



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Editorial

The Aftermath of the Great Safari

This Editorial is not written to tell the story of the Great Safari, but to try and bring out the achievements of this grand tour.

Whatever we hoped the Safari would do for us was excelled by at least a million per cent. It was expected when the touring reunion started that those participating would have a wonderful holiday and that great good would emanate to the other states. This was the underestimation of the year!

As one speaker put it "This was the greatest Shot in the Arm the Association could possibly have got". Another person discussing the outcome of the Safari said "If the Association was a live and good one before it will now live forever". If ever comradeship was re-cemented then this occurred at the reunions in the various states. It was possible to actually feel the great enjoyment that our mates and their families felt to be together again and not only relive the past, but feel a boundless enthusiasm for the present and future. There is not the slightest doubt that everyone we met wants the Association to go on and proceed to greater heights.

The lengths that the members in all the states visited went to, to provide for our enjoyment can only be described as fantastic and the chances made available to meet mates was just too terrific for words. Granted

some of us had changed in appearance quite considerably and it was difficult at first meeting to put names on persons, but after initial re-introduction, the game was on and the old memories revived.

One of the things that struck most at heart was the fact that not only were members in the East meeting us for the first time for many years, but also were meeting some of the chaps in their own states for the first time in many a long day.

As the Safari was in its concluding stages the N.S.W. Branch was busily preparing to repeat the performance in W.A. in the not too distant future. This only shows just how much they thought of this reunion.

From the point of view of those who travelled from W.A. it must be said that all had a marvellous trip and a wonderful holiday and this Safari will remain a talking point for years to come. Although this Safari was in the planning stages for six years, the eventual effort more than proved the worth of such interstate reunions and also proved that a big attraction like the Olympic Games or Commonwealth Games was not an essential prerequisite in the holding of such reunions.

To conclude it remains to thank everyone everywhere who did so much to make this Great Safari the truly magnificent function it proved to be.

C. D. Doig, Editor.

West Australian Whisperings

Association Activities

Since last the Courier went to press there have been many Association activities including the Great Safari which will be dealt with in full in a series of articles in this and later Couriers.

APRIL MEETING

This took the form of a small farewell party to those members and their friends who were leaving on the Great Safari. Although the attendance was only small, it was made up for by the sincerity of the farewell gestures.

ANZAC DAY IN PERTH

Although your Editor was not present, he has been told this was on the high plane of all previous Anzac Days. Rod Dhu laid a wreath at the Dawn Service on behalf of the Association. The march was really well attended considering some 30 members were in the march in Sydney. Bob Smyth led the contingent and Jack Penglase was an able banner bearer. President Jack Hassen arranged the catering for the party afterwards at the W.A. Rowing Club quarters and was ably assisted by Rod Dhu and Bluey King (that stalwart friend of the Association) who helped to collect the dough and keep the function solvent.

I understand some thirty members attended and this speaks volumes for the loyalty of members to the old Unit. John Burrige read a letter from Bill Epps outlining the progress of the Safari to Melbourne and this was most appreciated by the gang. Apparently the gang kicked on afterwards at the usual venue at the Bedford Hotel. Thanks to the efforts of everybody another tip top Anzac Day in Perth.

JUNE MEETING

This was held at Anzac House Basement on Tuesday, 4th June, and was the first of the Calcutt Memorial Games nights. Probably due to the fact that there has not been a Courier for some time and also due to illness by quite a few members the attendance was not nearly as good as in

the past. However those who made the effort had a great night and they have the points on the Board. Results were as follows:— **Darts:** 1st R. Kirkwood, 2nd A. Smith, 3rd L. Bagley, 4th R. McDonald. **Table Tennis:** 1st J. Carey, 2nd L. Bagley, 3rd R. McDonald, 4th A. Smith. **Quoits:** 1st C. Varian, 2nd J. Hasson, 3rd L. Bagley, 4th A. Smith. **Bowls:** 1st J. Carey, 2nd C. Varian, 3rd R. McDonald, 4th C. Doig. **Rifle Shoot:** 1st J. Hasson, 2nd L. Bagley, 3rd C. Varian, 4th J. Carey. Progress points: L. Bagley 10, J. Carey 9, C. Varian 9, J. Hasson 7, R. McDonald 5, A. Smith 5, R. Kirkwood 4, C. Doig 1.

Committee Comment

A Management Committee meeting was held at Anzac House on Tuesday, 28th May, and there was a really great attendance. The only absentee being Bill Epps who was confined to bed. The main business of the evening was taken up with lengthy discussions of the various fixtures under way or just completed. John Burrige and Ray Aitken and Col Doig gave their reports on the Timor Memorial project. Col Doig and others who participated gave a long outline on the Safari. All agreed that it was a wonderful trip and had rekindled interest in the Association in every possible way. Jack Hasson gave a report on Anzac Day and he was very satisfied by the way everyone had responded to this event having regard to the number who had gone East.

Geo Fletcher most kindly accepted the task of mowing Kings Park area in the absence of Bill Epps.

Treasurer Arthur Smith gave a resume of our finance which, although no sweep was held this year, proved to be in a reasonably healthy condition, but will need the attention of the committee in the next financial year.

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Personalities

It is with regret we have to advise the passing of Mrs. Holly, mother of Bill, who was killed in action in New Guinea in 1943.

Bill Epps is at present confined to bed with a minor heart attack contracted in the final stages of the Safari in Sydney. Bill had done a herculean task right through the trip and it was most unlucky that this should occur to him so late in the tour. We all wish Bill a speedy and sure recovery and hope he will be with us again in the very near future.

Fred Napier was another casualty on the trip. He was unfortunate enough to have a recurrence of dermatitis early on the tour at Kalgoorlie and this was inclined to get progressively worse as the tour progressed. It must have spoiled considerably the enjoyment he would normally have had on such a trip. Fred was in Edward Millen Con Camp when last we heard of him. Once again we wish him a speedy recovery.

It was good while in Adelaide to see Alan Holland looking so well. Not having seen him since 1942, I was tickled pink to see him so much on top of the world and doing O.K.

WANTED URGENTLY

Mrs. F. J. Morris, of Capel, W.A., requests anyone who knows Jack Hanson (believed somewhere in N.S.W.), to ask him to get in touch with his father, J. W. Hanson, of 2 King William St., South Fremantle.

TIMOR MEMORIAL APPEAL

The latest news from Timor is that the foundations of the Memorial have been poured and the Portugese Authorities are well on with the project.

Jack Carey and Col Doig met the Australian Consul for Timor at the Australia Hotel in Sydney (he was back in Australia for a short holiday and rebriefing). Mr. Denvers was able to bring us up to date on what was going on. He was sure that this Memorial would definitely prove to be a tourist attraction as it would be a most imposing and useful structure set in quite considerable grounds. He

was of the opinion that when it came to dedication and handover the Portugese Authorities would like a very high ranking official to do the job as they were very protocol minded. Although the interview only lasted 20 minutes or so, it was most informative.

While in Canberra David Dexter through his contacts arranged for informal drinks with the Prime Minister at his Lodge. David Dexter, Ron Kirkwood and Col Doig attended. Mr. Gorton was a most gracious host and we who attended think we got the story of the Timor Memorial over to him as effectively as possible. He evinced great interest in the plan produced for his inspection and quite frankly had never seen this plan previously despite the fact that he had signed the letter requesting our appeal for Commonwealth assistance. At one stage in the interview he said he would have another look at the whole thing. This has been followed up with a letter from Sydney and we await the outcome. I think it can fairly be said that your Association has done all that can be done to persuade the Commonwealth Government to come to the party.

Meanwhile we have the problem of now raising the full \$8000. A list of amounts subscribed to date is appended to this article. You will see we still require a lot of money and this has to be raised pronto to enable the project to be opened free of debt.

During the Safari the matter of the Timor Memorial was raised at every possible occasion. Although there was no lack of interest the financial result was not very good. This was largely brought about by the fact the Eastern States members had been called upon in a big way in the financing of their side of the Great Safari. I'm sure that when we attack at the right time we will find they will respond in their usual generous way.

It was decided at the last Committee meeting that the matter of a fund raising committee be taken up most rigorously at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 2nd July, 1968. In the meantime we would appeal to all readers once again to give as much as they can to this most worthy appeal.

TIMOR MEMORIAL FUND

Chas le Feuvre (second)	1
Chas Le Feuvre (third)	1
Kevin Curran	30
Ted Loud	20
Bert Tobin	20
Max Davies	25
A. Brown	20
Gordon Hislop	100
Rip McMahon	20
W'm Petersen	10
City of Perth Sub-Branch (second)	40
F. S. Brown	25
Ron Gurr	10
Alan Hollow	40
Bob Palmer	20
Vince Swann	40
Peter Mantle (second)	40
Les Dingle	5
Tom Crouch (second)	14
Helen Poynton	14
Alby Friend	30
Spriggy McDonald	10
Joe Brand	10
Bill Coker	20
Joe Palm	20
Timor 1-Arm Bandits	8
P. J. Walter	10
Harry Holder	30
Jim Smailes	50
Housie-Housie Evening 10/2/68	30-20
Mick Morgan	20
Shorty Stevens	15
Angus MacLaughlan	20
Eddie Craghill	10
Peter Alexander	5
Freddie Otway	10
Frank Freestone	10
W. R. Green (ex-navy)	10
From previous list	2511.38
TOTAL	\$3096.38

RANDOM
HARVEST

**P. ALEXANDER, of 170 Forrest St.,
Palmyra. W.A., writes:—**

Thought it about time I dropped you a note also some money for subs and will donate \$10 for Timor Memorial Fund.

All the best to Tony Davidson and Ernie Hoffman. Sorry to have missed you at the last Re-Union, Ernie, but if you can make it down for this next one be sure and bring a pair of ear plugs. You are in for a bashing from Keith Hayes and myself.

**MAX DAVIES, of P.O. Box 19,
Stawell, Victoria, writes:—**

Hanging my head in shame for overlooking chit. Enclosed cheque for the Timor Memorial Fund of course.

Am really looking forward to the Safari. Unfortunately Easter is the big time at Stawell and I'm pretty well tide up but am taking the following week off and will tag along to Sydney with the mob.

Please tell any who are travelling by road that Stawell is on the highway between Adelaide and Melbourne and Grace and I would love to see any who can call in. See you later on.

**BILL DRAGE, of 20 Boronia Ave.,
Geraldton, writes:—**

Just a few lines to see if you are dead or not, and to find out about the Safari. Isn't my cheque down to Col? I have had no reply, could you find out if he has received it and let me know. Also send me a list of the itinerary if you would. All this as soon as possible as I have a few things to get. How is grandma and the family? We are all well up this way. Hoping to see you soon.

The Great Safari

This great event planned for so long and looked forward to for so long has come and gone. What a trip! Just how can it be described in writing? It would take the pen of such a great adventure writer as Jack London to do full justice to all that happened. How could so few people have so much enjoyment in such a brief time and live to tell the tale? Where does one start? Where does one go and where do you end? This appears to be the task of all who made the trip. As your Editor I will do my feeble best but there will be millions of things well worth recording which have escaped my most untrustworthy pen, so please chip in and assist in the following months, especially the ladies who had such a wonderful holiday and a wealth of experience.

The story has got to start somewhere so what about Perth Station at 5 p.m. on Saturday, 6th April, 1968. What an evening. Luggage being checked in, final drinks at Perth Station, farewells by an ocean of friends and relatives, those overnight bags stowed with every form of hard liquor known to man. Boy, what a night! The trip to Kalgoorlie, the worst coaches that the W.A.G.R. could supply, rusty water to drink with the best brands of Scotch, did we care, not a bit of it, we were on our way, eager to have fun, and nothing could daunt us. Did we sleep, you ask Les Dingle who arose at 3.30 a.m. quite convinced we were about to approach Kalgoorlie, shaved and dressed and then had the only sleep he had for the night. Bill Drage snored awake and made certain nobody else within 3 miles went to sleep. I'm assured Arthur Smith outsnored the Drage — impossible.

At last Kalgoorlie. After the usual kerfuffle with the luggage, we went to our separate hotels led by Steve Rogers, Tony Davidson, Eric Thornander, Doug Fullarton and Terry Turner. Kalgoorlie having such highly convenient drinking hours, it was not so very long after breakfast that we were mostly together again at the York Hotel having a revive. This lasted from 10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

After lunch Tony Davidson took quite a few of the women to see the sights and quite a few of us went out to see Jack Sheehan operating "the game". Jack (or Dave or Ging as he is known in Kalgoorlie) has not changed so very much, a little thinner on the thatch, but this the same useful frame as ever. A return to town and this time the Oriental Hotel and their spacious beer garden which we filled to extreme. We had a wonderful time until the legal(?) closing time of 6.30 p.m. During this period Eric Thorander and Tony Davidson said Kalgoorlie could be pretty dull at night so we had better arrange a party. No sooner said than done and this was arranged to take place at Tony Davidson's home at 8 p.m. Once again what a party, some of our members had had just too good a time in the day and were not at their top. No names no pack drill. Who should turn up at the party but "Pip" Dunkley, son of our popular M.O. of Timor days, a dead ringer of the "old pot and pan" as he was when he first said good-day to us at Northam in 1941. All good things come to an end and in the words of Peppy's "so to bed".

Next day to catch the Trans for Adelaide. Boy, those lick lick compartments! Still we did manage to squeeze in with vast quantities of reviving fluid. Some genius had worked it out that it is best to travel on the "Grog Standard" and is he so right. The standard of service on the Trans is quite good. Meals are excellent but their idea of how to handle drinks goes back to the year dot. We managed to get our fair share but also managed to drink the train dry in one day flat! Still, we were all primed with good old Scotch so who cared! To hear Tom Crouch, Jack Carey, Harry Sproxtton, Joe Poynton and Col Doig singing the "Marsellaise" late the first afternoon would have made the Vienna Choir blush, but was it fun. All this done on whiskey and powdered milk, the efficiency of which Joe Poynton can vouch for. To see Mich Morgan take over the lounge car and treat everybody to a concert and to see a gang of blaise

**ANNUAL RE-UNION
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
Monash Club Basement**

**COMMEMORATION SERVICE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
Honour Avenue, Kings Park**

teenagers suddenly decide it was good fun to join in, would have done your eyes the world of good. Mick cuts a gorgeous figure in his shorts and his step dancing is out of this world. By this time the belly is aching with laughter and the ribs can't take much more. Port Augusta and a chance to fill the grog larder. Nothing on the station and a lengthy run to the nearest Pub, two dozen of cold Southwark, the "Connie" not keen to let it aboard, but a persistent Joe Poynton, "Spriggy" McDonald, Ted Monk and Col Doig, slightly exhausted after their run, saw the ration aboard. Then Helen Poynton distributing the ration before we got caught. This if you are in it is really funny. Port Pirie and a change of trains to Adelaide and very poor service in the liquor dept.

Adelaide and a big gang to meet us and transport the luggage to our motel, the Shandon at Seaton Park. Doug Tapper and Bert Bache in charge. Bob Williamson, Ross Smith, Lofty Timcke, Keith Dignum, "Shorty" Stevens, Alan Hollow, all hands assisted by "Butch" Wilson and his boys from the Commando Association. A rapid settle in at what proved to be wonderful accommodation and perfect "for our purpose". That evening a reunion at the Shandon which allowed all the South Aussies and their wives to show us their brand of hospitality.

During the evening we were found by Ron Mackie resplendent with face fungus. The supper could have kept a gang of buck navvies going for a fortnight. Bert Bache heavy on our shoulders! T.V. appearance for 3 at 8.30 a.m. next day. Radio appearance for 2 at 10.30 a.m., meet General Manager of TAA at 4.30 p.m., trip to Mt. Lofty commence 10.30 a.m., view Chrysler Works in afternoon. Boy what a programme for our first full day in Adelaide! Ron Kirkwood Bill Epps and Col Doig fronted for the TV appearance at Channel 7 and had a wonderful reception and managed to get over the story of the Timor Memorial very well. Col Doig and Ron Kirkwood then headed for the Radio Appearance while Bill joined the main body on the trip to Mt. Lofty, etc. Hereby hangs a tale! The heavy trip was having its effect and the hot shower was wearing off. Col Doig and Ron Kirkwood, to-

gether with Bert Bache (the human dynamo), got to the studio a little early and were greeted by the programme manager who said he could organise a cup of coffee to fill in the time prior to interview. The Doig's efforts to drink that coffee had to be seen to be believed. The shakes had set in with a vengeance and after three fruitless efforts to get the cup to his mouth he desisted, being urged all the while by the manager to drink up. Kirkwood having a wonderful time all the while. The interview eventually loomed up and dirty dog Kirkwood promptly put Doig in the hot seat to be interviewed by Margaret Rohan (Miss Australia, 1967), and another bloke. Once again it proved to be a good interview and the story of the Safari and Timor Memorial was adequately handled. Meanwhile the tourists had had a wonderful trip to Mt. Lofty with a lovely lunch, although Bill Drage had difficulty in "driving" the bus and finally decanted himself in Adelaide while the main body went to view the Chrysler Works. This was most educational and we actually saw a Valiant car fully created from the raw product to the car being test driven round the track. They can have those process workers jobs for mine. Didn't see much in the way of jobs that a well trained ape couldn't do as well! This tour a bit on the lengthy side, probably because everybody's tongues were hanging out. That evening Joe Poynton's mate from the Rocket Range came down to Adelaide and set himself up as honorary host to the gang. Did he give the wallet a nice kick in the guts?

Next day the trip to Barossa Valley and a look over Seppeltsfield Winery. The lunch stop was at Wirrioopna and was probably as nice a meal as I've ever tasted and priced most reasonably. This I am told is a community town. The Barossa Valley when we saw it was not in good heart due to a bad season, however the trip over the Winery was excellent, especially in the rear of a mini-skirted guide with a two tone voice. The wine tasting afterwards was terrific except that some ignorant member of the party requested a "squash" of all things. This brought the ire of that "plonko" Col down upon her ears. We scoffed about 2 dozen bottles of

assorted wine and then bought the shop out of samples. Another first I believe.

That evening Bert Bache had arranged bookings at the Old Kings Theatre for those who wished to attend. This was as good a piece of entertainment as we saw on the whole tour, taking the form of a melodrama of the old type interspersed with vaudeville acts while you had a meal and drinks.

Good Friday was out of the motel and on to a barbecue at "Butch" Wilson's property in the hills. "Butch" is President of the Commando Association in S.A. and a very staunch worker. He has a beautiful property which he is developing into a Country Club and has already completed a nine hole golf course. This was tried out by quite a few of the gang for a couple of holes. Doug Tapper assures me that there are no champions among the mob although the Drage hits a fair ball and "Lofty" Timche is a dark horse. The barbecue was an unqualified success and filled in what could have been a dull Good Friday in Adelaide. Keith Dignum took a lot of candid camera shots of this day and has supplied me with an excellent album of the result. Thanks "Dig".

And so to the train for Melbourne. Not a particularly rowdy trip this one as we had been spilt up all over the train as the behest of some ignorant railway official. A wonderful reunion with the gang in Adelaide and considering their numbers a fantastic performance in how to deal out hospitality.

Melbourne, oh Melbourne, what a greeting. The station appeared to be thronged with the gang. Geo Kennedy holding up a big notice with the red double diamond prominently displayed with Great Safari and the head line. Faces, faces, a sea of faces, but names that were different. Rapid reintroductions and you were back to 1945-46. Excitement was at fever pitch, this was the first of the big ones! You could feel the atmosphere. How good it was to be together again. Geoff Laidlaw, Tom Nisbet, Bert Tobin, Harry Botterill, "Sep" Wilson and a host of others — how could one absorb it all. "Toby" up on his feet distributing mail, telling the gang that Kev Curran had a winner for them at Caulfield that day (it didn't), distributing free tickets for Caulfield,

then to your luggage and away to your billets, a free day until 5.30 p.m. that evening. What a moment of history and what sublime delight.

That day quite a few made the trip to Caulfield and either added or subtracted from their fortunes, others were the guests of their various hosts at trips here, there and everywhere.

The first of the big functions in Melbourne — the party for all and sundry at the Artillery Hall. A terrific crowd. Men, women and children. Everyone tripping over themselves "to get to know you". "Smasho" Hodgson the first I saw then a million others. A real "Ball". The smorgasbord type evening meal was something out of this world. Another opportunity for Helen Poynton to show her film of Unit Association activities in W.A. (She had already shown this in Adelaide.) Back to the main hall for more fun and games, the grog never stopping for one precious moment. (I am not going to try and name the people at these functions, but will take the opportunity later to name all those we met in the various States.) Because we had a big day on the morrow this function completed at midnight and everyone was still agog with this first of the wonderfals in Melbourne.

Sunday and a trip by three huge buses to Wilsons Promontory. Enough of the fluid that cheers to keep proceedings enlivened while we were on the way down. Kev Curran does a smart sprint to the pub at Fish Creek for a few cartons of cans. Then the "Prom" looms up and nostalgia sets in. Where was Darby? Where are we now? Not much to go by now as all these old spots have been demolished. Eventually we settle in at the main area which was No. 2 Camp in the old days. A short service at the Cairn (a beautiful monument judged by our standards). Photos and more photos. Pose for this and pose for that. Then a barbecue lunch and prepare for the homeward trip. Vince Swann, Jack Carey and Harry Sproxtton made a foot journey and rediscovered where the old camp we occupied had been located and as they pointed this out it all flooded back. The long trip home enlivened by entertainment by Mick Morgan and Co.

Easter Monday, a day to enjoy yourself your own way. Most either to the football or the races. Yours truly with Bernard Callinan to see

Melbourne play Fitzroy and viewing same from that Holy of Holies the Committee Section of the M.C.G.

That evening the Reunion for the men at 2nd Commando Sqn Barracks at Rippenlea and the ladies to the theatre show "Fiddler on the Roof". The W.A. ladies entertained quite a few of their Melbourne counterparts to dinner and then on to the show. They voted this one of the best nights of the whole tour. The menfolk did equally as well as the Reunion saw so many of your old mates that it was difficult to have speech with all of them. The opportunity was taken to show the plans of the Timor Memorial and put everyone in the picture. Col Doig proposed the toast of the Unit after being introduced by Victorian President John Southwell. Geoff Laidlaw responded and said in his remarks that the Safari was the greatest shot in the arm the Association could possibly have got. A really delightfully informal night that provided the maximum of get together and enabled most to talk to mates who had not been seen for so long.

Tuesday a free day if you could call anything where your host takes you all over the place a free day. The W.A. women did get a minor chance to see the Melbourne shops and sneak about.

It is rumoured that Joe and Helen Poynton and Mick and Jean Morgan, who were staying at the London Hotel, got by with the minimum of sleep and generally had a "ball".

To digress a moment. At the first function held in Melbourne, the Victorian Branch took the opportunity of producing a magnificent scroll in pure parchment complete with seal and container on which everyone "who took part in any form of the Safari were requested to append their signatures". Col Doig received this on behalf of the Association and it will find a very permanent place in the Association's Archives. They also most generously made Col a presentation of a Parker Pen in recognition of his efforts in organising the Great Safari.

The end of the Melbourne segment was in sight, as on Wednesday we departed by the Daylight Express for Yass, for onward movement to Canberra. Goodbye Melbourne Town was the theme song as we said Au Revour to this marvellous gang of people who had taken us into their homes

and their hearts and treated us with such fantastic hospitality. The throat was very full as the train pulled out and on this occasion not with grog.

The first of our real setbacks occurred at this point as the luggage van on the train was incapable of handling but a small proportion of our luggage and a blythe conductor told us that it would be following on a later train and would arrive at Canberra next morning. As some of the gang had also put their overnight bags in the main luggage, they looked like sleeping on a layer of powder. Afraid Australia's railway systems leave a lot to be desired in the way of decent and reasonable service and if we had not been travelling in a big party all prepared to enjoy ourselves, we could have been very nasty about it all.

Yass Junction and the bus trip to our full compliment in Canberra. The accommodation was going to take hours and we would not be in Canberra till after midnight. The old gentleman was agreeably surprised when we arrived in time for an early tea! Met at the hotel (Forrest Lodge) by Ron Dook, Dave Dexter, Alan Stewart, Jim Fenwick and Tom Snowden. This is our full compliment in Canberra. The accommodation was excellent although only a licensed restaurant. Ron had taken the precaution of putting us all up as honorary members of the "Burns Club", which would have been a full 100 yards away and seemed to be open permanently. Dave Dexter had made arrangements for one of the members to be interviewed by the A.B.C. and this fell to Col Doig. Len Bagley, who seemed to have appointed himself O.C. baggage, headed for Canberra Station and the Stationmaster threw us all in a flip saying as the baggage was addressed via Yass it would be off-loaded there and not forwarded to Canberra. There was an immediate panic to get luggage numbers. etc. Luckily for us this situation resolved itself and the luggage did come to Canberra via Goulburn the next morning. Anyhow it did not stop everyone having a wow of a time that night in Canberra.

Next day, Thursday, recover luggage and head for the bank, our first opportunity of refilling the wallets since we left Perth. (No time in Adelaide, no banks open in Mel-

bourne.) Our first taste of damp weather and to be the only damp day on the tour. The lads in Canberra had arranged a trip on the ferry "Mimosa" on Lake Burley Griffin with lunch and liquor inclusive. What a lovely trip, what a terrific lunch! Because of the inclement weather the opportunity to see Canberra at its best was restricted but most took the chance to have a look around reserving the War Museum for our return trip. It was after the trip on the "Mimosa" that Dave Dexter frantically rang to say that Ron Kirkwood, Col Doig and himself were to see the Prime Minister at 6.15 that evening. "Kirky" made a smart movement in the direction of the "Burns Club" to get the Doig off the grog and in a fit state to greet the P.M. (Shades of the shakes in Adelaide methinks.) This has been reported elsewhere and will not bore you with repetition except to say it probably was the real highlight of the tour for those involved. They received a souvenir box of matches from Mr. Gorton and gave him an Association tie in return. The same evening Ron Dook arranged for the gang to go to the Leagues Club at Queanbeyan in N.S.W. for their first taste of the poker machines. This was a beaut night with a wonderful dinner at very reasonable rates and we were able to do our dough on the one armed bandits. Helen Poynton and Jack Carey and Mick Morgan stayed in front but most of us contributed a bit of foreign capital. Jack cracked a couple of jackpots, but due to his ignorance of the system, only collected one.

The next day we booked out of Forrest Lodge to start on our tour of the Snowy Scheme. Ron Dook arranged to look after our excess baggage and so made life easy for us once again. This sort of treatment was typical of the whole trip. We set off at 8.30 a.m. from Canberra for Cooma, which is the jumping off point for all Snowy tours. It is a journey of 78 miles and for once we did not make adequate arrangements. No grog. How silly can you get? After a lecture at Cooma and a picture show, we started the Snowy tour in earnest. A truly terrific project, but that first day was just too long. It was the day when we saw most of the great things of the Snowy project, but I think everyone had had it by the time we reached Adaminaby where

we were to stay the night. The trip by launch on Lake Eucumbene, with lunch aboard, was a highlight of the early part of the day. The trip into Tumut Ponds power station in the late afternoon was unbelievable to see a great tourist bus drive for $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile into a tunnel and then have space to turn around was a modern day miracle. The power stations two and three levels below and their indescribably cleanliness left you agape. The roads around the Tumut valley would frighten Christ out of anybody. The shutterbugs on the trip had a complete "ball" and Drage sat like Buddha in the back corner seat wondering when his turn to great the Angel Gabriel was about to occur and giving vociferous orders to the driver the whole time. And so to Adaminaby and a nights repose. We were greeted with the full red carpet treatment at the motel there and must say this was the best treatment at commercial establishments on the whole tour. We smartly made arrangements for a suitable amount of liquor for the next day as a number one priority. The accommodation was excellent and the food all that could be desired.

The next day took us on stage two of the Snowy tour, but being fully prepared and also a shorter day and much more scenic drive, we arrived at our next staging point, Khan Khobbin, in good form. It is very hard to describe a tour of this project in words as the magnitude is so great and so much of the work in the form of tunnels not seeable, that all that can be said is that it leaves you just a bit breathless and staggered at its magnitude. There were many really funny incidents which occurred on this trip but most were completely unprintable, either because of the laws of libel or sheer censureship. The night at Khan Khobbin saw us all in single accommodation which was more than adequate. The hotel though quite modern was understaffed and getting a drink was most difficult.

The third day of the tour was mostly a scenic drive, but we did see the massive Murray 2 Power House with its 10 great turbines and once again the amazing cleanliness struck you, especially as there was no one in sight who appeared to be a cleaner. The skiing village of Threadbo was one of the delights of this afternoon.

A true replica of the Swiss Chalet type which I am led to believe is the usual for this sport. They charge like an angry buffalo for both accommodation and liquor. Onwards to Canberra and book in again at Forrest Lodge.

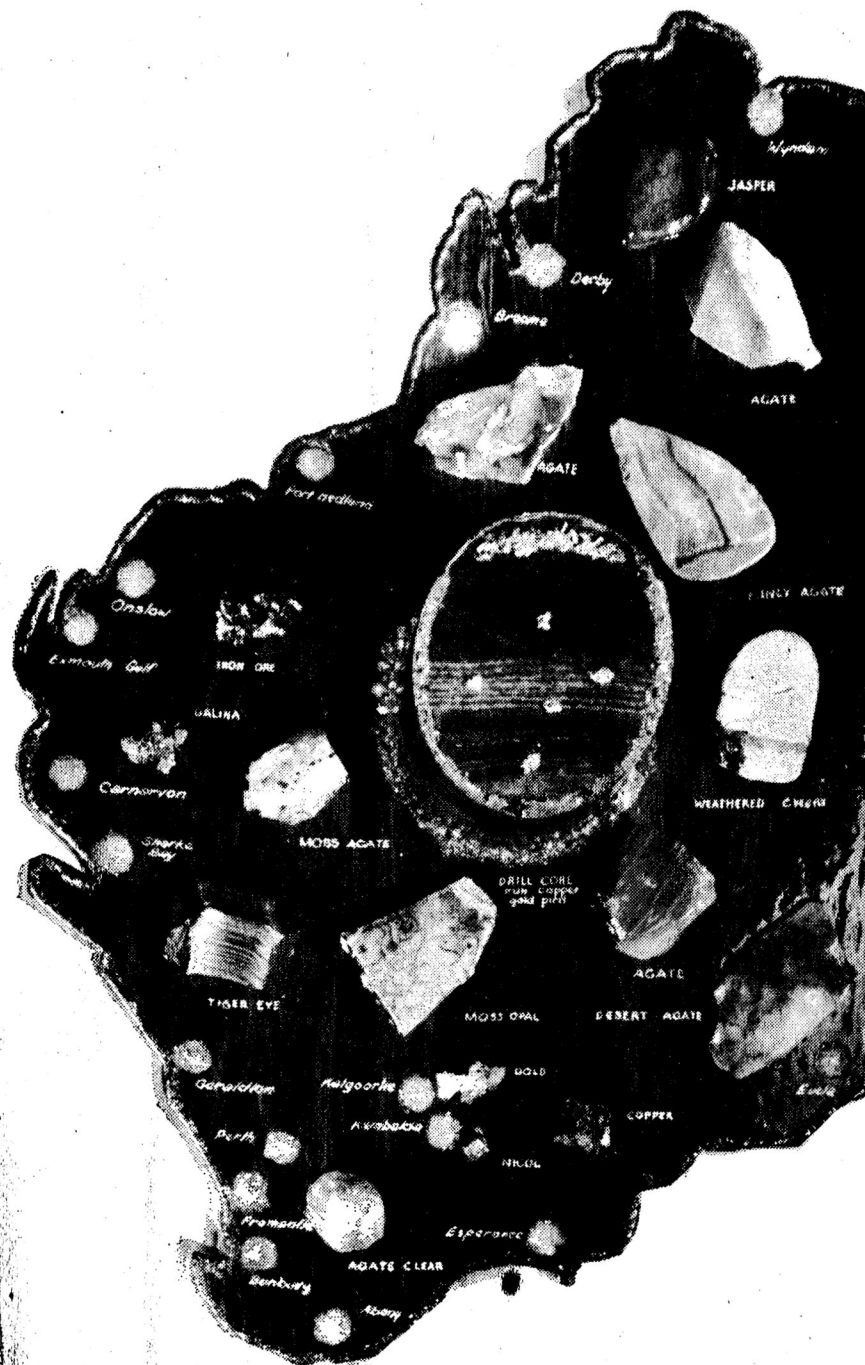
The next day saw all the luggage (and what a pile of it) booked to Liverpool and then practically everyone took the opportunity of seeing the War Memorial and Museum. This is a fantastic building and the display of war replicas and paintings, sand tables, diorama's, etc., is beyond the power of my pen. The Hall of Remembrance is out of this world and a few minutes in its hallowed presence leaves a feeling of reverence and a lump in the throat. We were able to see the names of our war dead enshrined on the massive Honour Rolls abutting the Hall of Remembrance. Our time here was all too short to do anything like justice to all the things which should be seen. Canberra impressed us as a beautiful city with no expense spared and shows the effect of true planning. The hospitality showered upon us by our so few members once again left us amazed and sure that our Unit Association must be the best of its kind anywhere.

We left Canberra Monday night for Liverpool. Boy could that train sway and rock. Once again service was poor as they ran out of hot meals early in the piece, then the hot pies went off and down to sandwiches. Still it was not a long journey as we arrived at Liverpool by 9 p.m. It looked as though we had struck our first blue duck as there was not a soul in sight when we first arrived. But suddenly a babble of voices, a rush of bodies and it was on again. The greeting party were at the pub near by and the train was early. What a welcome! People everywhere shouting and laughing and back slapping. Re-introductions again and in no time flat the inevitable cans of beer were produced and the game was on again. Eventually some order out of apparent chaos and those being billeted were whisked off by their hosts and the remainder driven to the caravan park at Bass Hill. Alan and Edith Luby, Jack Hartley and Bill Coker did an enormous job on this evening and at midnight Jack Hartley returned with hot cups of coffee and hamburgers and cheese, etc., etc. The caravans proved to be excellent for

our purpose once we had settled in and the ablution block was a beauty, being most modern and lovely and clean. Seeing that about all the time you had in these caravans was enough to sleep a little and eat a quick breakfast before a bus or a car was there to take you some place, they were more than adequate for our needs. I think certain individuals even had time to catch up on delayed "home work". Those who were billeted with members cannot speak too highly of their treatment as each host seemed to think that hospitality had to be on all the time.

Tuesday was a free day to see the sights of Sydney and once again replenish the roll. That evening a bus was on tap to take us to the first function of the Sydney programme at Cabravale Services Club. Here we were to have the first glimpse of what these clubs in Sydney are like. The appointments were colossal. Here too, we were to get a real shock and a thrill to see Tony and Carol Bowers and Don Hudson who had flown from W.A. to join in the reunion. The crowd appeared to be terrific at this function as it was here that the Queenslanders joined us and also a contingent from Melbourne. Those from Queensland included Tony and Iris Adams, Billy Connell, Angus and Joyce McLachlan, Peter Mantle, Fred Otway, Alan Soper, "Bulla" Tait and Alex Voevedin. The Melbourne party at this stage comprised Geo Kennedy, Johnny Roberts, Jack Ranehan, Bert Tobin, Harry Botterill, Jerry McKenzie and Max and Grace Davies. Alan Munro, Peter Krause and Geoff Laidlow joined us for Anzac Day.

The show at Cabravale was a beauty and was well compered by Alan Luby. Frank Press toasted the visitors and Gerry McKenzie responded. The occasion was taken by the N.S.W. Branch to present Col Doig with a handsome smokers stand in recognition of his efforts for the Association over the years. The W.A. Branch, through Jack Cary, presented to the N.S.W. Branch a lovely trophy given us by Les Dingle. This trophy will be held by the N.S.W. President, Bill Cocker, for whatever purpose the Branch so desires. Jess Epps took the opportunity to thank everybody for their hospitality on behalf of the ladies. It was here also we were to see the amazing generosity of these



The Trophy which was presented to N.S.W.

clubs as the President came in and announced that the club had decided to give the N.S.W. Branch a rebate of 25 per cent on all expenditure for the night. Handsome indeed!

Wednesday saw most of our gang go along and have a look see at the famous St. George's Leagues Club, known as the Taj Mahal of the N.S.W. clubs. The visit had been made possible by the efforts of the N.S.W. Committee. All agreed it was fabulous and one of the highlights of the trip to Sydney. Once again a few had a victory over the poker machines, but most managed to contribute something to the management. It was here that Doug Tapper made his appearance in Sydney, having made the trip with a couple of mates from Adelaide.

Paddy Kenneally took the chance to take Angus and Joyce McLachlan, Col Doig and Ron Kirkwood to see "Beaky" Smith at Nora Head lighthouse, out of Gosford. Unfortunately too much surprise as "Beaky" was not home. Nevertheless it was a most enjoyable trip and gave those on it a chance to see the great new toll road being constructed to Newcastle.

The next day, Thursday, was probably the main object of our visit to Sydney, namely Anzac Day. The initial performance was the Dawn Service at Cabravale Club. We got our revellies mixed up a bit as we thought we had to rise at 4 a.m., however the bus arrived at 3.30 a.m. and the Service was at 4 a.m., so most of us missed out but quite a few did attend and reckoned it was amazing to see a bar opened and the grog rolling at that ungodly hour of the morning. We were then whisked into Sydney and a wreath was laid on the Cenotaph by Jack Hartley and Bill Epps. A further wreath laying ceremony by the Combined Commando Association at the War Memorial in Hyde Park then back to our assembly point at Qantas Building. A long, long wait while those who preceded us in the march made their way through Sydney streets to Hyde Park. While we waited the gang gradually assembled and seemed to be slowly reaching fantastic proportions. It was terrific to see old mates greeting one another for the first time for so many years. At last it came to be our turn to move off. The Red Double Diamond Banner carried on high by the huge frames of Tony Bowers, Sandy

Eggleton and Geoff Laidlaw heading the parade. A truly stupendous number of 114 on parade in Sydney!! I think everyone was thrilled! Here we were represented by every State in Australia, with the exception of Tasmania. I don't think I have ever seen anyone so thrilled as Geoff Laidlaw to be heading his old gang once again in this the State of his birth and enlistment. The march was far from orderly and the step atrocious, but who cared? This was another moment of history. When the brief march past the saluting base at the Cenotaph to Hyde Park was over, we followed the banner to Hastings Deering Building and were here greeted by a sight not seen by W.A. boys for donkeys ages. Beer in the open street. The biggest dish I have ever seen with bottles and cans on ice. It was not long before everyone had a bottle or can in hand and went into the ear bashing position. This went on for a steady hour when once again it was up stakes and on our way this time to the Arnecliffe R.S.L. Club, where we were to be the guests. From mid day until 6 p.m. we sat or stood and grogged and ate on all the while renewing the mateships of old. Further members joined us here and by the time it was over there had been about 120 members in business on Anzac Day in Sydney. We mustered every member in Australia but we could not find more than 400, so this percentage on this memorable occasion is nothing short of astounding and I doubt if any unit in the world could do anywhere near as well.

It was at Arnecliffe we saw a Sun-Down Service where the mob assembled, marched to the local War Memorial and a party of Naval personnel impressively lowered the flags for the day. A nice brief little ceremony that was well worth being in. Remember the whole of the day from midday till 6 p.m. was on the house by this R.S.L. club. Another truly generous gesture. All good things come to an end and a most memorable Anzac Day eventually came to a close.

Friday saw us leave our various billets and taken to Church Point to board the "Krait" for a trip through Broken Bay up the Hawkesbury River to Cottage Point and the Kurangai Chase Boat Club. Here Bill Coker and Co. put on a crackerjack barbecue. The Krait is the famous vessel used by members of Z Special Force

to sink an enormous amount of shipping in and around Singapore during the War and is now a National Trust and cannot be hired but if you are considered to be sufficiently VIP you are granted the use of the vessel which is manned by volunteers and is used for sea rescue work, etc. The skipper on our day gave us a most adequate talk on the history and exploits of the famous old craft, which was enjoyed by all. This trip also showed us the true grandeur of the Hawkesbury and Broken Bay and certainly stopped the W.A. boys from talking about the Swan very quickly. This will always remain a most memorable day in everyone's memory. It was days like this that gave us that extra opportunity of having another chance to talk with old mates not seen for years.

Saturday was a free day and allowed the gang to go their various ways. Some to the rugby, some to the races and others just to a pub. Joe Poynton went to Sydney Cricket Ground with Paddy Kenneally and Merv Jones and saw a good rugby game. That evening everyone seemed to decide on a night club. A gang of us went to the stripper show at the Pink Pussy Cat. Boy all that meat and no potatoes Not highly recommended. Unfortunately this was the day Bill Epps our party leader won himself a more than mild heart attack which laid him low for the rest of the tour.

Sunday, the final day. A huge bus to take us to Warrangam Dam for a scenic trip and barbecue lunch. Never have I seen a place so well laid out to cater for picnic parties, at least 500 people could easily be handled at the countless barbecues provided and in the most delightful setting. Once again a beaut lunch and plenty of fluid. On the return trip we took in the Macarthur-Onslow Rotolac Dairy at Comden. A fantastic effort in automated milk extraction with cows going on to the rotary at the rate of one every 10 seconds and being carried around and milked and then discharged. They are milking one thousand cows twice a day and doing it easily. Cows are bred by artificial insemination method, fed in huge troughs on lucerne and additives and then turned out on absolutely dry paddocks. They never graze during the lactation period. It was here that quite a few of the hardened charac-

ters of the party were actually photographed eating ice cream!

This was the end of the main Safari and from here the party broke up and gradually wended its way home. There seemed to be a never ending series of farewell parties at Sydney Station as small groups boarded the Southern Aurora heading for their various destinations. Our hosts clung to us bitterly seemingly loth to see us go and we were just as loth to depart.

What a trip, what sheer unutterable joy. Will it ever occur again? I hope so for the sake of everyone.

It now remains for us to give to all our hosts everywhere our heartfelt and sincere thanks for all they did to make this Safari the "Great" that it really turned out to be. But how can you thank such glorious people? Words fail me. All that can be said is God Bless You All for being alive to look after us.

Now for a list of those members we met on the trip. Please take this to mean we also met your wives and families.

Kalgoorlie

Tony Davidson, Doug Fullarton, Ernie Hoffman, Steve Rogers, Jack Sheehan, Eric Thornander.

Adelaide

Bert Bache, Keith Dignum, Alan Hollow, Ron Mackey, Ross Smith, "Shorty" Stevens, Dud Tapper, Ted Timcke, Bob Williamson, Jim Veal.

Melbourne

Ralph Baldwin, Alex Boast, Harry Botterill, Bernie Callinan, Arch Claney, Ron Campbell, "Boy" Coats, Lyle Cooper, Tom Coyle, Kev Curran, Jack Fox, Alf Grachan, Alf Harper, "Smash" Hodgson, Geo Humphreys, Geo Kennedy, Peter Krause, Geoff Laidlaw, Gerry McKenzie, Bruce McLaren, Ken Monk, "Darby" Munro, Tom Nisbet, Gerry O'Toole, Jack Renehan, Johnny Roberts, Geo Robinson, Jim Robinson, Bill Sharp, Maurie Smith, John Southwell, Bert Tobin, Bill Tucker, Geo Veitch "Mac" Walker, Jim Wall, Stand Whitford, Arnold Webb.

Canberra

David Dexter, Ron Dook, Jim Fenwick, Tom Snowden, Alan Stewart.

N.S.W.

Bill Bennett, Neil Bray, Noel Buck-

man, Ted Chapman, Ted Cholerton, Bill Coker, Ray Cole, Les Collins, Pat Costello, Keith Craig, Jim Cullan, Jim Darge, Norm Demmery, Jim Dent, Mick Devlin, Jim Donovan, Sid Dubber, Fred Eggleton, Jim English, Angus Evans, Bob Field, Max Davies, Tom Field, Jim Finlay, Bill Gallard, Joe Garland, "Happy" Greenhalgh, Jim Halliman, Shorty Hart, Jack Hartley, Eric Herd, Ron Hilliard, Cyril Holley, Bill Hog, Jack Iles, Merv Jones, Jack Keenahan, Paddy Kenneally, Harry Hanrahan, Jim Lett, Mal Lindsay, Alan Luby, Mick Mannix, Tom Martin, Lionel Newton, Tom O'Brien, "Shadow" Olde, Cliff Paff, Jack Peattie, Frank Press, Johnny Rose, Alfredo De Santos, Frank Sharp, Jim Smith, Beaky Smith, Russ Symons, "Babe" Teague, Tom Tierney, Ron Tren-grove, Snowy Weir, Jimmy Went,

Keith Wilson, Don Woodhouse, Don Murray.

W.A. Party

Len and Dot Bagley, Tony and Carol Bowers, Jack Carey, Tom Crouch, Col Doig, Bill and Jess Epps, Jack and Jean Fowler, Alf and Glad Hillman, Harry and Maisie Holder, Don Hudson, Slim and Katie James, Ron Kirkwood, Bill Drage, Bob McDonald, Mick and Jean Morgan, Fred and Glad Napier, Joe and Helen Poynton, Arthur Smith, Eric and Twy Smyth, Fred and Rose Sparkman, Ron Sprigg, Harry Sproxtion, Geoff and Pam Swann, Clarrie and Grace Turner, Les and Katie Dingle, Roy and Jean Letts, Doug and Betty McNair.

If any name has been omitted please blame the rigorous trip and my failing memory and advise me as soon as possible.

Historically Yours

RAY AITKEN'S 1968 RETURN TO TIMOR

(Continued from last issue)

24/11. We came up from Maliana to Hatulia having used the phone to make sure that there had been no rain in Hatulia. Even so it was a very difficult job. The track was excellent until we commenced the climb. Here it was wet and unbelievably bad. We made another call at Emerera and had lunch at the pensione of Lay Tching Tsun, the man who failed to charge us when last we inconvenienced him. We had a very good curry and I can recommend this gentleman and his pensione.

Lay Tching Tsun had the goodness to take us on a walk around the town including a fine little modern hospital.

Had to return towards Hatalia because I had left my camera on a grassy bank when I climbed down to look at a fern. We recovered it and proceeded to Nurfutali for fuel for the jeep. We were delayed here by the srfit really heavy rain we have seen. It literally poured down and we were sure that the

track would be untenable until it shed the water.

We came to Aileu on the track so many of you know by way of Solo through the eucalypt clad ridges.

After a quick bath—the running water was off—we were entertained at the Officers' Mess. The Capitan Commanding and his officers were more than interested in finding out the exact situation at the time of the "massacre" since all Timorese, Portuguese and Australians alike still argue about this. The thing seems destined to remain shrouded in mystery. It is perhaps as well that it should. The affair reflects little credit on most people involved.

During the long day's trip Tony practised his Tetam which is making giant strides. I suspect he was influenced in his desire to learn after seeing the school teacher at Maliana.

I think I have omitted to record meeting (Arch Campbell will know meeting a friend of Arch Campbell's at Hatalia. Can't for the life of me remember his name.

He sends his regards to Archie Campbell and he remembers clearly the reprimand he received when he once shot some goats—indeed perhaps the actual words used.

Further I should also record that Alfredo Pires, son of Cabo Pires, who was Chef Post of Lacluba is still here. He sends his regards to John Burridge. We remember each other because as a boy the Administrator could not keep his hands off weapons. They had a fascination for him and in the Aussie camp above Lacluba he was often bawled out by me personally.

25/11. Morning in Aileu and thousands of larikeets in the trees above the mess. Had a look at the memorial for the massacre but as John Burridge has already recorded this it seems needless repetition.

After breakfast the Commander took me round to show me his men and his post. Both are spotless and organisation is that of an efficient fire brigade—everything ready to go at a moment's notice.

We left Aileu with some regrets and climbed up to Maubisse and thence to the Same saddle without stopping at all. It was remarkable to receive the same sullen wide eyed stare round Maubisse, that we encountered years ago. Salutes were returned sparingly if at all and few people rose to their feet.

After crossing the saddle the jeep was often chased by laughing kids and salutes returned with a wide smile. One would not think a mountain range could make so much difference between people, but it still seems to be the case that they just are different.

We went into Same and put up at a modern Pousada set up by the Government especially for Australian tourists. I stayed in it, by the way, at army expense. Double rooms with bath, shower, etc., and unlike other parts of the island water without limit.

We went down to Betano in the afternoon by way of Alas and Fatucuae.

Hau la quoi rai manus (I like not hot country). It is still sticky down in the palm lands.

The poor old "Voyager" is reduced to her engines only. Certain citizens of the island are said to have made a minor fortune removing the brass, etc.

We paid a visit to local army post where they were not unnaturally interested in the 1942 revolt and particularly aware of the fact that they were close to that area.

I met an old bloke who guards the time bell here. He is cartuas loo and becic mati. When I asked him if he remembered the Australians he said that he was so young at that time he only has a little memory of it. I have been feeling my years ever since.

26/11. We came up through the great Same valley and down into the equally great Ainaro wing of it. Out of Same we drove through hundreds of natives going in to the bazaar all the same as of old, except that they are now much better dressed. They still chew the nut and ruin their teeth.

Before starting the climb we called on old Cabo Antonio Francisco who claims to have put enough tucker in G.G.L. and some of his troops to fit them for the trip to Lilitei and Remexio. He is now 77 but as strong as an ox and demands that I carry his regards to G.G.L. He remembers me only from the beach at Betano the night the "Voyager" came ashore.

With him was Mario dos Reis Naronha, once a teacher in Dili, whom I met at Lilitei and who later sent me a letter in Portuguese which I was able since it said that "uma os indigenes" had seen "muita astropas Japariizes" near Remexio.

Mario sends his compliments to you all. He claims that he was later suspected of being "pro Japanezes" but was able to produce a surat from Geof Laidlaw which put all things right. He regards this as having saved his life.

Ainaro was hard at its market when we got there. It possesses a remarkable memorial to Galeixo Cortes Real who received Portugal's highest decoration for service and loyalty. He was killed by the Japanese in 1943.

We reclimbed the valley and went up into Hatubulico with Tata Malau lording itself above us. The peaches still grow in Hatabulico but failure of efficient pruning has reduced the crop. It is still rai maliri (cold land) at this height.

We had lunch with the Chef da Post and his wife. They are a young Timorese couple who I am sure have

dedicated themselves to their charges and their job. The Chef da Post told us that his first appointment was in his own area at Bacau, but he asked for a transfer as he preferred an area in which he did not have to give orders to his father.

One of his right hand men in his administrative police was an old suku of King Ananias who remembers the Australians very well. They told me that there used to be an ex-creado in the valley but he died, being very old indeed. How does that make you feel?

We came into Maubisse for the night at the military post and I was able to convey John Burridge's regards to Capitán Forseco.

27/11. Went from Maubisse to Turiscal. Road not very impressive. On the way back I collected some ferns for Kew Gardens. We had lunch in Maubisse and came on through heavy rain to Dili. My air-conditioned room was very inviting. However I am informed that tomorrow morning I must move out as it has been previously booked by Tourist Dept. for someone else. Am not looking forward to a week in a hot room but I have an appointment with three creados for the 30th and have to finish this Memorial thing.

28/11. Devaluation of sterling has hit me to the tune of about \$250, as I was carrying 700 pounds largely to be able to establish the Memorial account. However am now too old to worry about such things. As the man said: "You can't take it with you." Not that I've got much to

take. They say an unkind thing about sterling here. They say that the day may come when you may buy it by weight.

Am suffering a little let down after a glorious trip. Would much rather be in the hills than in this sweat box.

Six Aussie tourists are due and they had previously booked the air-conditioned rooms. I hate their guts at present.

Have fritted today away rather. Have not been up to see C.D. because I was waiting for mail. I now find he has a letter for me. I will go up in the morning.

Deolindo arrived on the plane. He may make my work easier.

29/11. Saw C.D. Plans arrived safely. Made a deposit with Bank of Dili for 16,000 escudos. Had to call the account by my name, i.e. R. Aitken, Dare Resting Place and 2/2nd Commando Account. Had I used the account name without my own the bank rules would have required us to register as a commercial firm and pay dues, etc. The manager was good enough to point this out to me so we've saved a little money.

Have my first attack of tummy trouble and am as weak as a cat but the management supplied me with sulfoguanil tabs, and this should fix it up. Had no dinner as an insurance measure and drank only lemon and ice.

Hope to see Senor Marcos da Costa on Saturday morning to tie up letters of undertaking.

(To be continued)

ANNUAL RE-UNION
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
Monash Club Basement

COMMEMORATION SERVICE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
Honour Avenue, Kings Park