



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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THE TRIP TO TIMOR

The Hand-over Dedication of the Dare Resting Place has now moved majestically into the History of the Unit and the Association. This was an event unparalleled in the annals of our history. Words fail when attempts are made to describe the outstanding success of the whole function.

However, first things first and this will be an honourable attempt to put events into perspective.

The West Australian contingent numbering 30 (21 members and nine wives) left Perth at the ungodly hour of 1.50 a.m. on Saturday, April 12, and proceeded by stages ex Adelaide, Alice Springs, to Darwin.

We were met at Adelaide by Dudley Tapper and his gang, including Bert Bache, and taken for a tour of the city and environs until our plane left for Darwin.

A short refuelling stop at Alice Springs then on to Darwin for an overnight stop. We were met at Darwin by a blast of hot, humid weather and thanked our lucky stars for an air-conditioned room.

The contingent from the Eastern States comprising Fred Otway, "Happy" Greenhalgh, Maurice Smith, Peter and Elvenor Krause, Bob Williamson and also Bob Smyth, had already departed for Timor on the Saturday morning.

After a very brief sleep we were hustled to Darwin Airport for Immigration and Customs formalities and then aboard a Fokker Friendship for the trip to Baucau in Portuguese Timor. This was a wonderful experience and as the coast of

Timor loomed on the horizon nostalgic memories flooded back. There were the friendly mountains, our horrors and our saviours. Below could be seen the Timorese villages with their typical "oomahs" looking for all the world like tiny toadstools from this height above them. The rice paddies loomed up and then we were into Baucau Airport. This is a truly excellent engineering feat and is of outstanding quality.

Your writer was living on his nerves ere this as this was the crucial stage of the whole movement. Could we be ferried to Dili in time for the service at 11.30 a.m. that Sunday morning?

There really was no cause for alarm as sitting on the air strip were two Dove aircraft ready, willing and able to get us to "the church on time".

Once again Customs and Health formalities and the first parties were on their way to Dili, arriving there by 8.20 a.m.

We were met on arrival by the Australian Consul, Max Berman, and his secretary, Vic Rebikoff, and swiftly conveyed to our respective accommodation. The second party arrived from Baucau one hour later.

We were met at our hotel (the Resende) by Bob Smyth, "Happy" Greenhalgh, Fred Otway, Maurice Smith, Bob Williamson and the Krause couple, who were able to give us an account of proceedings the previous evening.

The W.A. contingent was split up between the Resende where the

married couples stayed and the Mira Mar where those travelling stag were accommodated.

On the Saturday night the Governor of Portuguese Timor had given a dinner party to welcome the Administrator of the Northern Territory and the V.I.P.s who accompanied him and this had been attended on behalf of the Association by Bob Smyth. "Happy" and the rest of the gang had gone aboard the navy vessels, H.M.A.S. "Assail" and "Attack" who were in port especially for our ceremony.

To digress for a moment it is as well to tell the story of how John Burridge, by much manoeuvring managed to have the Australian Navy represented at this function. When returning from his recent trip to Timor to make the arrangements for the hand-over he discovered that the Navy vessels "Assail" and "Attack" were due to go on a routine visit to Dili the week after our function was due to take place. When approached the Navy Officer in Command, Capt. Brian Cleary, was anxious to be in it if it were possible. All things are possible when "Joe" Burridge is in the saddle and after a bit of lobbying among Members of Parliament and others the dates were changed to fit in with our arrangements. The small vessels used for fisheries surveillance added the necessary touch of class to the ceremony, despite their small complement.

Now to return to the events of Sunday 13th.

We were warned to be ready to leave our hotels by 10 a.m. to go to the venue of our Memorial and prepare for the ceremony. We loaded aboard a variety of vehicles, all four wheel drive as this is the only type of vehicle which could climb to the mountain on which the Resting Place is situated. A brief stop at the Australian Consulate then on to the winding mountain road with drivers belting along in a cloud of dust, blowing horns practically continuously. This writer formed the impression that it was O.K. to knock down anybody legally if you blew the horn first.

As we neared the Memorial site we suddenly found the roadside become a bower of arches on either and the roadside became a living guard of honour of Timorese spear-

men. The sight was unbelievable. Then on to the actual spot for the ceremony, overlooking the actual Memorial.

There is a newly finished road immediately above the Memorial and it is at this point the plaques telling of the Memorial are placed. Above this road is the main road to Ailiu and above this the remainder of the mountain side. The whole of this area from the Memorial to the top of the mountain was covered with colourful and teeming humanity. Such vivid colour I have never previously seen.

A guard of honour of Australian Naval personnel and also a guard of Portuguese Army personnel were formed up for the salute. The whole scene was something that will probably never be witnessed in this world again. The greeting we received was both spontaneous and magnificent. We had returned home! And all this and we had not yet dismounted from our vehicles. Had not seen the Memorial!

Dismount from our cars, a shake hands with Mr. Roger Dean, Administrator of the Northern Territory, who was representing the Australian Commonwealth Government, and his entourage which comprised the Naval Commander Northern Territory, Capt. Cleary; Army Commander, Lt. Col. P. J. Norton; Air Commander, Group Capt. Mather, and A.D.C. Lt. Brian Bell. Mr. Dean was also accompanied by his wife and the President of Darwin R.S.L., Mr. J. P. Tiernan.

Then turn around and view the scene. What utter grandeur! What true magnificence! The vista of Dili in the foreground opened up before you in a scene probably unique in the world. Timor's topography is probably absolutely unique and this site one of the greatest possible. Then to look down on the glory which is our Resting Place. Never in my life have I witnessed such a beautiful site. The colour and majesty is indescribable. The translucent blue water of the pool, the rugged strength of the Resting Place, the colourful terrazzo of the flooring, the power and strength of the free stone retaining walls, the huge trees and colourful shrubbery all added to a scene that was truly breath-taking. A quick catch in the throat was the first reaction. "Was

this our gift to these wonderful people?" Surely this was fairyland. We were dreaming. No it was all real. So much more than we expected in our wildest dream.

Thank you! Thank you! You wonderful architects, engineers and workmen, that was my silent prayer.

All this happened in the space of seconds while we awaited the arrival of the Governor. The guards gave a Royal Salute as His Excellency arrived and were inspected and then onto the ceremony of handover and dedication. It was with bated breath we who were involved awaited the start.

The Australian Consul introduced the speakers and we were away.

The first to address the assembly was your President, Bill Epps, who found the occasion as much as he could bear and was so overcome with the emotion of the occasion that he broke down only to come back and finish the task in a manner only to be described as heroic and magnificent.

Col Doig followed him and he too found the occasion overwhelming and was shaking like an aspen leaf.

Col. Scapinakis spoke for the Portuguese, Nicolau Goncalves (Norm Thornton and Ray Aitken's creado) spoke for the Timorese. The Bishop of Dili blessed the Resting Place. Mr. Roger Dean then read the inscription on the plaque in English and the Governor read the plaque in Portuguese.

Mr. Dean then spoke for the Australian Government and lastly the Governor replied from the Portuguese Government.

This all took a considerable time as all speaks had to be translated either into Portuguese or English after they had been delivered.

As the plaques were unveiled the guards gave a Royal Salute and a bugle band played the Retreat.

A most moving and amazing ceremony, colourful in the extreme and never to be repeated in this world again. Those who were fortunate enough to take part will have memories forever of this magnificent day.

With the ceremony over it was now time for the contingent to meet up with their ex-creados who had been assembled for just this occasion. Many and touching were the re-unions as we once again met these

faithful friends. Over 100 of these people had assembled and many were vouched for as being the ones who had helped us so much. A small token of our esteem was handed to these people now quite aging and we so remembered them as boys and youths. Once again the lumps were in the throats and many an eye was brushed to remove a tear.

All the while a dancing group performed near the pool of the Memorial. The women accompanying the party were all awe struck by the occasion.

After the re-union with the creados we were able to go down the magnificent stairway and view the Memorial at close hand and see the true beauty of it all. The huge Arturo shell which provides the font. The seats and terrazzo floor, then the lovely pool with the water cascading down a concrete wall that for all the world looks like an immense mirror. To see the true grandeur of the free stone retaining walls already planted with giant monsterius and to see the colourful Timor plants tastefully arranged in strategic places. All placed with the loving care.

Your writer could only wish for a pen of greater descriptive strength to be able to capture the true glory of it all. It was all so rushed but it was all so wonderful and the organisation was perfect, even down to a plentiful supply of "Tuaka" laid on by the Timorese. We were really back in the thick of it all.

All good things come to an end and we left our Resting Place with some reluctance to return to the Australian Consulate for a quick drink and then to the Resende Hotel where all had a buffet lunch.

It was a moment for reflection on all the things that had happened to us since we left Darwin at 6 p.m. that morning. Probably there has never been a group of people who had encountered so much in so little time.

The afternoon was spent by most in going to see the grand cock fight which had been arranged by John Burridge and for which a prize of \$50 was donated by the Association. This is still the same gory sport we knew of old but probably a bit more sophisticated nowadays and the owners of the winning birds do not do

as much victory dancing as of old. The winning bird knocked off four opponents in the day before his owner was presented with ten \$5 bills by President Bill Epps. His eyes popped out a yard at the thought of so much "ossen".

Then was to come the big social occasion, the cocktail party at the Australian Consulate, given in conjunction by the Consul and the Association. Probably all the dignitaries of Portuguese Timor were present and of course the personnel of "Assail" and "Attack" and ourselves. The evening was hot and humid and was beginning to take toll of the travelling party who had had very little sleep since Thursday evening. So in the words of Samuel Pepys "So to bed" but not to immediate sleep as this was a day to reflect upon for many a waking hour.

Before departing from the Memorial and all the events surrounding it a big word of praise to those so much responsible for its construction. To the architects, Pinto Lopes and Bruno Soares, who conceived it initially; to Marques da Costa, the engineer who carried the project to its final conclusion; to the Australian Consuls, John Denvers and Max Berman, who acted on our behalf so efficiently and of course to the supervisors and workmen who built it and last but not least to Col Hodson who created the beautiful plaques. All in his turn please accept our gratitude and heartfelt thanks for a job so wonderfully done.

Monday the whole contingent was treated to a beach party at White Sands beach to the east of Dili. This is a wonderful spot not unlike the sandy coves of Sydney. The beach huts are in true thatched Timorese style and provide wonderful shade. A party of native dancers were brought from Liquisa and they never let up all day and performed probably the full range of native dances known on the island even the Dance of the Lorensi which had once been banned by the Portuguese for 400 years. The music was really lovely and not at all raucous. The food was in Timorese style including "bebi" stew cooked in bamboos, rice cooked in plaited leaves, whole cooked pig stuffed

with rice and a million other delicacies.

Don Turton took the opportunity to record quite a bit of the music of the dancing group. This was a nice relaxing day after the excitement and rigours of the previous day.

Tuesday saw the party split up and head in various directions to try and renew some of the spots we knew of old. Those staying at the Mira Mia took off on a three day tour which encompassed Eremera, Railaco, Lete Foho, Same, Ainaro, Mobisse, Ailu, Remixio, then back to Dili while those from the Resende went in the opposite direction commencing at Ailu and going round to Eremera to Dili. Others took a one day trip arranged by the Army to Eremera in the army's "mechanical drays" and had a wonderful day and a sore bottom. (It was suggested to Col. Scapanakis that next time he sign a contract with Mercedes-Benz he get them to throw in the springs for the vehicles.) Some also did a one day trip to Ailu and also to Remixio and to the Catholic Seminary which is situated near our Resting Place.

All who went anywhere were greeted with the usual Portuguese or Timorese hospitality and courtesy. All remarked that once the sophistication of Dili was left behind the island was little changed from the days of our campaign. All were most impressed by the education programme now being carried out on a compulsory basis from the ages of seven to 14 years. Agriculture has expanded and the Lois and Glano Valleys abound with rice paddies and there are miles and miles of coffee plantations all the way to Eremera and also to Remixio. Timor coffee demands the top prices on the European market.

While tripping around many of the lads met up with their creados and once again there were touching scenes of re-union. Unfortunately the lads from "A" Platoon met few of their creados as these appear to be the ones who suffered most at the hands of the Japanese.

Thursday saw the contingent re-assembled at Dili and we prepared that night for a dinner party at the Australian Consulate. This was a most enjoyable occasion and the food outstanding. This was followed by a party at the Resende when

folk singing by a Portuguese group was enjoyed.

Friday saw a lot of the gang fly to Baucau in preparation for the homeward journey by those leaving the island on Saturday. Most of these took advantage of a charter trip around the island by Dove aircraft. This enabled us to see from the air spots we would not have had either the time or due to bad roads a chance to see on the ground. Some saw Same, Alas, the Kablakis, Viqueque, Ossu, Ossurua, Bagau, and other places in the eastern end of the island. Some were as of old but others like Viqueque had grown into quite large places. Baucau is a lovely spot up on the scarp and not nearly so hot and humid as Dili. The Hotel Baucau is very new and very comfortable. The dining room-cum-bar is in true thatched Timorese style and suits the climate admirably. The food excellent and the beer cold. There is a duty free store at the airport which was opened for us but was not marvelously stocked. However most of the party were able to buy something of value at a reasonable price.

Saturday for a lot was a long return home. Out of bed at Baucau at 4 a.m. Airport at 7 a.m. Darwin 7.30 (central time), through Health and Customs back on the plane, stop Katherine (which has grown to quite a large place), stop and change planes Alice Springs. Arrive Adelaide 7.15 p.m. Out to Dudley Tapper's home for a barbecue and beer. Meet Alan Hollow, Bert Bache, Lofty Timke and others. Rush out to Adelaide Airport, board a 727 for Perth, arrive home at 11 p.m. 4,000 miles in a day and were we weary? This was the end of a marvellous trip for about half the party. Crammed like a goose for eight days but well worthwhile and the experience of a lifetime and a talking point for years to come.

The remainder of the party comprising Tony and Carol Bowers, Peter and Pam Campbell, Reg and Dot Harrington, Vince and Pam Swann, Jack Cary, Jack Sheehan, Harry Sproston, Tom Crouch, Don Turton and Doc. Colyer, stayed on until Tuesday and caught the normal service plane out of Baucau that day. They were able to see considerably more of the island. Some

took the Dove down to Maliana and were surprised by the amount of work going on there. They were not able to get to Bobanaro as the road was still out. From Baucau they went to various spots including a Research Station which very much impressed the farming brigade who feel this is an activity in which they may be able to assist at a later date.

They were also taken to see a place out from Baucau where the Japs had a huge work party of Timorese prepare caves as a supply dump and after the job was completed the whole work force of some many thousands were slaughtered. They say the whole roadsides are planted with crosses marking the resting place of the dead. This only emphasises just how merited our Memorial to the wonderful people of Timor really is.

Eventually the whole party arrived home some on Wednesday evening and some on Thursday evening. Those arriving on Thursday had a compulsory day stop over at Darwin and also a day at Alice Springs and they voted it all worth while.

So the great trip is over. Whether we will ever be able to do it again on such a grand scale is a moot point, but it was truly worth while.

Too much credit cannot be given to Bill Epps who as our President, led the party and got himself very bound up in administrative work in Dili with the Consul and other dignitaries and did not get a chance to get around as much as many of the others. Bill and Jess accepted this responsibility with their usual equanimity. They were assisted in a big way by Ray and Muriel Aitken and Ray acted as the official interpreter of the party and general man of all work.

The party was not without mishap. Vince Swann won himself a dose of malaria and quite a few suffered stomach upsets either on the island or after return. Arthur Smith collapsed at work on the Thursday before Anzac Day and had to be sent home where he was still confined to bed at time of writing. Tom Crouch collapsed at the Criterion Hotel on Anzac morning but had recovered somewhat by evening. Bill Epps was far from well on Anzac Day but reports a big improvement now. So you will see it was a pretty rig-

orous trip which took an eventual toll.

That completes a rather sketchy account of a most momentous holiday. There must be a bundle more experiences which can be recounted and here is your opportunity to hop in and write of your experiences. This especially applies to the ladies of the party some of whom were noted to be keeping daily diaries.

The speeches delivered at the hand over Dedication Ceremony are printed below in this issue. These include the translated to English versions of those speeches given in Portuguese.

Members are informed that it is the intention of the Association at a later date to forward to all members a suitable colour photograph of the Memorial and also if possible a suitable colour photo of the crowd at the Memorial Dedication.

Mal Herbert and Jack Fowler both took movie records of the highlights of the ceremony and also of the trip. The Portuguese authorities took an official movie film of the ceremony and a copy of this in due course will be made available to the Association.

It is hoped in the near future to get together as many films as possible both slides and movies and a committee is already working on this project and when completed a night will be advised to members when a viewing of these will be made. This should be of great interest to all members of the Association.

* * *

President's Footnote:

As President I cannot allow this report of the Trip to Timor to close without putting on record a very sincere vote of thanks to the man who did so much to make it all tick. We have always known that as an organiser Col Doig has no peer. Even so this trip was a real challenge even to this master man. When you consider that the party left Perth at 2 a.m. on Saturday and travelled to Adelaide, Darwin and across to Timor to arrive at the opening ceremony by 11 a.m. on Sunday (just 33 hours) without a single hitch or hold-up speaks for itself. We stepped on and off planes, onto buses, into hotels, back onto planes, taxis and finally were settled into our hotels in Dili with time to have a

quick clean-up before the official ceremony. The trip home, done in reverse, was just as painstakingly planned out for us.

On behalf of everyone who benefitted by his organising a very big "Thank You" to that Prince of Organisers—Col Doig. The day the Association loses his services will be a black day indeed.

ADDRESS BY THE AUSTRALIAN CONSUL MR. M. F. BERMAN

Your Excellency the Governor, Brigadier Pires; Your Lordship Bishop Ribeiro; The Honourable Judge, Dr. Manuel Fernandes; Your Honour the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Mr. Dean; The President of the 2/2nd Commando Association Mr. Epps; Mr. Doig, and the members of the 2/2nd Commando Association, without whose presence we would not be assembled here today; The Consul for the Republic of China, Mr. Pao; The Consul for Indonesia, Mr. Agoes; Distinguished Guests; the People of Timor; Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honour for me, Your Excellency, Brigadier Pires, and Your Honour, Mr. Dean, to stand in this beautiful spot amid these everlasting hills with fellow Australians represented by the men of the 2/2nd and representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia's Navy, Army and Air Force and our friends the Portuguese on the occasion of the Dedication of the Memorial to the Portuguese people.

It is presumptuous of me to remind you of the deeds of the 2/2nd Commandos. Their exploits are already recorded in history. These timeless mountains bear silent witness.

Suffice to say that the achievement of the men of the 2/2nd must be regarded as unique. The 2/2nd Commandos kept the soldiers' faith. They remained steadfast in war, but they did more than this. They returned in peace.

The story of the 2/2nd I leave to more eloquent lips, to the men who made it. However in conclusion I must record my gratitude to them, and I know that this would also be the sentiment of my predecessor, Mr. John Denvers, for conceiving the idea of this place of peace, this

Resting Place, which is a reminder of our friendship for the Portuguese people.

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Your Excellency the Governor; Your Lordship the Bishop of Dili; Dr. Fernandes; Mr. Roger Dean, the Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

As President of the 2/2nd Commando Association it is my pleasant duty to speak at this function, held at a place already familiar to my comrades. Here, or hereabouts, in the year 1942 we sat for many hours and many days observing the activities of the Japanese Military in occupied Dili. Today we observe Dili in the company of our friends in peace and in good fellowship.

My Association grew out of our service on this beautiful island. The friendship and faith in each other we learned here caused us to wish to keep together throughout our subsequent lives. To this end we formed the 2/2nd Commando Association, and though our members are scattered over the mighty extent of the Commonwealth of Australia, and indeed the world, we are still in a position to be able to contact every surviving member of our Unit. Thus the unity which stemmed from Timor has grown in solidarity through the years. Though we come from all walks of life we manage to keep our contacts.

It is because of this unity that we are able to be here today. Though our numbers may be few, as a result of the vast distances involved, we are representative, and we bring you greetings from all members of the Association.

When one of our members revisited Timor and gained for the first time a knowledge of how our friends the Portuguese and the indigenous peoples of Timor had suffered between 1942 and 1945, we were able to produce some small token of our sorrow and our regard.

I come to you humbly. This Resting Place at Dare which we dedicate to all the people of Timor and all the Portuguese wherever they may be, is both little and late.

We are able to dedicate it today from all the people of Australia because the Federal Government of our country and the Government of

Western Australia were generous in their support of my Association's project.

We are in no doubt that the reason for our survival during 1942 was that from the very first we were amongst friends. When we think back upon the unbelievable risks taken by Portuguese citizens, both European and Timorese, on our behalf, we are amazed and awed. Perhaps we should not be surprised, for from the time Padre Talaveras landed on this island, so many years ago, and the green and red banner established some permanency in this outpost, this land has been a home for the adventurous in spirit and the brave of heart.

(This is where Bill was so overcome with emotion that he broke down and was unable to continue. He called in Ray Aitken, who had composed the speech, to carry on.)

May I express, too, our wonder at the unflinching courage of those members of the indigenous people who risked their lives as creolos in our service. Whether they were of the Mombai or the Noga Noga or any one of the tribes of these mountains, they were a credit to Rai Timor and the Portuguese Nation.

It is the hope of members of my Association that this ceremony and this small token of our esteem for our friends the Portuguese, will help to re-cement the friendship formed between us and to keep our memories fresh.

May I here express our grateful thanks to the Administrative Chiefs of this island for their unflinching courtesy and patience in the long months which have gone before this day. We would like also to thank the two Australian Consuls, Messrs. Denvers and Berman, who have given time and thought unsparingly to make this day possible.

My Association wishes me to express direct appreciation to the Director of Public Works, Marques da Costa, and the Architects, Pinto Lopes and Bruno Soares, who have brought this Resting Place to completion.

(Bill was able to return at this point and concluded the speech.)

Finally, Your Excellency, in thanking you for allowing us to re-visit this land and at this late hour make this token of our unending fellowship with the citizens of Timor, may

I hope, on behalf of my Association, that the flag which flies here today will continue to fly for another 500 years, and may those flags which fly with it now be a mark of a continuing friendship growing through strength and understanding to more frequent contact and permanency.

(Bill then thanked Ray for stepping in and explained to the gathering that he had been so filled up with emotion that he could not speak and thanked them for their attention.)

SPEECH BY COL DOIG

Your Excellency the Governor; Your Lordship the Bishop of Dili; Dr. Fernandes; Mr. Roger Dean, the Administrator of the Northern Territory; Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. Epps has spoken for the 2/2nd Association. It is my duty to speak for the Unit. The 2/2nd was a small Unit. Though we gathered to our numbers certain oddments of soldiery, both Australian and Allied, the original Australian Unit which landed in Dili in December, 1941, numbered only 327. This was one Commando Squadron and its first reinforcements.

Our Unit was a highly trained entity of light infantry, capable of extreme mobility for purposes of raiding, demolition and harassing action.

Its members were essentially amateur soldiers, swiftly trained to a high degree of professionalism. In concept, the Unit was made up of a collection of individuals, all of whom were considered capable of acting alone. All were original volunteers to the Services and all had volunteered for special service. Theoretically each member was of officer or non-commissioned officer material. Indeed it was the type of Unit which might have been more properly occupied in capturing an enemy General than in acting as a garrison on Timor. However, it was this individual competence which was to be one of the factors in our survival.

When the Japanese forces landed in Dili, the main body of the Company was already dispersed in the hills from Nasuta and Railaco to Ma il Ho and Bazaar Tete. This preparatory dispersal, forced upon us by food and malarial problems,

was yet another factor in our survival.

The defence of Dili on the night of the 19/20th February, 1942, was largely a token defence. Within a few hours it was all over, and the only effective action was the demolition of the air strip by one of our sections. The small Dutch force in Dili surrendered somewhat more than half its numbers and the Australians, minus about 16 of their members, were licking their wounds in the hills.

The next few days were very quiet. Apart from a minor Australian exploratory move or two, little of note occurred. It was not until early March that the invading forces applied pressure. A major probe was made towards Eremera, and an attack was launched on the Australian section occupying Nun Turi Pu above Bazaar Tete. The Japanese suffered heavily here and were engaged again by another part of the Unit later in the day, suffering more casualties. The move towards Eremera resulted in further ambushes. The Japanese forces withdrew to Dili.

Though the initial "bleeding" of the Australians had been very successful indeed, they were now on the run. They had suffered some casualties and the carrying of wounded interfered with their mobility. In these circumstances their indebtedness to the Portuguese can never be over-estimated. Chefes da Post everywhere were authorised by their Government to arrange food for the Australians. The Administration, at grave risk, had taken the stand that the right of the courageous neutral was to feed all comers. Private citizens amongst the Portuguese adopted the same stand. We cannot name them all, or indeed remember them all, but let us take Antonio Alves Varvelhiero as a shining example. With no thought of his personal safety, he made light of providing food and shelter for an entire platoon of battle-weary Australians, though the Japanese forces were almost on his doorstep. Ai Foo was never in greater danger. May its coffee continue to multiply.

His Excellency the Governor, immured in Dili, resisted pressure to turn his administration against the Australians. Aid from his provincial administrators and post chiefs continued to make the 2/2nd less of a

group of bandits, and more of an effective Unit.

The great numbers of troops available to the invader enabled him to patrol the nearer mountains almost at will, but did not prevent the establishment of observation posts, above us here near Dare, at Dar-aa, at Cumeer and elsewhere. Frequent ambushes and raids, notably one on Dili on May 15, caused the Japanese Commanders to doubt the future. They were unable to tell whether the probing was preparatory to a major attack from mainland Australia. They could have slept soundly, as the Australians had no contact with their homeland and were hard at work building a usable transmitter for just this reason.

The invader was hit hard whenever he took to the mountains and despite a determined effort in August his attempts to oust the Unit from its peaks were largely ineffectual, until he adopted a sort of scorched earth policy, brought in native allies from across the border and stirred up some dissident elements. It is significant that as the Administration came under stress the way of the Unit became harder.

Our Unit was relieved in late 1942 by 2/4th Commando Squadron. Times were now very difficult indeed, and the new Unit lacked the local knowledge of the 2/2nd and was soon evacuated.

What I have said should serve to show clearly that though we were proud of our Unit, confident in our individual capacity to cope with our odd, out-numbered situation, confident too in the integrity of our comrades, our survival and value was in direct relation to the aid and friendship of the Portuguese, official and private, and those other wonderful citizens, the indigenous peoples of Rai Timor.

For these reasons, Your Excellency, I pledge our Unit to regard the Portuguese and their charges as *belu bebic*. (Tetem—friends always)

ADDRESS BY COL. SCAPINAKIS

(This was given in English by the Colonel and is a true record)

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to thank Mr. Berman, the Australian Consul in Dili, for his invitation which permitted me to

take part in this ceremony.

As a soldier I will talk frankly with my heart and just a few moments. On the military point of view the action of the Australian soldiers here during the Second World War, was a high example and a high lesson how to do a guerrilla war.

A few hundred men fought against thousands during a long time. This was possible for two reasons.

First, the high technicism of the Australian soldiers. Their great sense of duty. Their sacrifice spirit developed to the most high degree. Their courage, their valour and their gallantry.

Second, the great help given to them by the Portuguese people, European and Timorese, who have chosen a way of conduct and as their flag honour and loyalty. By that they sacrificed their lives, their homes, their families. They gave them their food, they indicated the ways of the jungle, they concealed them, their ammunition and their guns. They went to the enemy lines to watch and hear, to give them good information.

God bless the mothers who gave sons like these to our two nations. And God bless too those who have died for a better world and a world of peace.

I hope that this Memorial will increase more and more the understanding and friendship between our two nations.

NICOLAU GONCALVES (For The Creadoes)

Your Excellency the Governor, Australian Gentlemen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we were told about this ceremony we were very happy, and we came to Dili with a happy heart. The shadow of the bad days of war didn't destroy our joy. With tears we recall our Australian friends of those days, whom we accompanied and guided because they were good people, and because we always thought their victory meant peace for our land and for Portugal.

We were boys then. Now we are old, but we didn't forget. We keep in our minds the picture of the gone dangers. Of things we saw and pains we suffered.

Sometimes we tell the livid truth and to the others it looks like big

lies, but that was the way things happened. Even today we are filled with fear when we talk about it.

Australian soldiers were never frightened. They slept with their eyes open and attentive ears. They did no harm to the people. We ate and drank from their food and drink, whenever food and drink were available.

We put all our hope in the Australian soldier who said he was defending Portugal, and that was the truth, as they respected our flag and liked us to say we were Portuguese.

Here we are, some of these Timorese Portuguese Australian soldiers haven't forgotten. We haven't forgotten them either. Our friendliness towards the Australian soldier is a true one, and it won't die as we teach it to our children.

Thank you very much for this pretty Memorial that comes from the great and kind heart of the Australian soldier.

All we did for the soldier of Australia was our duty, as a Christian obligation. They were Christians too, but even if they were not we would have done the same thing.

But if they owed to us anything in help and loyalty, we have been amply paid since the day the Portuguese banner freely returned to the staves of Timor.

ADDRESS BY MR. R. L. DEAN

Your Excellency, My Lord Bishop, I should like you to know that I appreciate very much the invitation to join with you today in this important ceremony. I realise also the honour of representing the Government of Australia at it.

With my wife and I are the Officer Commanding R.A.A.F. Darwin, Group Captain A. E. Mather, D.F.C. A.F.C.; Naval Officer in Charge North Australia Area, Captain B. L. Cleary, R.A.N.; Commander N.T. Command, Lieutenant Colonel P. J. Norton; President of the R.S.L. Darwin, Mr. J. B. Tiernan, M.B.E.; and my A.D.C. Lieutenant Brian Bell.

I am very glad that they have been able to join me to represent their several Services because of the close co-operation the Navy and Air Force gave to the Australian soldiers during the Timor campaign. Also because of the association Darwin had with it as the base, I think it appropriate that they and the Pre-

sident of the R.S.L. should be present today.

The proceedings we are witnessing today will add to the history written nearly 30 years ago by the men of the 2/2nd Commando Squadron and the people of Portuguese Timor.

Previous speakers have told with great warmth and feeling of the affection and respect which grew up between our troops and the people here during World War II. As evidence of this we have 2/2nd Commando Squadron Association members from many parts of Australia and people from various areas of Timor—both with the same aim—to renew friendship and to demonstrate that they have not forgotten the experiences of shared hardship.

In fact many Australians have not forgotten the warm relationship which has existed over the years between the Timorese and our country and the Australian Government has been more than glad to make a contribution to the cost of this Memorial on behalf of the Australian people.

I am sure there must be widespread approval for the form of this Memorial. It is both practical and symbolic. The provision of a resting place for the people on their way to and from the market in New Dili is a great amenity, and one which we hope will be used and appreciated. From the symbolic aspect, I see the excellent craftsmanship as representing the firmness and reliability of the Portuguese and Timorese people, and the stream cascading into the pool as the un-failing flow of goodwill between our countries.

This Memorial has been erected essentially for the use of the local people, but I am sure that before long it will become something of a shrine for visitors not only from Australia but from all over the world. I am sure that the members of the 2/2nd Commando Squadron Association will return home feeling that their years of planning and endeavour in this project have been well spent, and I have no doubt that their work will be applauded by their fellow Australians.

I express the hope that the existing warm relationship between the peoples of Portuguese Timor and Australia will continue to flourish, and that the years ahead may be ones of peace for all people to enjoy.

THE GOVERNOR OF TIMOR

Your Honour the Administrator of the Northern Territory; Your Lordship the Bishop of Timor; Your Honour the Judge of Timor Territory; Military Commander; Representatives of the 2/2nd Commando Association; Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been the will of the former Australian combatants, the Independent Company survivors, that disembarked here at the end of December, 1941, to put in practical form their feelings of gratitude towards the warm and unselfish welcoming bestowed on them by the Timorese people.

The ex-Commandos decided the high praise already attributed to the Timorese people in the press and in conferences, in books and on the radio, were not enough to pay for the debt of gratitude contracted towards our people through the hard days they lived here during World War II.

They got together for this purpose and with the same tenacity and the same determination they used in the military operations they fought, once again they won and attained their proposed goal—the realization of this just dedicated Memorial.

This work built by skilful hands that gave to it an architectural shape of great simplicity, honouring as it does the Portuguese of Timor, puts in permanent form a sublime gesture of the Australian people of which the Independent Company is a part.

Gratitude is the attribute of noble souls. To express it in such an eloquent manner, for events that happened nearly three decades ago, is a positive evidence of Christian civilization, always triumphant whenever men master themselves and listen to their consciences.

From the knowledge I had even before being invested as Governor of this Province, and from what I learnt here, I know the Timorese people keep pleasant memories of the Australian fighting men who knew how to fight without indulging in violence, always respecting the populations' dignity, property and belongings.

This moral attitude, so difficult to keep through the days of war, is the reason why instead of hostility the Independent Company combatants found in Timor hospitality in the be-

ginning and later open hearted friendship.

But, were not the Timorese people what it is, with a deeply Portuguese and Christian upbringing, transmitted through close contact, even among those who are not converted to Christianity, the efforts of the Australian fighting men would have been to no avail, no matter how kind and intelligent they might have been. Hostility would have sprung up from the natural instinct, with the consequent cruel reaction, the more so as Portugal wanted to keep to its neutrality.

There has been therefore, an admirable correspondence of feelings in which I see shining brightly the understanding of the Portuguese of Timor, in that hour of terrible misery and indescribable distress.

Timorese knew, with a surprising ability to observe, how to distinguish their friends from their foes, returning goodwill for goodwill, defending themselves from the tragedy in which they were innocently involved, but always keeping their indefectible patriotism.

I listened attentively to the speeches just made and the words I heard entirely confirm the greatness of soul of this handful of Oceania Portuguese I have the honour of governing today.

To Your Excellencies, Your Honour the Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia, the Consul for Australia in Dili and Mr. Bill Epps, I present my compliments and thank them on behalf of my country's Government and of Timorese people for your presence and the beautiful sentiments you have conveyed.

To Mr. Doig I ask you to convey to Brigadier Callinan whom you represent here and who was the Second in Charge of the Independent Company, that his stay at Cailaco is still gratefully recalled and that we are sorry he could not be here for me to express my appreciation as a Portuguese and a soldier, for this homage paid to the Australian fighting men, homage which is a tribute nobly paid to the gallantry and courage of the Timorese people.

At last to you, Nicolau Concalves, great in your modesty, I say that bronze plaque you see over there, being doubtlessly the consecration of your effort and of so many other

Portuguese like yourself, is also an inscription forever reminding the future generations that the Australian Soldier is the glory and honour of his country.

FAREWELL LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR OF TIMOR

Your Excellency,

As our time for leaving Timor approaches we think we should put in writing some of the things we have tried to say to you personally.

First, Sir, we would like to thank you once again for the wonderful hospitality we have received on this island. We must also thank you for the splendid completion of the Dare Resting Place. We trust you may be able to convey to Lisbon our grat-

itude to all who gave attention to the construction at this beautiful spot.

Would you also convey our thanks to Colonel Scapinakis for transport supplied.

But finally Sir, it is to you and your administrative subordinates to whom we owe most thanks. May the project now completed be a token of continuing friendship between our two peoples and our two countries.

Should Your Excellency ever visit our country on unofficial business please do not forget to contact the 2/2nd Commando Association for as the Portuguese say: "Our houses have no doors".

W. T. Epps, President.

West Australian Whisperings

Association Activities

APRIL MEETING

This was a very small meeting held as usual at Anzac House Basement on April 1 and the main business of the evening was in the nature of a farewell to those departing on the Timor trip. It was a most enjoyable if informal evening and everyone was home at a tidy hour.

ANZAC DAY

Blessed with gorgeous weather we had a marvellous day. John Burridge and Ron Kirkwood laid a wreath on the State War Memorial at the Dawn Service and others noticed in attendance were Len Bagley, Bill Epps, "Spriggy" McDonald, Geo. Boyland, Fred Napier and Col Doig.

The march attracted one of our biggest roll ups ever and led by Bill Epps with Mick Morgan carrying the banner approximately 60 of our lads and boys from other Squadrons swung down St. George's Tce. and William-st. to the strange march music of a Salvation Army Band playing what appeared to be a one step. However we got there without anyone crossing their legs. We proudly marched off once again led by Bill Epps and at the end of the march adjourned to the W.A.

Rowing Club where the amber fluid was ready to flow having been arranged by Joe Poynton and being handled when we arrived by Rod Dhu and Clarrie Varian. Thirsts were quickly slaked and we settled down to reminiscence on Timor experiences as most of the party who were on the trip had stayed on for the march.

Although he only arrived home the previous night at midnight Jack Cary once again provided a marvellous meal which I am sure everyone enjoyed to the utmost.

More grog and then of course the inevitable singing and this went on until 6.30 p.m. (not bad from 12 noon). The players and stayers adjourned to the Bedford Hotel and carried on strongly for many more hours.

During the afternoon Don Turton took the opportunity to present to Col Doig a watch in appreciation of his efforts in organising the travel section of the Timor trip. This was subscribed to by those who took part in the trip.

Among those noticed on parade and elsewhere were Ray Aitken and his cousin also Ray Aitken who was in the No. 1 N.Z. Coy, Les Anderson, Len Bagley, Tony Bowers, Geo. Boyland, Joe Burridge, Peter Campbell, Jack Cary, Eddie Craghill, Col Criddle, Dick Darrington, Jack Denman, Rod Dhu, Col Doig, Bill Epps,

Geo. Fletcher, Alby Friend, Doug Fullarton, Dick Geere, Jerry Haire, Percy Hancock, Reg Harrington, Jack Hasson, Keith Hayes, Harry Holder, Ron Kirkwood, John Lillie, Gerry Maley, Sprig McDonald, Jim McLaughlan, Mick Morgan, Fred Napier, Ray Parry, Jack Penglase, Joe Poynton, Merv Ryan, Jack Sheehan, Bob Smyth, Vince Swann, Don Turton, Clarrie Varian, Roy Watson and from N.S.W. Ray Cole.

There were also a bundle of usuals from other squadrons who have no association of their own and we are always pleased to welcome them to Anzac Day with us.

It may be said a truly typical Anzac Day in the true 2/2nd manner.

JUNE MEETING

This will be held on Tuesday, June 3, in the Basement at Anzac House. This will be the first evening for competition for the Calcutt Memorial Trophy Games. This will be your opening opportunity to take the trophy home with you this year so roll up and give this event a great big boost.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Your Editor's attention has been drawn to the fact that there has been no write up of this most pleasing and successful function. So here it is if it be ever so late.

This was arranged by Len and Dot Bagley and took place at the Highway Hotel and we were given the use of the dining room and provided with drink waiters, a three piece orchestra and a most beautiful supper. (This is an under estimation. It was more like a full banquet.)

During the evening Mr. Syd Calcutt on behalf of the Calcutt family presented the Mick Calcutt Memorial Trophy to Jack Cary, the winner for 1968. He also presented replicas to previous winners in Mick Morgan (1966) and Bill Epps (1967). These were beautiful little pieces provided by Col Hodson and will grace any mantelpiece.

The roll up was most encouraging and included many from the country including Dot and Reg Harrington, Grace and Clarrie Turner, Vince and Pam Swanne, Elsie and Alf Hillman, Vida and Don Turton, and probably others who the passing of time have obliterated from my memory.

Everyone present voted it a must for the future years despite the high cost.

Also during the evening the opportunity was taken to meet the Australian Consul from Portuguese Timor, John Denvers, and his wife and John was presented with a desk set in appreciation of his efforts on our behalf with the Timor Memorial.

Committee Comment

Since last we issued a "Courier" Committee meetings have been held in March and April. The main business has been directed at both meetings towards the organisation of the Timor trip and Anzac Day.

At the March meeting John Burridge gave a lengthy report on his trip to Timor to organise for the party going in April. This was most comprehensive and included hotel bookings, ceremony arrangements, V.I.P.s., etc.

At the April meeting Bill Epps gave his report on the actual trip to Timor with especial reference to the ceremony. He was also in a position to say that final documents had been signed to clean up the whole Memorial project. There remain some outstanding accounts regarding functions held at Dili but these should not amount to a great deal.

It was decided that a presentation should be made to Marques da Costa, the engineer for the project. This was deferred until the next Committee meeting to give members a chance to go into the matter of a suitable presentation.

It was decided that President Bill Epps lead the Anzac Day march this year.

Bill Epps reported that two working bees had taken place at Kings Park to clean the area prior to Anzac Day. At the first Bill Epps, Ron Kirkwood, Arthur Smith and Col Doig took part and at the second Len Bagley, Jack Hasson and Geo. Fletcher cleaned up finally before Anzac Day.

Ron Kirkwood and John Burridge were appointed to lay the wreath on Anzac Day.

Joe Poynton advised that arrangements for refreshments were fully in hand.

Personalities

We start this column this issue on a rather sombre note.

First we have to report the death after a long illness of member Lionel (Curly) Freeman, in New South Wales early in April, 1969. Lionel will be well remembered by the Timor boys as one of the first reinforcements who joined us off the "Koolema". He served with "A" Platoon. If my memory serves me right he and Bob Larney, Des Lilya and Arnold Webb successfully got back to Australia and were sent back to the Unit. Our sincere condolences to his wife and family.

Secondly advice has been received that Dick Burton was accidentally killed in Queensland just before Christmas. Dick was working for a Shire Council in Queensland at the time of the tragic accident. Dick will be remembered as an original member of 9 Section with Ray Cole and later Jack Denman. He was always a quiet unassuming chap who was accepted as a top grade soldier and a good bloke. Once again we extend to his family our sincere sympathy.

Thirdly, Harry Sproxtton had the sad experience of losing his brother while he was on the trip to Timor and was not aware of the fact until he returned over a week after the happening. The Sproxttons were a very closely knit family and this makes the loss the more serious. We hope Harry that time the great healer, will ease your sorrow.

Grace Turner also has had the sad experience of losing her father, Mr. Roy Murnane, after a long illness. Roy was a 10th Light Horseman in World War I and was known as a breeder of race horses.

Most sorry to hear that Arthur Smith had collapsed at work and was under doctor's orders at present time to take it very steadily. Apparently the Timor trip was more rigorous than we imagined.

Tom Crouch is another who had the nasty experience of collapsing on Anzac morning. Reports to hand later in the day indicated that Tom was not as bad as originally we thought as he gave everyone concerned a nasty scare. Tom always appeared to be a bundle of good health.

On a more happy note it was good to see Ray Cole over in W.A. for Anzac Day and looking so very big and well. Ray was in W.A. for a family wedding and says he was real lucky that it coincided with Anzac Day to enable him to meet so many of the boys.

Jack Sheehan was one of the gang who went to Timor who had a marvellous time. He absolutely radiated good fellowship the whole time.

Bob and Barbara Palmer had the time of their lives on the trip as did Dot and Reg Harrington, Carol and Tony Bowers, Pat and Peter Campbell, Pam and Vince Swann, Jess and Bill Epps, Emilda and Peter Krause, Muriel and Ray Aitken and Jean and Jack Fowler.

Among the stags Mal Herbert, Stan Payne, Don Turton, Arthur Smith, Jack Carey, Lou Thompson, Jerry Haire, Dick Geere, Bob Smyth, Harry Sproxtton, Tom Crouch, Happy Greenhalgh, Fred Otway, Maurice Smith, Bob Williamson, Col Doig and Joy Reynish all had themselves a ball.

Seen in town this week was "Rip" McMahon down from Onslow to visit the fang farrier. "Rip" looks well and says his stay may be protracted.

It was the Association's real pleasure to have with us on the trip to Timor Dr. Neil Colyer, of Armadale. Apart from the most comforting fact of having a doctor with us he was a wonderful travel mate. He took an ocean of photos, travelled all over with the boys and generally had a ball. Neil is a bloke who picked himself up by the bootlaces doing his medicine the hard way as a C.R.T.S. student after the war and started in practice with close to nought. He carried on in the C.M.F. after the war and rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel and was for a time D.D.M.S. in W.A. serving at the same time as Tom Nesbit was Brigadier in Command of H.Q. Group, Western Command. Thanks for being with us Neil, and we hope to see more of you in the future.

At the time of going to press we have to report that two of our members are in hospital.

Dr. Dunkley is reported to be in Hollywood and is not allowed visitors. We all hope that our No. 1 Doctor is soon out and about again. Even though we do not see him

very often he still retains a soft spot in our hearts.

Ron Sprigg, of Albany, is at present in St. John of Gods., Belmont, after having an operation on his big toe. Though only a small op. it is taking its time about clearing up and he may be there for a while yet.

Random Harvest

PETER BARDEN, of Radio Station 6GN, Geraldton, writes:—

Anzac Day, 1969, was a memorable day in more ways than one. On the bright side two Double Red Diamond types, Nip Cunningham and Yours Truly, marched together in both the dawn parade and the civic commemoration and enjoyed a few "nips" (coffee with a dash of rum) at the "gunfire breakfast" which followed the dawn parade. We also enjoyed a noggin or two (?) at our R.S.L. building after the main parade, but had one regret—Bill Drage, who was on parade, did not join us, but quickly disappeared (we presume he had an engagement at the golf club) but would have loved to have had Dragic with us, particularly when we were engaged in forceful (and, we hope, delightful) renditions of all our favourite songs of army days.

As far as the sad side of Anzac Day was concerned, this was occasioned by the student louts at the dawn service at the State War Memorial. Although we are 300 miles away, we gave vent to our feelings by calling a special R.S.L. meeting immediately after the main parade. Yours Truly, the convenor of the meeting, successfully moved that a telegram be sent to the State Executive, deploring the students' action and endorsing the statement "That we are not worshipping war but are remembering the men and women who died so that we can lead a decent life in a decent country." It was a meeting of a few minutes duration—and Yours Truly obliged by sending the telegram of disgust, per medium of the teleprinter in the office of his A.B.C. newsroom.

I had the pleasure of a visit the other day by Brüss Fagg, of North-

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ampton, who had just returned from a well deserved three weeks holiday break as far south as Narrogin. Bruss is a justly proud man, because the Anzac Day parade at Northampton, where he has been re-elected R.S.L. President, was highly successful.

Reverting to Nip Cunningham, he told me that he recently had a few noggins at Geraldton with "Plugger" Watson, of Perth, who was on a visit with a refrigerated road van. Nip said that Plugger gave him two trot winners, but that neither of them backed the two horses because they were too busy talking.

Nip was recently in Perth, receiving hospital treatment, but did not meet up with any Double Red Diamond types. He appears to be quite happy with the result of the hospital treatment.

Well, duty calls now, so I must be away. Kind regards to all the boys—and may I conclude by asking members who are proposing to visit Geraldton to let us know so that we can arrange for the boys to meet over a noggin or two.

P.S.: Hearty congrats on publishing the thought-provoking article "Something From Somebody Else", by Mr. B. B. Callaghan. It was a "beauty" and already I've incorporated some of these comments about "our world of change" in a Geraldton motion for R.S.L. State Congress, in which we are advocating that the older folk should be more realistic in this world of change and give to the younger people the responsibility they believe is theirs.

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JUNE MEETING:

DON'T FORGET THIS!

**ANZAC HOUSE BASEMENT
TUESDAY, JUNE 3rd**

**MICK CALCUTT MEMORIAL TROPHY NIGHT
FIRST FOR 1969**

Be In It To Win It

JULY MEETING:

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**TUESDAY, 1st JULY
ANZAC HOUSE BASEMENT**

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