

Bill Howell, whose home in Manurah, was extensively damaged in a small cyclone last month, has been visited and help has been offered to him when he needs it.

Your Committee met on 12 occasions during the year, and attendances were generally good. The special committees formed met on other than our usual Committee meeting nights, so were able to report to and keep the general Committee informed of what was taking place in their particular projects.

And now, gentlemen, I would like to say "thank you" to all members of the Executive and Committee, over which I have had the honour to preside during the past year. To list the work performed individually would take far too much time and space. Sufficient therefore to say that each member has done everything that has been asked of him, and has done it willingly and conscientiously.

Gentlemen, it has been a great honour to have been your President for the past year.

—A. SMITH, President.

#### EDITORIAL REPORT

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

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

Once again progress can be reported and the journal continues to give service. Contributions varied little from previous years but on this occasion the influx of letters during the conduct of the sweep was to some extent greater

due to the fact that two sweeps were conducted in the year. Letters from members in the Eastern States were once again high on the list of contributions and are much appreciated.

For the year just completed only eight "Couriers" were issued, the months of December, February April and May being excluded. The total cost of printing being £104-15/- and bulk postage £3/19/6. You will readily agree that this is fantastic value for money expended.

The present mailing list is comprised as follows:

W.A. . . .	193
Vic. . . .	119
N.S.W. . . .	114
Qld. . . .	29
S.A. . . . .	18
Tas. . . . .	9
A.C.T. . . .	4
Overseas . .	5

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The address list is now comparatively up to date and there remains little that can be done to improve the distribution of the journal.

Once again the "features" section of the paper has had a rough spin and owing to pressure of other business your Editor has found it difficult to continue to produce "Historically Yours". However, there is now a reasonable pool of material available to keep the "feature" section occupied for quite a few issues.

My thanks once again to Bill Epps for a terrific job in printing and despatching the "Courier" and keeping the address list current. This entails no end of work and scrutiny of all inward mail to make certain no changes of address and additions to the list are omitted. Thanks are also due to Keith Hayes for provision of stencils for the addressing machine and the high quality of these shows up in sharp relief with the old ones.

Thanks once again to Harry Botterill in Victoria, Ron Trengrove in N.S.W. and Peter Barden in Geraldton for their regular contributions. Their contributions have maintained their usual high standard.

To all others who have sent in contributions, I extend my sincere thanks and hope that they will continue in the future.

To the publishers, "The Swan Express" of Midland, I would like to say once again a sincere thank you for a job well done and a paper well produced. The way in which dead lines have been met has saved your Editor a considerable amount of worry and I am thankful to have such a co-operative firm doing the publishing.

My efforts over the past year have been well below 100 per cent due probably to the fact that having held the position for such a long time a natural lethargy is inclined to set in. Time is becoming an increasing difficulty to me, and my other troubles also do not make for being efficient editorship. However, if you see fit to re-elect me to the office I will do my best to carry out the duties to the utmost of my ability.

Mr. President, I wish the "Courier" all success in the years ahead.  
—C. D. DOIG, Editor.

### Committee Comment

The first meeting of the new Management Committee was held at Anzac House on Tuesday, July 21, when an excellent roll-up of members came together.

The President welcomed new members and congratulated old members on their re-election to office.

The Treasurer presented his usual comprehensive financial statement which once again showed that the finances were in good shape.

The President presented a report from Mr. Smyth regarding Kings Park in which he stated that he was still doing business with the Main Roads Department regarding specifications, etc., for the kerbing. It was also reported that Terry Paul had delivered the necessary timber for the kerbing of the rear of the area and this was at present held at Mr. Rod Dhu's residence. A sub-committee comprising Mr. Smith, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Doig, and Mr. Hasson, was formed to look into the best possible manner in which to lay this kerbing.

The programme for the early portion of the year was arranged as follows:

September 1: Business session.

September 5 (Saturday): Annual Re-union.

September 6 (Sunday): Commemoration Service.

October 7: Sports against Korean Veterans Association.

The matter of a Children's Party was deferred until next Committee Meeting to enable members to think over the best possible type of party and date on which it should be held as the whole matter was considered to require possible change.

Members expressed satisfaction at the better roll up at the Annual General Meeting and all were satisfied that a good meeting was possible if every avenue to attract members was exploited.

### Personalities

Since last the "Courier" went to press the Association has been shocked by the tragic death of Bill Roger-Davidson and his father in Victoria. Full details are given in the Victorian Notes in this issue. Bill was a most loveable character and a wonderful soldier and who should know better than your Editor as Bill was in his Section. He never shirked a duty and was always the most pleasant of companions, the true "Good Cobber" that is said to be the highest estate of Australian mateship. Bill was a true blue member of the Victorian Branch and all in all a wonderful asset to the Unit and the Association and to see one so young tragically struck down in the prime of life is truly regrettable. The sympathy of the whole of the Association goes out to the loved ones left behind and we only hope that time the wonderful healer, will help to salve this irreparable blow. It is left to say "Vale Bill Roger-Davidson, great mate and good citizen".

Sadly we have also to chronicle the death of another good friend of the Association in Mr. Bill Holder, secretary of City of Perth Sub Branch R.S.L., and father of our member Harry. Bill had been very ill for some considerable time and in a way his death was a happy release from suffering. It was a great pity that such a jovial and human soul should not have been spared to have many more years of



enjoyment. Bill probably did more than anyone else as far as the W.A. Branch was concerned to put the Association on an even keel. It was through his good offices that we have always had a permanent address with the City of Perth Sub Branch R.S.L. and this in itself has made for steady and easy organisation. He was the soul of co-operation when it came to arranging functions and sports nights with R.S.L. gear and more often than not joined in himself. Our sympathy to Harry and to his wife on their loss. Arthur Smith and your Editor were honoured to be pall bearers at a relatively large funeral.

During the month members in Bill Wilks and Dave Ritchie both lost their mothers. Of course with the passing of time it must be expected that parents of members should pass away but it is none the less an unhappy occasion. Please accept our sincere condolences in your loss, Bill and Dave.

Just as we go to press we hear the saddening news that George Strickland has had a double loss in his family. Both his father and mother passed away within a couple of days of each other. The deepest sympathy of all members goes out to George at this time.

In happier vein allow me to pass on the information that Helen and Joe Poynton are the proud parents of a baby girl. Our congrats Joe and Helen and I believe that the Geraldton Convention had a minor something to do with the result. Good luck in a big way to both of you.

Ted Loud was in town recently and left me with a fantastic headache from which I haven't properly recovered. Still have a slight twitch in the left eye brought about by looking too long and too often at the beverage when it was amber. Ted said he had a wonderful time on his trip to Singapore last year and can thoroughly recommend this trip to anyone requiring a good holiday at reasonable prices. He was in Perth for attention to his fangs and threatens to be back again in November. Yours Truly going bush!

One wet Saturday afternoon recently made the fatal blunder of going to the Subiaco Hotel prior to going to Suby Oval and there lying

in wait to trap unwary visitors was Terry Paul and Rod Dhu. Didn't make the footy, it was too wet anyhow! Terry had just brought down a truck load of timber for the Association and tried hard to get me to assist with the off-loading but no dice on such a miserable day. His wife and girls were both getting square eyed viewing the Dhu television. Roddy also threatened me with Joe Brand's company but Joe, that wise old owl, must have looked into the crystal ball and decided that this wasn't his day.

Most pleasant to see Jack Denman, Merv Cash, Jim Smailes, Barry Lawrence, Tom Nesbit, Don Murray, and many others at the Annual General Meeting. We have hopes that one year all these will be fitting into office and carrying on the good work.

Sightings of members has been a bit rare of late, must be the damnable weather, nearly 90 per cent of wet days since the start of June, that has kept them at home. Eric Smyth was down from Geraldton on a business conference and was able to see him if only briefly. Don Turton, after a long period, also showed up on a couple of occasions and we were able to pound one another's lugs for a while.

Gerry Maley is one who stepped down from office this year, finding the strain of the service station and his new home just a little too weighty to fit in with Association commitments.

Our congratulations to Bill Epps on being elected Vice President. Bill would, without a doubt, be the hardest working member of the Association as he is in everything from Kings Park to "Courier" and any honour the Association can place in his direction is fully merited.

Rumour has it that Mick Calcutt is about to retire from work and live a life of ease. God help the unwary. Batten down the hatches you availables as the little man is on the war path!

## Heard This?

"What caused the death of the tattooed lady's new husband?"

"He smothered to death trying to read between the covers."

## Victorian Vocal Venturings

A very tragic accident on the Queen's Birthday weekend when Bill Roger-Davidson and his father were knocked down and killed by a car when they were leaving the St. Kilda football after the game.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife and three children for their sad loss.

Bill has always been a real stalwart of our Association, and we are going to miss him very much.

We have had a couple of visits from Alan Stewart who has been down on business from Canberra. I had the pleasure of meeting Alan and having a drink with him and Bert Tobin and Jim Wall on his first visit. I couldn't make it for his second visit but I believe a few of the boys met him.

Alan doesn't seem to have changed much from when he was living down here. Seems to like Canberra a lot. Is nearer his old stamping grounds and manages to get in plenty of shooting and fishing.

On the Queen's Birthday weekend I had the pleasure of visiting Tom Foster at Dutson Downs, near Sale. Spent the weekend with my son David, at one of Tom's houses at Locks Port on one of the lakes at Lake Entrance. We liked it so much that we are going to spend our holidays in September there.

Tom, who is managing Dutson Downs, has turned this place into something really worth seeing, and it is quite obvious that he has put a lot of work into it and is justly proud of his efforts. I would recommend to anybody who is down that way to pop in and have a look around. Tom and his wife Mary, will really make you feel at home.

I had a letter from Happy Green halgh from Nungindie. He is still waiting for a relief so that he can take up his appointment at McLean.

Well, that's all the news for now so until next time, cheerio.

—HARRY BOTTERILL.

## Heard This?

### INSPECTED

The little wife was all set to start making tiny garments, but she wanted to be sure. A thorough examination at the doctor's office resulted in a routine prescription, some routine advice, after which the M.D. did a curious thing. He reached into his desk drawer, took out a tiny rubber stamp of indelible ink and made a neat imprint on the little wife's tummy and then instructed her to get dressed and go home.

Back in her apartment, she and her husband puzzled over the tiny imprint, with letters so small they could not be distinguished. Finally the husband got out a powerful magnifying glass and they were both astonished to read through the lens: "When this is large enough to read—come back!"

### HEARSAY

A friend was visiting a pair of newlyweds who had been married for about a month. He missed the last train back to the city, which necessitated his staying over night.

"We're a little short on sleeping accommodations," apologized the young husband, "and I'm afraid you'll have to sleep in my twin bed."

The guest, a bachelor who was somewhat on the fussy side, asked: "Is it soft? Is the mattress comfortable to sleep on?"

"Why . . . er . . . I suppose so."

### BIG BANG

"Say, old boy, what caused that terrific explosion at your house last night?"

"The whole thing was touched off by a little powder on my sleeve."

Address All Association Correspondence to Box T1646, G.P.O. Perth

# Historically Yours!

(Continued)

## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE ROAD TO BIBICUCU

Start for the interior — Vegetation on the way — Roads — Camp on Erlura — Mt. Tehula — Kelehoko and its flora — Pass a night under the eaves of a native dwelling — Huts in trees — Bed of the River Komai — Pass a night on Ligidoik Mountain — Character of country — Valley of the Waimatang Kaimauk — Singular scene — Unburied relatives — Burial rites — Gravesticks — Rites attending a king's death — Swangies — Lose our way — Flora on Turskain mountain — Rajah of Turskain's — Botanical excursions — The rites of the sacred Luli and the choosing of warriors — The Rajah.

After many hours spent in arranging the burdens of the different ponies and men, I despatched the cavalcade at 11 o'clock (March 30). The officer expressed the greatest astonishment at all absence of timidity on A's part on being left alone; but, on being reminded that she was an "English Senhora", he appeared satisfied that the fact was sufficient to explain the phenomenon. He encouraged her with assurances that there was nothing to fear for my safety, swearing to her on the cross-hilt of his sword that if anything befell me it would be over his body, and solemnly charged also the little old woman who was to be her factotum, that if she failed in her duty she might expect, on my return, all the calamities that her superstition could picture to her. Having constructed for myself a saddle and stirrups out of my Ulster coat and a rope looped at both ends, and given A. a last assuring word, I followed the cavalcade, ascending the well-known path above our hut to 2500 feet, where, turning eastward along the summit of the ridge, we travelled parallel to the coast, on our way, in the first instance, to the Rajah of Turskain's.

The vegetation was almost exclusively Melastomaceae, with acacias, tamarinds, and gum trees, while in the narrowest and most inaccessible gorges tall graceful tree-ferns abounded among thick shrubbery, whose components I could not identify, and in many places broad areas of *Setaria* and *Paspalum* grass took the place of all other vegetation.

No such thing as a road exists anywhere in Timor. All the paths follow the knife ridges of the hills, or skirt along the face of precipitous slopes, invariably in deep ditch like trenches, out of which a stumble would fatally land either horse or man hundreds of feet below. The Timor horses are wonderfully sure-footed, and seem quite accustomed to these difficult ways.

Having started late in the forenoon, it was found impossible to reach, before sunset the hut where we had intended to camp. As we had no food with us for the men, we were compelled to practise the highwayman's art on the numerous natives loaded with maize, whom we met going towards Dilly. From each of them, the rajah's officer—an official of their own king—demanded a few heads, which after some display of authority, were generally given up. After several acts of this kind, I was surprised to see that those meeting us even an hour later, on catching sight of us a long distance off, darted aside down the first declivity out of our way, and, laden though they were, generally managed to escape. The intelligence of our coming had been conveyed to them from the nearest hill-top the first mulcted people had reached. It is astonishing with what ease and accuracy the Timorese can convey intelligence from one mountain crest to another. Nearly every man carries in his wallet (which he never travels without) a short wooden pipe, by whose curious notes he can convey signal sounds to a long

distance; but by the unaided voice they are able, in a series of what seem only demoniacal howls, to hold long dialogues from peak to peak across wide valleys. It was in this way doubtless that our men were nearly done out of their supper, which according to the laws of their kingdom the officer was within his right in demanding.

Reaching about five o'clock a little plateau, known as Eriura, at 3,500 feet above the sea, where we found a well and several tall gum trees with their stems hollowed out by fire, we camped for the night. After seeing the baggage stowed inside the trees, I occupied the time till dark in assiduously collecting the herbaceous plants which dotted the ground. The district being notorious for robbers, we picketed the horses at dark within a quadrangle of fires—not an unnecessary precaution; for in the middle of the night we heard very suspicious low whistle-calls several times repeated, which gave vigour to the "Alerto!" of our guard. The Timorese are very clever horse-stealers, I understand, and, by abducting them off from the very side of their owners, the astuter thieves among them have obtained the reputation of being Swangies, who have the power of making their bodies invisible.

Next morning at sunrise, after I had taken a round of bearings, we started in a south-easterly direction, continually climbing as on the previous day, along hog's-back ridges and round precipitous gorges. On the bare red clay of Mount Tehula, at 4,200 feet, I gathered, with great delight, a new species of Epacridaceae a heath-like plant, which formed interrupted shrubberies all over its summit. From Tehula by a shallow saddle, we reached Kelehoko, 4,600 feet, where unhorsing to rest for an hour, I made a most interesting collection of plants, many of them belonging to European families and genera, violets (*V. patrinii*), geraniums, bright azure Campanulaceae on the bare red soil, oxalis, and a new species of Orchids, *Diuris fryana* of Ridley; and near it, among the grass, a new bright species of the Scrophulariaceae, belonging to the genus *Buchnera*. Hence winding down the valley of the Komai, on foot, as the path

was very steep and unsafe, we reached about half-way the house-cluster of a native known to my guide, who had been over all this country during various revolts.

As it was beginning to rain, we decided to camp here for the night and asked to occupy a part of a man's house. To this he replied that his dwelling was at our disposal, but for our own sakes he had rather we did not go inside, as a child of his had been buried only the day before, and he was ashamed of the smell left by the dead body; but we might, if we liked, occupy the platform below the eaves. We accordingly spent the night in this rather cramped situation, completely protected from rain, and in the morning discovered that the whole story of the child's death was a myth; but I have no doubt that we were more comfortable outside, if the wreaths of smoke that oozed through the wicker-work sides of the house gave us any idea of the purity of the atmosphere within.

The Timorese, differing from the peoples of the Indo-Malayan region or of the Tenimber Islands, do not live in villages, but more like the Buruese, in a cluster of family residences, or in isolated habitations often far distant from any other dwelling. This Fatete homestead, a single family abode of one or two houses, was placed in the centre of an enclosure strongly fenced in by high palings made of long itudal planks and logs of trees intertwined with growing bamboos and thorny shrubs. The gateway was closed by a door of a broad solid slab of wood, swung on its lintels by the two pivots left projecting at the upper and lower corners, and secured by a bar of a slender tree. Just inside the gate stood a little shed, occupied every night by a sentinel on guard, and where I observed a "dummy" head on the top of a pole as a warning to thieves and robbers of the reception that awaited them.

Within the enclosure were stockaded wallowing-pools for the owner's buffaloes, and stalls for his goats and ponies in times of alarm, while the ubiquitous pig, his most treasured possession, had its usual quarters beneath the dwelling.

The houses were of bamboo, the walls—in which there were no win-

dows—being of several layers of wicker work matting, raised several feet off the ground on strong pillars. The floor projected some feet beyond the walls all round, forming the platform under the eaves, on which we camped. Their dwellings are not divided into apartments, but there are stall-like divisions, which can be closed by curtains, and are used for sleeping in. A spot is always railed off for the sacred (luli) spear, knife and gun, before which the head of the house makes a propitiatory offering to speed his particular undertakings.

Outside the enclosure, in the tops of the taller gum trees, were curious miniature huts, which I at first thought, from the absence of any ladder, might be pigeon houses; but they turned out to be their granaries—reached by climbing the trees—and the depositories of the more valuable portion of their household effects, such as plates, bowls of European make, and cloths. They are invariably placed in high trees whose trunk was divided into four diavicating arms, on which two diagonal planks can be fixed to support a firm floor. They are said to be little subject to the depredations of rats, but they seemed most tempting objects to every prowling thief. It may be, however, that they are protected by the sanctity of the taboo—or, in their own language, are luli.

Next day, descending by the usual ditch-like paths and zig-zagging down land-slipped gorges we reached, at 3,000 feet above the sea, the bed of the river Komai, a wide channel several hundred yards in breadth, paved with soft blue-black pebbles and sand, through which instead of one large river numerous small independent streamlets, some of them pure and sparkling, but most of them of a blue inky hue, were meandering their course. A few of these slaty stones were of red or yellowish colour; I myself observed no granite, but my boy brought me a porphyritic nodule.

Our way lay down the river bed, the only good road we had yet traversed, between banks, from 100 to 150 feet in height of perfectly horizontal stratified pebbles, laid down in the bed of some form

er lake or estuary through which the river, by the slow elevation of the land is now cutting its way. Tall casuarinas, loaded with stag-horn-ferns, grew at the bases of these pebbly cliffs and dotted the dry portions of the river bed.

When we had reached a point 2,000 feet above the sea, we left the river, turning to the right up the long steep slope of the Ligoik Mountain, on whose top at 3,400 feet we unhorsed to lunch close to the barricaded dwelling of a sub-chief of the Motael kingdom in which we still were. Notwithstanding the threats of the official of their own kingdom in attendance on me, we could not succeed in purchasing anything of an eatable kind except some Indian corn for the men, and had to be content with the meagre provisions I had myself brought.

Just as we were about to resume our march rain commenced to fall in torrents, compelling us to demand shelter, which was ungraciously conceded to us, as on the previous night below the eaves of a most wretched hovel.

From our elevated position the whole country within the sweep of the eye was of a most singular conformation, being entirely composed of knife-edges, peaks, and precipitous slopes of deep valleys. It surprised me to observe that it was the most inaccessible peaks and isolated crags that were crowned by dwellings, hidden from sight generally among groves of trees. It was easy to see that I was travelling in a lawless land where every man's hand was against his neighbour, and where therefore every man was constantly and restlessly on the outlook.

On the following morning (April 2), after I had taken a series of bearings to all the prominent peaks, we continued our journey south-eastward, descending 450 feet to the Vekele stream, only to wend our way up again 550 feet to the crest of Lebetutu, over a bleak, stony, almost grassless country. No sooner had we reached the crest than we began to descend once more—but less abruptly—into the wide valley of the Wai-Matang-Kaimauk. The change to a new set of muscles was at first very agreeable, but ere long I found myself wishing that we were going up,



the very reverse of what I was praying for just before we came over the ridge above us.

There was no improvement in the road, which as hitherto wound along in an interminable drain, barely wide enough for single file, worn in some places so deep and narrow as to admit only with difficulty our baggage-laden ponies, which, startled by the grating of their burdens on the sides of the defile, were constantly bolting—crashing along headlong, till their panniers were left behind, or them selves jammed fast utterly blocking the way, as the towering mass of the mountain on the one hand, and the precipitous cliffs on the other, or precipitous cliffs on both hands, prevented all passage forwards or backwards. It seems to me impossible for a proper road ever to be made across the island, for, from the mountainous character of the country and the unstable nature of the soil, the best constructed way must inevitably disappear each rainy season. "The land of Timor is always falling", is the natives' own account of the country.

Looking down into this valley, the scenery was of a most singular and striking description. The river was itself the most prominent feature, like a livid blue-black band drawn athwart the landscape, clouding rather than enlivening it. On the further side the mountains, sculptured into peaks and crags, rose so precipitously as to seem insurmountable, while their slopes were disfigured by perpendicular livid blue escarpments thrown down by landslips into the valley; on our own side of the river several giant, wildly picturesque trihedral pillars of rock, all of them of nearly equal height, reared their crags above the level of the mountain slope for some 500 feet. Between two of these great pillars the homestead of the Dato of the Suku of Sauo, was most romantically and enticingly situated, and as it was already late in the afternoon I decided to claim his hospitality for the night.

Before reaching his homestead I noted at a scented lemon shrub the first butterfly—a *Papilio*—I had seen since leaving Fatunaba. Indeed, life of all kinds had been exceedingly conspicuous by its ab-

sence; save a scarlet *Trichoglossus* or a cockatoo flying across our path, and a few crows at Erlura, I had seen no birds, and the vegetation since crossing the Ligoik river had been very poor indeed. A few casuarinas acacias, gum-trees, and some rough-leaved *Compositae* being the only vegetable forms.

The slopes on the other side looked somewhat more tree dotted however, but the bare red ground displayed itself over a large part of its area. A few hundred yards from the homestead gate we passed a granary looking hut in the top of a high tree with a number of bundles dangling from its floor. On inquiring what they were, I was surprised to be told that they were dead bodies—folded at the thighs, and wrapped in mats—relatives of the Dato waiting to be buried!

Entering through a high barred gateway, we found the homestead to consist of eight or ten well-built houses of a somewhat different style of architecture from that prevalent near the coast. Surrounded by a high stone wall surmounted by a cactus hedge, and built on a rocky buttress jutting out over a precipitous gorge, it was unapproachable except on the one side by which we entered.

When we had settled in the empty guarda to which we were at once conducted by the Dato himself, the first civility and token of friendship that passed between the chief and my Hindu guide, as representing me, was the exchange of siri, pinang and chalk. Each prepared his quantum, and stuffed it into his mouth, but before adding to it the chalk, of which each had taken the proper quantity into the hollow of his hand, "Mamam?" (may I eat?), said my guide, with an obeisance, following the proper etiquette, to which the Dato replied, "Maman" (eat). This little ceremony had an instant effect in loosening the tongues of our hosts, who kept up an unbroken dialogue till long after dark.

Just at sunset we were surprised by the intrusion of a man, who beat a long and vigorous tattoo on a drum suspended in the centre of the building, to give, as was explained to us, information to the neighbourhood that the remains of



the father and of some other relatives of the Dato—an old white-haired man—which had been dangling some 30 years in the tree-top which we had just passed, were at last to be buried, and that every night till the feast was ready the drum would be beat at sunset. I had observed an unwonted activity of rice and Indian corn stamping, and remarked the wealth of pigs and goats that we had to make our way through as we entered all now explained as preparations against the day of burial.

When a member of a family dies, at least three duties are imperative on the surviving relatives before the body can be buried. First, every blood relative without exception is bound to give, either in person or by proxy, a gift of greater or less magnitude to the deceased. On arriving where the dead body is, each donor places his gifts on or near the corpse, and within its hearing fires off as many shots of his gun as he can afford, for the departed. The other essentials are a death and burial feast.

If the defunct has been a lowly person with few relatives, a small feast will suffice to satisfy the demands of custom. If, however, he have been of some rank, with many relatives and a wide acquaintance, these must be on a scale commensurate with his position; and so serious are the demands that custom requires, that the death feast alone often reduces the family to abject poverty, necessitating the delay of the funeral for months, years, or even a whole century, till such time, in fact, as the relatives and descendants are able to provide the necessary costly feast. The corpse, which has been lying where it died during these first tedious ceremonies, is then folded at the hips, bundled up in a mat and suspended by a cord below the floor of the curious dovecot like huts in the trees of which I have spoken, to wait interment; or in some districts it is placed on a bier in a little hut prepared for it near the dwelling of the nearest relative.

If a son die before his father's remains have been committed to the ground, the primary and imperative duty of burial devolves on his heir with his other obligations. The knowledge of "who is who"

among the various dangling remnants of humanity is handed down from each inheritor to each succeeding heir of the obligation! When at last sufficient buffaloes, pigs, goats, Indian corn, rice, and kanipa for a feast in accordance with the rank of the deceased have been amassed, the body, in such condition as it happens to be, is laid, attired and ornamented in its best garments and finery, in a short wooden coffin dug out of a block of wood, along with the various gifts which the relatives had perhaps decades before bestowed on it, and the whole, wrapped in a "patola", or ornamented cerecloth, is committed to the grave amid the firing of guns and the wailing of women.

From the time the funeral company arrives, which is generally many days before that actually appointed for the interment, buffaloes and horses, sheep and pigs are ruthlessly butchered to satisfy the insatiable appetites of these savages, who devour it half-cooked, and whose drink throughout the whole period of the ceremonies is confined to the strongest and coarsest arrack. Under the influence of this stimulant the women starting up, and falling into a ring, each beating a round drum, commence to dance, going round and round in a circle, at first slowly, then by degrees faster and faster, till they become thoroughly excited.

Shouting and bawling out unintelligible words or sentences, they constantly increase the pace of their prance and the din of their voices, till the men at last becoming excited also, dress themselves in their war feathers and accoutrements, and brandishing their swords, join in the drunken and demoniacal scene, which continues to increase in fury till the wearied-out frames of the performers sink through utter exhaustion, which it often requires, so mad is their frenzy, a whole circuit of the sun to produce. In such a scene the Timorese appear as pure savages.

When these orgies at last come to a close, the skulls and cheekbones of the slain herds are strewn over the ground among the stones heaped upon it at the time of burial; or in the case of persons of rank or importance the jaw-bones and horns are inserted into holes



## Random Harvest

**JOHN BURRIDGE, writes from "Overseas":**

I thought it was high time I did my bit for the "Courier", so will give an outline of the trip to far.

Firstly Joan and I are very lucky to be travelling in a foursome. Four can do so much more than a couple and can generate enthusiasm and a levity which is impossible with just two. This is particularly so when one is fortunate enough to have such travelling companions as John and Joan Stewart.

We've had a real ball since we left and have laughed our way to Singapore to Bangkok to Birut to Athens. Right now we're soaking up culture like one of the millions of sponges that Athenians sell to each other. Did you know that Athena was the daughter of Zeus—King of the Gods? It seems that Zeus had a hell of a headache one day and in desperation called in Vulcan. Vulcan hit old Zeus a beaut on the back of the nut and out came Athena. I don't quite see the value of all this deep stuff but one is certainly inspired at the tragic beauty of the ruins of the Parthenians on the Acropolis of Athens. This magnificent structure stood erect throughout the centuries, respected by friend and foe alike, then some 150 years ago a Turkish commander gave the order for bombardment. The result is a monument to the stupidity and futility of man's inhumanity to man.

In Beirut we all smoked the hubble bubble pipe and I won £18 at the Casino at roulette. What a floor show! Not only the bare top look but very nearly the bare bottom look also.

In Bangkok we had races in the motorised tri-shas—reminiscent of the Timor donkey cart races so many years ago. We also ate traditional Thai food reclining on rugs and cushions with our right ears tastefully bedecked with a garland of jasmine. If I could only have got a photo of old Stewart I could have retired on the hush money!

Fortunately we've all got stomachs like emus and we always make straight for the local grub in a big way. We've eaten not only

some extraordinarily interesting food, but some that is downright unmentionable!

Our next port of call is Vienna, then to Northern Europe, Scandinavia and London.

I'll write you more from time to time.

**RIP McMAHON, of Club Hotel, Southern Cross, W.A., writes:**

Enclosing sweep butts and cash. Sorry to be running late with them but owing to a change of address I never received them till last week. Best of luck with the sweep and regards all round.

**CHARLIE KING, of Wilfrey Road, Canning Vale, W.A., writes:—**

Please find enclosed cash and butts for the sweep.

Pay us a visit when you have the time. You and the boys are always welcome. All the best.

**E. HOFFMAN, of P.O. Pophying, via Kalgoorlie, W.A., writes:—**

After 16 years digging the same bloody hole, chasing the elusive yellow metal, it doesn't leave me with much scope for a letter. So here's the usual.

Regards to all and thanks a lot.

**"Doc" WHEATLEY, of 253 Fulham Street, Cloverdale, W.A., writes:**

I've sold out at last and am now domiciled at the above address.

There are all the usual jobs to do with a new house and we have been flat out, but still have a lot to do.

Just as well I got out when I did as the prices of tomatoes have been terrible from the growers' point of view, of course.

I will drop in and see you some time soon. Till then all the best to the gang.

Am enclosing butts and cheque.

**TERRY PAUL, of P.O. Boyanup Brook, W.A., writes:—**

Put all these tickets in my name. I am out of a cheque butt at present so will send you the money during the week. Will send this from Bunbury R.S.L. show by somebody going back to Perth. I nearly forgot them.

**DOUG FULLARTON, of Donnelly River Mill, via Bridgetown, W.A., writes:—**

Herewith ticket butts and cash. Running late as usual but these should be in time.

Will be in Perth for a few days over Easter and will see you then and indulge in one or two.

Sighted Rowan Robinson and Bernie Langridge a couple of times. All appear in the best of health.

Best wishes for a successful sweep.

**BERNIE LANGRIDGE, of Donnybrook, W.A., writes:—**

As you will see by the date on the cheque I had this ready almost a month ago. I have been trying to arrange something with the local R.S.L. but have not had any luck. If you feel like a break any time you know you are most welcome here, just drop in on us and we will be delighted.

Will write a long overdue letter when the fruit is nearly finished.

Our very best wishes to you and the gang.

**TOM CROUCH, of R.M.B. 11, Donnelly Mail, Mangimup, W.A., writes:—**

Sory to be so long winded about the returns. Do whatever you like with the balance.

The fire danger was too acute down here for me to make Harvey but I hope you all had an enjoyable day.

Sighted "Youngie" the other day looking lean and bronzed, the typical outdoor man. It appears that he is wedded to the north.

Saw Bob Palmer on his annual pilgrimage to Nornalup. Couldn't mistake him at 1,000 yards. Still the same sardonic grin.

Look out Sydney. The Old Rowley is on his way over. Been awarded a free trip for his ability at selling McCullochs, for heavens sake don't call them chain saws.

Saw Handsome Colin Criddle's photo in the paper with his hell divers. Must be real crazy.

Have had a very long dry summer down here. Less than two inches of rain since October last. Am looking for a break at Easter and to hell with the Apple Festival.

Noticed Bernie Langridge had a stud sheep clearing sale recently.

Appeared to have done reasonably well for British Breed sheep. Noticed Joe Brand's clearing sale advert, too.

Well will endeavour to write again during the winter. May be in town for the beef breeds bull sale at the end of April.

I think a sweep on the Sydney Cup is a better proposition than the Kalgoorlie Cup.

Fancy Ron Trengrove picking flowers. Best wishes to everyone.

**ROY WATSON, of 18 Steven St., Fremantle, W.A., writes:—**

Just a few lines to wish you all the best for a successful cup sweep this year, also to send regards to all the boys.

Nothing very exciting going on here, although we've been giving the prawns a run for their money over the past few weeks, but they are on the way out now.

In a hurry as usual so I'll sign off now.

**REG HARRINGTON, of Anaro, Wyening, W.A., writes:—**

Once again I'm guilty of delay. Am enclosing butts and a cheque. Regarding the cheque, some time back we received quite an elaborate detail of a memorial to be erected at Tidal River. I intended subscribing to that but have let things slip. Would you, if the fund is still open and the project still on, could you forward any surplus to the appropriate authority. So long for now.

## *Heard This?*

### ON THE RISE

Before the days of miracle drugs it was customary to treat certain diseases of a social nature with mercury.

Rastus met Rufus on the street one day and they fell to comparing notes in this respect.

"Lawse," said Rufus, "ah has so much mercury in me dat ah is fo' pounds heavier dan ah was befo' ah went to de doctor."

"Dat's nothin'," scoffed Rastus. "Why man, ah has so much mercury in me dat ah is nine foot two inches tall in de summer time."



*Remember These . . .*

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# ANNUAL RE-UNION

**SATURDAY**

**5th September**

**ANZAC HOUSE BASEMENT**

# COMMEMORATION SERVICE

**SUNDAY**

**6th September**

**HONOUR AVENUE, KINGS PARK**

Make Your Arrangements Early