



# 2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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## A Christmas Message

At this happy time of the year with the advent of Christmas and New Year we rejoice, may the spirit of togetherness and friendship live on.

Let us, in the midst of our own celebrations, give thoughts to those less fortunate than ourselves, those unlucky ones who for a variety of reasons, cannot rejoice and make merry at this festive time. Let us if we can, by word or deed, help others make this particular Christmas more joyful for them. By bringing happiness to others, surely we will make our own Christmas happier for ourselves.

We have had a wonderful year and have cause to feel proud of the wonderful efforts of everyone who has assisted in keeping those bonds of friendship so tight over all the years. This year has been highlighted by visits from many of our Eastern States members and we are always glad to welcome them.

Unhappily as always there have been occasions to say our last farewells to several of our members, to the families of these our mates, remember, we will be thinking of you all as Christmas approaches.

To the Committee and all the readers of the Courier far and wide, Jean and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 1985.

John F. Fowler (President)



# COMING EVENTS

**CHRISTMAS DRINK WITH OUR LADIES**

ANZAC CLUB — 12 NOON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14th

THIS IS A "MUST" TO START THE FESTIVE SEASON. *BE THERE!*



## POYTON PICNIC

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THE ORGANISERS *MUST* KNOW NUMBERS ATTENDING EVEN IF ACCOMMODATION IS NOT REQUIRED.

## COMMEMORATION SERVICE

### S.A.S.REGT. GIVES SPLENDID SUPPORT 18th NOVEMBER 1984

Our Annual Commemoration Service in King's Park took on a new dignity and meaning when the above Regiment supplied a "Catafalque Party" to man our Memorial during the entire service. They slow marched down Lovekin Drive then with splendid drill movements took post at the four corners of the Memorial and reversed arms. The leader of the party then took his place facing the Memorial.

Lt. Col. Chris Roberts, O.C. of the S.A.S. Regt., laid a wreath on behalf of the Regiment accompanied by his R.S.M. Mick Ruffin, then they took post facing the gathering of our members.

After the address by our President, John Fowler, the boys formed ranks and marched the full length of our Tree Plaque Memorial section, en route gave an "Eyes Right" to the O.C. of the S.A.S. Regiment. At the cessation of the march the "Catafalque Party" dismounted and our boys, still in formation, acclaimed them roundly for a fine display of precision drill and meaningful co-operation.

It was a tremendously impressive ceremonial presentation by members of a fine Regt. and we thank Lt. Col. Chris Roberts and his boys for adding to our Day of Remembrance a real touch of emotion and dignity that our mates beyond the vale so thoroughly deserve.

At the conclusion Lt. Col. Chris Roberts issued an invitation for all to have a drink at their Sergeant's Mess within the precincts of Campbell Barracks to nicely round off the day. We say a sincere "thank you" to R.S.M. Mick Ruffin for being such a fine host to the boys and girls of our Association who accepted the kind invitation.

## PRESIDENTS ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again we are gathered here in this portion of Honour Avenue to pay homage to those of our comrades who lost their lives on Active Service and whose names appear on these trees that are around us. Probably nowhere in the world could you find such a living reverence and serenity as one finds in this grove of trees.

This is the 38th year of our Association's formation and which we have carried on all these years so that we do not forget those brave souls who paid the supreme sacrifice. This brings back memories of the war years of 1939-1945 and with the passing of the years we can feel a deep sense of gratification in the way in which we have kindled the flame of remembrance.

This part of King's Park has always been set aside for our Association. Our boys set to work cleaning up weeds and planting lawn, reticulation, laying kerbs, and have maintained it ever since. In the later years George Fletcher, and Rod Dhu were our wardens, unfortunately Rod Dhu passed away and George Fletcher had to relinquish his post because of a bad back. The job of looking after our area is now in the hands of the King's Park Board but George still keeps a close eye on our area. To all those who have helped in keeping this hallowed ground in such great order we thank you.

We have been active all these years and hope to continue while we are able. Our activities include:- the Annual Dinner, Ladies Christmas Evening, Poynton Picnic, Don Turton's Day and Country Conventions. Our Safari's are the highlight of our activities, starting in 1956 and continuing to our recent great Safari here in the West in 1983 and now our next one will be in Canberra in 1986.

I appeal to you all who are present to use this brief moment as a time for re-dedication to the task that most certainly falls upon us, reflect on the past and give due praise for all that has been achieved so that we may go forward and look to the tomorrows. Surely our feelings should be stirred by great and heroic deeds that were performed by our fallen comrades who we commemorate on this day.

I would like to thank you all for coming along and sharing in this simple ceremony of homage, and trust, with the passing of the years we will continue to remember those who did so much for us.

May they rest proudly in the knowledge of their achievements, may we and our successors in that heritage prove worthy of their sacrifice.

## NEWS FROM WARATAHLAND

### 2/2 COMMANDO ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA N.S.W. BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT 1983-84

Dear Members,

Another year has flown by and thankfully we who are left are able to gather here today at Arncliffe, for this, the first of our daytime meetings.

This is a new innovation as you know, and is in keeping with kindred organisations, and brought about by the fact that fortunately so many of us are now retired, and less agreeable to venture out on the colder nights.

My thanks to you also for being able to attend in spite of those people who try to defy progress and disrupt the work of those fortunate enough to be in employment (continuing rail strike!).

Our recent trip to Malaysia showed that we who considered ourselves to be members of the "Lucky Country" are losing a lot of face in the so-called third world countries because of our inability to "deliver the goods".

The year under review has been one of highs and lows. High in the sense that once more we had a most successful National Reunion in Perth, and in spite of distance, and the fact that so many of us are now in the Pensioner Group, members and their wives came from all quarters of Australia to once more show their loyalty to one another, and to the 2/2 Commando banner - what a wonderful family!

The lows of course have been in the number of our family members who, during the year, have crossed the River Styx and gone to meet their Maker. We console with wives, families and relatives as we say "We will remember them."

On the plus side, our quarterly meetings have been well attended by the old "hard core nucleus" that has endured for many years.

Our Christmas barbecue at June Bennett's was a great success, even though only a handful of the Southerners were able to find their way across the creek to the good country.

We held a Mini-Safari to Young in March, which was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Our thanks went to Keith and Betty

Craig for their efforts in organising this event. At the B.B.Q. on the Sunday we presented Keith with a Life Membership Tie Bar in appreciation of his many years of support.

Anzac Day was the usual great success, with good representation from the Unit. Unfortunately I was held captive by 50 lb weights at R.G.H. Concord and my only participation was watching the march on television. Some of the fellows were good enough to call and see me on their way home and give me a report on those present.

Our affiliation with the N.S.W. Commando Association and the No. 1 Commando Regiment has been of the highest order and we have been well represented at all functions.

On 31st March/1 April, ten of us were included in a party of 23 from the Association who joined the Regiment for their Annual Camp at Jervis Bay. During the weekend we presented our Marksmanship Trophy which was won in its first year by a Corporal, Ian Matthews from the Regimental Sigs attached.

Also, in the field of Lawn Bowls, our Unit members have been well represented and acquitted themselves well, either as individuals or in teams at various venues. So, even though we may weary them we can still carry the banner proudly and effectively.

My sincere thanks to those who have been sickness visitors or looked into welfare work during the year, especially when I personally was on the receiving end, and our good wishes to you and all your families for the ensuing year.

Alan Luby  
PRESIDENT  
3 Sept 1984

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Dee Why N.S.W.  
28/10/84

Just a few notes on N.S.W. people and doings.

Our A.G.M. was held on 3rd September at Arncliffe R.S.L. Club and all officers were returned in the same positions. This was the first of our day time meetings and a good roll-up was recorded in spite of the current rail strike.

## COMING EVENTS TO NOTE IN YOUR DIARY:

Tuesday, 27th November.  
Lunch for Commandos and wives  
12 o'clock at Paddington Woolahra  
R.S.L. Club.

Sunday, 2nd December  
Christmas Barbecue at Hilliards 1400  
hours. B.Y.O. All welcome

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## PERSONAL PARS

MICK DEVLIN took ill in Tamworth recently. Was brought to R.G.H. Concord by air ambulance - has severe lung condition and is undergoing Cobalt treatment. Went home today and will be transported daily to the Mater Hospital.

GEORGE & MEL MATHIESON both received complicated chest injuries in a car accident when proceeding from Tamworth to Grafton. Stated to have been hit head on by an out of control car during a severe rainstorm in the vicinity of Armidale.

MEL remains in Tamworth Hospital, luckily daughter Sue lives there, and George was brought down, also to R.G.H. Concord, by Air Ambulance. Last night he was reported to be showing some slight improvement but still has a long way to go.

BOB SMITH recently completed another course of Chemo - Therapy, in itself an ordeal, but then to top it off his arm became severely infected and is only now beginning to heal.

JOYCE has also been on the sick list but tries to carry on cheerfully.

KEITH CRAIG is reported to be suffering from some "balance" problems, That's the worst of being so tall Keith, you sway in the breeze.

JOAN DARGE recently had a fire at her home as a result of a spray can bursting and apparently coming in contact with the gas hot water flame. Damage was mainly in the laundry, kitchen, dining area, with smoke and water damage elsewhere, stated to be about \$10,000.

MARGE PEATTIE apparently suffering some residual effects from her vein by-passes is now limited to climbing only small mountains.

FRANK "CURLY" O'NEILL was recently awarded a T.P.I. pension by Vet. Affairs Department.

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## THE LUBYS

In my letter dated 20/9/84 I told of our trip to Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. We have been reasonably well since, although Edith continues to be troubled by her bronchial problem and is now under a new specialist.

We have been sorry to hear of the illness of some of our good friends in W.A. and the loss of others. I guess we should be thankful that we can still get around and enjoy some of the pleasures of life from day to day.

I know through the N.S.W. Association that you have been advised of the impending trip to Australia by Mike Calvert towards the end of November. As yet no definite plans have been made as we have no exact dates or how long he intends staying in each state, or where. We'll play it by ear and come come up with whatever is necessary at the appropriate time.

We are also expecting a visit from Clarrie and Grace Turner next month and hope they will be here for some of our activities. Also believe Elsie Wares is on the road somewhere - maybe we'll have the pleasure.

That's about enough for now dear friends, with our warmest greetings to everyone.

Sincerely,  
Alan Luby

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## WOY WOY, N.S.W.

23/10/84

Just a few lines and a few dollars, one to say hello to everybody and the other to help the Courier.

Things are not bad with me although I have not got back to full health yet, but I'm on my way I hope. I have a pretty good M.O. He said to me "not to worry, you will live till you die", so who am I to dispute that kind of logic.

I really have no more news so will close till a future time

My best wishes to all.

Bunny Anderson

## THE LAST THING IN CONVENTIONAL COUNTRY CONVENTIONS

MANDURAH 2,3,4 NOVEMBER 84

It's over now, but what a "Bewdy"!!

Our good, hard working committee, being well aware that our kind of Association will not survive unless there is something worthwhile in the pipeline, decided to try to revive our once well accepted country convention scene. Mandurah was decided upon as the venue on the suggestion of guess who, now living in this beautiful and rapidly expanding retirement city. Yes!! Len Bagley, fast becoming "our man at Mandurah", again went to work and arranged for us a top programme of interest to folk in our age bracket at a most acceptable price. We're sure all those in attendance "had a Ball". Bad luck for those who couldn't be in it - they missed a "ripper" convention. Courier says "Give us another one just like that one" when next our programme of events needs a bit of a tickle-up. Those answering roll-call included:- Len Bagley, Tony & Gwen Bowers, Peter & Pat Campbell, Jack & Delys Carey, Allan & Joy Chatfield, Dick Darrington, Jess Epps, Jack Fowler, Doug & Edna Fullarton, Gordon Holmes, Dutchy & Jean Holland, Don Hudson, Betty Illsley, Helen Kenneally (N.S.W.), Bernie & Babs Langridge, Gerry & Mary McKenzie, Wilf & Lorraine Marsh, Mick & Jean Morgan, Fred Napier, Ray Parry, Terry & Ivy Paull, Joe & Helen Poynton, Gordon & Eva Rowley, John & Cath Roberts (Victoria), Merv & Dulcie Ryan, Harold & Iris Rowan-Robinson, Fred & June Sparkman, Don Turton, Jock Taylor (Victoria - brother of Scotty Taylor), Roy & Vera Watson, Jack & Hazel Wicks, (50) not a bad all round figure. Does it indicate that as the years go by we look forward to getting together with our old mates, more and more??

**THE PENINSULA HOTEL** gave us the honeymoon treatment. Yes, truly, very comfortable, solidly constructed and nicely furnished units, good food and surprisingly good week-end service. A superior hot water service - True - one could indulge in a hot shower any time, day or night - fresh clean and comfortable innerspring mattresses, both single and double - no further connotation necessary here!!

This is not a Ripley, but true - several FREE drinks were included in the price with the service. These people made us feel that we ageing and pensioner types were important and, above all, welcome. Many thanks to the Penn!!

**THE DINNER** This carefully arranged binge on the first night, in the Penn, was a gastronomic delight and it lasted through about 2½ hours of steady feasting - five courses, including seafood cocktails, soup, entree, choice of two main course dishes and sweets. Len's speech comprised of many well chosen words of welcome, advices, encouragement, a spot of cover-up, but otherwise nothing political and therefore "no dirty tricks". Our Len did well in every aspect of convention activity from "Whoa to Gd"!! Dinner time was alive with stories. Table wines (W.A. of course) had been well chosen by our recently joined "Lady Wine Member". A tricky little dish, this one, our Betty hopped the skill, from her practised art of many enjoyed tastings, onto selection of the Reds. Some Nosey's said it was a blended "House" wine made from Malbec, Grenache, and shiraz pickings. There were many more suggestions but all agreed it was a nice red drop. Gerry McKenzie was just as positive about the red as he was to be later about the dolphins. He said the Red was "doubtless a Saltram's Hermitage vintaged in stainless steel". The Moselle and Riesling were also palatable and very acceptable which was obvious from the pleasing and regular way in which drained carafes were refilled.

At 9p.m. the most horrendous sound of bashing, crashing drums, cymbals and all the other cacaphony of electronically reproduced music, reaching top bracket in decibels, hit our ears and the multitude of large hot powerful lights hit our eyes. My goodness, what a calamity!! It was time for us oldies to go. On the way out Mick Morgan, with his hand cupped around his hearing aid said "Bloody noisy aren't they??" We all agreed!!

**THE RIVER QUEEN** you might say, not such a natty craft to look at, but step aboard and that swell "Love Boat" reeks with tradition. Something tells you, this is a fun ship, even we of the walking stick brigade felt like saying, "I am going to like it here!!"

One notice at the coffee servery takes the eye, it says, "This is a swell ship for the Skipper, but a hell-ship for the crew. Stan McMahan is the Skipper and his pleasant wife Vonnie is the crew. She works non-stop to make the cruise across the wide expanse of the Estuary and up the Murray (W.A. of course), "As you like it." Gallons of free coffee also platter upon platter of tasty W.A. cheese, plus bikkies, are passed around. The Skipper, a man of the Peel Inlet and Tributaries is a son of the area and knows his stuff both historically and of modern day projects. You could say he shows love and respect for the environment and runs a trim ship which shows the tourists he cares for them.

The care shown in careful navigation of the dredged channels and entrances/exits to and from the deeper waterways adjoining Peel Inlet, is re-assuring. On stepping aboard I had a quick concerned look for life rafts and fire equipment but once aboard it was plain to see that everyone had confidence in our trusty little craft.

Even on the way home when a brisk sou'wester started to raise ripples across the broadest (approx 17km) expanse of the Estuary, no one gave a thought to anything but enjoying the remainder of the cruise back to the Penn. Environmentally (with apologies to the Greenies) our Skipper made it clear that anyone, yes anyone, irrespective of rank, fame, power or wealth who projected the minutest piece of rubbish over the side instead of in the receptacles provided, would rapidly be projected into the water to swim him or herself back to base! This is a worthwhile measure which surely pays off!! Another notice says, "no more than 6 persons on the aft deck" - it did not take six as huge as Tony Bowers, Joe Poynton, Don Hudson and even little Wattie, to upset River Queen's ballast balance. Someone said, "move e'm quick, there's too much bilge water down the blunt end".

No one complained about the harmony that echoed from that chorus aft, all the old favourites helped to keep up the high spirits. The singing was probably mostly because it was "Huddies" birthday. Guess his age? The lunch at Ravenswood Hotel on the Murray was "Tree-men-dus."

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## WHAT ABOUT OUR VISITORS?

Helen Kenneally (N.S.W.). How nice it was to have her join our Convention. A well informed and pleasant lass, how considerate of her to break her journey, hire a vehicle and come down to Mandurah. Helen an educationalist, not an actress, we felt sure was not dabbling in the world of make believe as she showed an obvious degree of pleasure in chatting along to we old timers. We know you are proud of your Helen Paddy and Nora, we also know the reason why! Thank you Helen for looking in on us.

John and Cath Roberts (Vic.). A Lucky break for us to hold our Convention while the Roberts couple were visiting their daughter in W.A. Gerry and Mary MaKenzie were pleased to pick our visitors up at their daughters home in Palmyra and take them to Mandurah. Obviously enjoying their retirement. Cath

and John were as usual a lot of fun. To hear stories from a now retired artisan goldsmith and jewellery maker and his much loved wife, now also retired (ex Secretary at the Sciences Club in Carlton) was as always fruitful and entertaining. The demo by Cath of how better trained AWAS SGT'S made themselves cosy on a high bar stool was not only informative in respect of the uses of furniture, but taught us also that aerobics were definitely in away back in those WW2 days. Sorry we did not get a snapshot. Come and see us again soon - you are both most welcome.

Jock Taylor (Vic.). George "Jock" Taylor is the brother of our Bill (Scotty) Taylor. More about this good scout or Scot if you like, elsewhere in the Courier.

Despite having just landed back by Jumbo from a visit in the U.K., Jock took off again from Melbourne to join us in Mandurah. Hope you enjoyed yourself Jock, we sure enjoyed having you along particularly as we now have first hand news about our dear old mate Scotty. See Correspondence Corner).

Editor. Our thanks to Gerry McKenzie for this report.

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## REPORT FROM JOH'S COUNTRY

Having spent quite a few weeks in this famous state, from the Twin City Services Club in Coolangatta to Mooloolaba on the Sunshine Coast, it is appropriate that I should convey to all, hearty felicitations from the "Bananalanders".

"Mine Host" was Tony Adams and his delightful wife, Iris - to say they spoil me is putting it mildly. We did just about everything possible, in the process had loads of fun. The weather was not all that kind but who worries about that when the warmth of people completely envelops you.

Those who went to the Queensland Safari and stayed at Silverton will remember Tony's sisters-in-law, Ethnie, Inez, Dulcie, Jill plus husband Cec. Well, they too had a hand in my having a wonderful stay in Brisbane and helped celebrate the 39th wedding anniversary of Tony and Iris. The Best Man was there, Archie, the Bridesmaid, Jill, the Matron of Honour, Dulcie and the sister, Ethnie, who dressed the bride and her two sisters - the only one missing was the Groomsman, Gerry Green.

Mooloolaba was the venue and the celebration at the lovely home of Cec and Jill, overlooking the bay, was first class. We had a tremendous day and had a special one in champagne for old 'Gig' Green. How the years have flown and how nice it was to get a near total reunion 39 years after the "Big Event". May there be many more Tony and Iris. All present sent their love to Unit members - a number hope to be in Canberra for the 1986 Safari.

The "Video King" George Coulson, with dear Bettye, dropped in to Tony's with three videos of the Sandgroper Safari. As we all know, George did a professional job and had orders from Tony Bowers and Don Turton. He also very kindly donated, via John Fowler, one for the Unit which can be borrowed at any time. Thanks for your generosity George, it is much appreciated. It was great to see them both and they pledged a trip to Canberra in 1986 and sent their best wishes to all.

Angus MacLachlan is handling everything with his usual aplomb and had a barbecue organised but the weather went right against that, so had to be content with a telephone conversation. Angus, along with all the boys and girls from "Joh's Country" sent very kind regards to members Australia-wide. It certainly is a delightful and vibrant state.

Ian McPhee had a slight set-back but is taking his affliction with courage and determination. He is still very independent in spirit and is tended by his wife Peg with real devotion. She is of inestimable help in keeping Ian's morale high. All members, I know, would wish them the best of everything and my thanks go to them for a lovely day spent in their very attractive home. God Bless.

Peter Hearle is a ball of muscle and still a very active fisherman but the weather even foiled Pete, temporarily, in his quest for the scaly ones! He sends his regards to all, particularly Colin Doig.

## VALE KEITH BEER

Keith passed away in August 1984 and once again an old mate has passed on and we have had no indication from any member as to what happened.

This lack of communication makes it very difficult to pay a full tribute to an old and esteemed member.

Would everyone note this problem and try to co-operate more fully.

We pass our deepest sympathy on to members of Keith's family in their sad loss.

## STOP PRESS

### SIDNEY G. WADEY — RAAF

Have received a long letter from the above whom many will recall as the airman who was brought down by a Zero when flying a mission in a Hudson over Timor. It was a bombing raid on Maubisse.

All the crew were killed but Sid survived with horrific burns and was picked up near Cribas by Tom Nisbet and Tex Richards.

Sid wants to contact anyone who saw him or spoke to him when he was being evacuated. His letter will appear in the February 1985 issue of the Courier.

In the meantime Sid, welcome to the 2/2 Commando Association, from now on you will be the recipient of our Courier. Once your story is told I am sure many of the boys will be in touch with you.

Kind regards from all members.

The Editor

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## SPECIAL THANKS FROM COLIN DOIG

Letters to Colin from Dud Tapper, Paddy Kenneally and Alan Luby will appear in the February issue. Colin was thrilled to bits with them and the good wishes that came from near and far from the boys and the girls. He is going along splendidly, looks a picture.

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## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Inclusion: — S.G. Wadey (Sid)  
13 Cedar Avenue,  
Warradale S.A. 5046

Telephone Number: — O.K. Dignum - S.A.  
(08) 356 2137

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## DONATIONS

Messrs. McArthur  
Chaplain  
Dignum  
Anderson (Bunny)  
Carthew



## CORRESPONDENCE CORNER

Highett, Vic. 3190  
18/9/84

East Victoria Park, W.A.

On behalf of myself and family, I wish to thank you and all the Commandos for your attendance at our late brother Jim's funeral.

Thank you for all the help you gave him in the past years.

May we wish you health and good fortune for the future years.

Yours sincerely,  
Maisie Coonan

Dee Why N.S.W.  
20/9/84

Sorry to learn through Jack Hartley of the loss of no less than three of our very good mates in the last few weeks - makes one appreciate how good it is to be here and, more particularly, as I am the only survivor from the originals from N.S.W.

Anyway, I'm happy to enclose our latest N.S.W. Commando News and even more happy to report NO CASUALTIES in the current SITREP, as far as 2/2 is concerned.

We had a wonderful trip to Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to visit Maria and her husband Les and found it a most enlightening experience. Flying over the mountains and jungles of Malaysia makes it easy to realise even 40 years later why Fred Spencer-Chapman titled his book 'The Jungle is Neutral' and so often while we were there I reflected on that statement.

The war memorial in K.L. is one of the most impressive I have seen anywhere and, like many others, I guess we had forgotten that the Malay's struggle for independence lasted from 1948 to 1960.

Chin Pen, who was Chapman's 2 i/c and decorated with DSO and MC by King George before being declared an outlaw is still remembered as a National hero.

Found the kids well and in the near future moving to Singapore, then Hong Kong and will be home for Xmas.

Please convey our greetings to all in W.A. Tony Bowers phoned on his way through last Sunday and told Ede of his marriage. Pleased to hear Doig is on the mend.

Best wishes. Sincerely,  
Alan Luby

Olive and I have just enjoyed a very nice trip flying to Darwin then taking the Australian Pacific coach tour of 21 days to Perth. We visited Katherine which is a vastly different place to when I saw it last in 1941, then to the Kimberley area, to the Ord River area, Lake Argyle and Kununurra - this is a beautiful spot, the fastest growing place in W.A. and definitely a young people's place, then to Hall's Creek, Fitzroy Crossing and Geikie Gorge cruise (very spectacular) to Wyndham, Derby, Broome and Port Headland where we had the pleasure of an evening with Charlie Pierce and Elsie Wares, then onto Mt. Tom Price Mine which is very interesting with its huge machinery and very well organised and run. Stayed the night at the very beautiful town of Mt. Tom Price - the interesting thing is the average age of the population is 13 years. The Hammersley Gorges were very spectacular and we were fortunate as there had been some very unseasonal heavy rains a couple of weeks before and everything was green and we started to see the Sturt Desert Pea which was very unusual at that time of year. Stayed at Wittenoom the night, then on to Karratha and Dampier, Exmouth and Carnarvon where we ran into miles and miles of beautiful wildflowers all the way to Geraldton.

In Perth we left the tour and Elsie Wares and Dot Boyland met us and we stayed with Dot while in Perth. Jess Epps picked us up next morning and took Olive and myself down to Albany where we thoroughly enjoyed a few days stay with Wyn Sprigg. The weather was pretty cold, especially as we just had 18 days of glorious sunshine up north, and Albany had a bad storm a few days before which made a mess of their beaches. It was great to be with Wyn who showed us the various places in and around Albany, then Jess (God bless her) took us back to Perth, looking up various members on the way. We saw Alf and Elsie Hillman in Albany, Ted Loud in Pemberton, looking pretty good and getting about very well, only using a stick to negotiate steps and uneven ground, Alec and Wyn Thompson both looking well. Called on Arthur and Audrey Marshall at Harvey where Arthur took us around his orange orchard - he is very proud of his oranges and I agree with him they are very nice and sweet. We stayed a night in Mandurah and spent a nice evening with Arthur and Beryl Smith. Arthur seemed in good spirits and pleased with the way his leg was going.

Next day we had to be back in Perth by lunch time but called on Dutchy and Jean Holland, Terry and Ivy Paul, Len Bagley and Betty and Joe and Helen Poynton, all looking very well. We called on Gery and Lal Green at

Shoalwater - hadn't seen them for quite a long time and it was great to see them both looking so well. We called on Don Murray at his office but it was after 12 o'clock and we missed him and had to make haste for Perth.

Our thanks to Jess for this great trip - she is a wonderful person and loves to be able to call in on all these people. While we have people like this among us we are going to remain strong.

We enjoyed our stay with Dot and on Sunday at a B.B.Q. lunch met Jack and Jean Fowler, Harry and Thelma Sproxtton, Barbara Palmer, Elsie Wares, Jack and Del Carey and Joan Cross.

On Tuesday Harry Sproxtton took me to the Committee meeting where I saw George Fletcher, Jerry Haire, Doug Fullarton and Len Bagley. After the meeting Jack Fowler took me to visit Col Doig. It was a pity to see Col in bed and so down in the dumps but we had a great chat and I still marvel at his memory. Each time I see him I learn something new about our campaigns. When we left Col seemed to have bucked up a bit but had a relapse a little later and was put into hospital. When we left Perth on the Saturday he was not the best so we are hoping he will get better.

On the Wednesday, 15th August Jess arranged a get-together for lunch at the Windsor Hotel and it was very nice meeting more of the folk. Present were Jack and Jean Fowler, Beryl Griffiths, Dot Boyland, Fred Napier, (lovely to see Fred looking so good), Mick and Jean Morgan, Jess Epps, Percy Hancock, Dusty Studdy, Spriggy McDonald, Jack and Hazel Wicks, George and Colleen Strickland, Roy and Vera Watson, Ron and Gwenda Kirkwood, Jack and Del Carey, Don and Vida Turton. Olive and I thoroughly enjoyed our day.

Our thanks to Dot Boyland for having us stay with her, we enjoyed it immensely and I liked my morning walks with Caesar (her dog). We were sorry when we had to fly home on Saturday the 18th - a really wonderful holiday. I recommend this trip to anyone who is looking for a good holiday and hasn't seen the Kimberleys and Pilbara area and you can always stop off at Perth and meet up with more of our good folks.

I must mention that Harry Sproxtton took me up to Ray Aitken's wildflower nursery where we spent a nice morning yarning with Ray on an escorted tour of the nursery which is very much bigger than last time I saw it 4 years ago.

Since we have been home we have heard that Arthur Smith, Ernie Hoffman and Jim

Ritchie have passed on - this is tragic news and our deepest sympathy to all their families. We had a letter from Nancy Mildren of Corryong to let us know that Tommy had passed on after a long illness. We hadn't seen Tom for many years but we were sorry to hear of his passing away. Nancy says she would still like to have the Courier sent to her as she feels she knows us all by the news in it. Tom is survived by wife Nancy, 4 daughters, 2 sons and 13 grandchildren.

Harry Botterill

Yokine W.A.  
5/10/84

I was recently in Adelaide for a Federal T.P.I. Conference, and my Tasmanian counterpart, Don Harlem (ex 'Z' Force), knowing my affinity with the 2/2nd, gave me the attached leaflet concerning the 'Max Loveless Pioneer Memorial Collection'. I am sure many Unit members will find this of as great interest as I did.

Unfortunately I will not be able to make the Reunion Dinner next week, and I will be very grateful if you will tender my apology.

The last time I saw you, at the Mandurah Cemetery after the funeral of our old mate Arthur Smith, you will recall bundling Gerry McKenzie into Len Bagley's car and heading off to the Smith home, and leaving me on my own in the cemetery. Well, when I got into my car the darned thing refused to start, and there I was! Automatic, of course. The grave diggers were unable to help with any jumper leads or suggestions, and by the time I found a house with occupants and a telephone, called the R.A.C. and was saved by the helpful and obliging Coastal Motors of Mandurah, it was well past 6p.m. before I got home.

Best wishes to all  
Gerry Maley

Pialba, Qld.  
24/9/84

Just telling my mates I'm still here, often thinking of our Unit and hoping everyone is as well as to be expected. Jack Hasson, how are you and Norma? We will be over in the west one day, maybe for the America's Cup.

Hervey Bay is a good place to live. We are in a caravan close to the beach and I have a small boat. I have spondylitis of the back and a

spastic bowel but having had it for a long time and a few pain pills I get by. I try to keep myself active.

I didn't hear any more news from Jackie Spencer - he was mining last I heard.

We had a memorial service here for Z Force personnel on the Krait. I think I told you when the Krait visited here. I helped people to look over it, and felt proud to be standing on its deck.

Regards,  
Jack Hanson

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Dubbo, N.S.W.  
15/9/84

Hello folks, do hope my letter finds you all well again and making the most of life, and to the ones who have been on the sick list, Jean Fowler, Jean Morgan and good old Col Doig, I trust you are all once again fully recovered.

As we are approaching 12 months since our grand "Safari" in W.A., I thought through the "Courier" I would say hello to all our good friends from all states and in particular all those good people from W.A. who were so kind to Phyllis and myself when we stayed on after the "Safari". Their hospitality and friendship will long be remembered and once again we would like to say thank you one and all.

During the year we had a visit from Jess Epps, accompanied by Bob and Joyce Smith - a couple of very happy days together and many a story was told. I gave Jess some souvenirs and photos for her archives. So nice to have seen you again Jess.

I was unable to attend the mini "Safari" in Young as I had Phyllis in hospital again and, as we had an overseas holiday planned, her doctor advised her to have the operation so that she would have three months to pick up before we departed. I also missed the boys on Anzac Day, assisting Phyllis to get on the go again but Don Latimer kept me informed on the days proceedings of the Commando Association.

Now some news regarding our trip - there were ten couples, friends from my Bowling Club in Dubbo, all retired, planned an overseas trip during June, July and August to dodge the winter months. We departed from Dubbo on the 7th June and arrived back in Australia on the 4th September - a wonderful holiday and a great experience. We visited Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Europe, the British Isles

including Ireland. The history of most of these countries dating back to the Roman days and B.C. is very interesting when one stays in a hotel in Yorkshire, England which was built before Australia was discovered and is still giving first class accommodation to tourists.

We enjoyed our stay in Singapore, a booming city with one of the world's most modern airports (Changi) named after that notorious prison where many Australians passed through. We also visited the prison which still operates as a maximum security jail.

From Singapore we flew to London and had three days before setting off for three weeks in Europe. We crossed the English Channel by Hovercraft from Dover to Calais on the French coast - 31 minutes to do the trip.

One does not realise how close the Nazis were to Britain - the big concrete bunkers still remain on the French coast at Calais, as well as remains of bombed out buildings.

The large cemeteries of war graves throughout France show the sacrifice our forces suffered in both World Wars 1 and 2 - all are well kept and a credit to the authorities who maintain them. Our journey through Belgium, Holland, Austria and Germany showed relics of the German occupation of those countries and the Allied bombings of Germany.

Four days were spent in Switzerland and even though it was summer the snow was still on the Alps. Lucerne was a very pretty spot with its beautiful lake on which we did a night cruise. Zurich and Innsbruck were also two very nice cities where we had overnight stays and experienced light falls of snow.

From Switzerland we moved through Austria and Germany down to Italy, crossing the Austrian and German border five times in one day, visiting points of interest.

A tour down the Rhine River by boat was very pleasant, passing all the barges navigating this large waterway through Europe, also all the vineyards on the mountain sides along the river banks.

The motorways throughout Europe are very good, with six and eight lanes of traffic, many fine overpasses and freeways, and from the time we crossed the Austrian border until we reached Paris we passed through 149 road tunnels, all ventilated and with fluorescent orange lighting.

We had three days of sight seeing in Rome seeing all the relics and remains of ancient Roman days. We visited St. Peter's, the

Vatican City and Museum, a masterpiece of stonework and architecture for buildings of such vintage.

The city of Rome was quite impressive but the cleanliness and sanitation leave much to be desired, and this was the opinion of many tourists we spoke to. It was the filthiest city we passed through during our three months tour.

Goodbye to Rome and we now travel on to France, stopping at Nice, Lyons and Paris, a very pretty city with so much to see and do. Also a visit to Monaco, the French Riviera, Princess Grace's Palace and a flutter in the "Pokies" at Monte Cristo. No fortunes won - a donation made.

From Paris we journeyed over the Channel to London where we spent three more days sight seeing before leaving on the British Isles tour which consisted of another three weeks. There were so many places of interest I could write for hours but just want to cover some of the tour for our "Courier" readers who may make a similar trip.

In the Scottish Highlands I took a photo of a very nice memorial to the Scottish Commandos who did their training in that area and took part in the raid at Dieppe in which most of them were wiped out. The lakes and lochs of Scotland were very pretty with the green hills on either side. We had another pretty boat tour down Loch Lomond which is over 30 miles long and 5 miles wide and both Loch Ness and Loch Lomond are estimated to be 700 to 1000 feet deep.

From Scotland through Wales and over the Irish Sea to Paddy Kenneally's country where the Irish hospitality was really appreciated. Yes Paddy, Phyllis and I climbed to the top of Blarney Castle and kissed the Blarney Stone - your imprint is still there.

The south of Ireland where we were is just as we read and sing about - the Lakes and Rivers, Galway Bay, Killarney and Tipperary. Dublin, the capital is another very impressive city. We had a very nice evening at an Irish Folk Concert in Dublin where all the true Irish charm and songs were presented, good comedians, great actors and some glorious voices.

After 8 happy days in Ireland we again crossed the Irish Sea by a ferry similar to our Empress of Australia which runs from Melbourne to Devonport in Tasmania. Our coach, with many others and motor cars went below and the passengers all embarked and enjoyed the comforts on the upper decks during the crossing. Security very strict when coming on to British soil - I.R.A. precautions.

Three more days were enjoyed in London before flying on to Hong Kong and China for the final fortnight of our holiday. Two days in Hong Kong and then we flew to Peking, the capital of China. We spent three days in this thriving city which has a population in excess of 9 million. We visited the Great Wall of China, built over 2,000 years ago and spreading over 7000 miles of mountains and valleys across China - a masterpiece of world engineering. Also visited all the Temples and Tombs of Ancient Emperors, the Great Hall of the People, a magnificent building on one side of the square while on the other side is a similar building which is the Chinese Museum. The Square of the People is the largest in the world and our guide informed us it will hold one million people. A wonderful city, people so friendly, hotels equally as good as those in Europe or Britain, every facility and good food, all beer at meals was free, included in tariff. How do you like that Col Doig and Joe Poynton, not forgetting Len Bagley (very good beer too). Leaving Peking we visited three more big cities, Hangchow, Soochow and Shanghai (11 million people) one of the busiest ports in the world and a thriving city, boats in the harbour from all over the world.

At no time during our 8 days in China were we screened or questioned regarding our movements. We were free to do what we wanted and take photos, other than military or naval establishments. I was allowed to take a photo of a group of Red soldiers on parade on the steps of the Museum. The image of China and its people gave us all a changed idea of the propaganda that we hear in the western countries regarding China. The people are free and happy, there is no starvation or poverty and everyone works for the good of China.

There are massive building projects and roadworks going on everywhere, the people work hard, shops are open from 8.30a.m. to 10.00p.m. six days a week and 8.30a.m. to 6.00p.m. on Sundays. The banks are open 8.30a.m. to 6.00p.m. six days a week. No troubles requiring cashing money - only restriction is that Chinese money cannot be taken out of the country. One has no difficulty cashing currency back into Hong Kong dollars at banks or before departure at airports.

I questioned our Chinese guide regarding drugs, crime and rape when I saw girls wandering around at night and he assured me that such things are out-lawed in the People's Republic of China and women are free at night with no worries of being molested.

All shops and stores were loaded with very cheap clothing and supplies. Chinese wages are very small, hence drug peddlers cannot make money in China.

Another thing that impressed me, being an ex-Railwayman, was their Railway system. They could teach us a thing or two about railways and running them.

We flew from Shanghai to Hong Kong for 4 days before returning to Australia. Hong Kong is another great booming city with tourists from all over the world, including the Sharps, looking for bargains of the Orient - a few more dollars spent.

Arrived home safely on 5th September very tired but enjoyed every day as each seemed more exciting and full of interest.

Please find enclosed donation for the "Courier", a great little paper with news from all over Australia.

Bye for now, best wishes to all, happy retirement and good health.

Kindest regards  
Frank Sharp

P.S. What a small world! In a Department Store in Peking we talked to four Papuan women who came from Goroka. I asked them if they knew Theo Adams and they knew him well, so I wrote him a little note to be passed on with our best wishes.

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Esperance, W.A.

Our old friend Ern Hoffman passed on as one would imagine he would have liked. Apparently he had a haemorrhage of the throat six weeks before and was in a fairly bad way. The doctor ordered him to go very quietly but am afraid on the Wednesday, Hannan's Handicap day, he was very quiet but just a bit naughty, as he had met so many of his very dear friends and his dear young ladies. Thursday morning, on his way back to Yarri, he must have been eating something which caused a coughing fit, he lost consciousness, rolled the van, and that's where they found him, on the Edjudina track which he loved to travel and talk about.

The funeral was attended by a large crowd of around 160. Betty and Keith Dignum and brother Bruce came over from Adelaide, also Peter Alexander. Could have been others there but did not see them.

We are all well here and enjoying an excellent season.

Hope to see all in November at the Mandurah Party.

Regards,  
Peter & Pat Campbell

34 Kent Street,  
Hamilton, Qld. 4007

Glad to receive the latest Courier.

Sorry to hear of Tom Mildren's passing - he was a great mate and I still have his photo. Talking of photo's, I handed over quite a few of interest at the surfers gathering. One in particular I would like to have if it can be found, and I would send a copy back to you. In the group those I can remember Dixon, Tait, Poynton, possibly Merv, Cash and myself ("Chappie" to the boys) and others. On a very muddy trail somehow a photo was taken of us bringing a stretcher case back to base. Others were various crossings of the Ramu, Bingham and party, and one of Bowers and a monkey nip.

Do you recall the parachute effort of V. Henstrich (S.A.) to rescue crashed U.S.A. pilots. I was one of the patrol that brought them back to Fata (very sick and weary boys). Somewhere amongst the mountains we caught up with Gus O'Donnel (Angau) officer - what a walker.

Occasionally call L. Tait and Neale William Singleton Hooper.

Regards to all  
C. Chaplain

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Seaton S.A.  
30/10/84

Reading your Vale notice to Ernie Hoffman has prompted me to put pen to paper and endeavour to draw a word picture of Hoffie and his life in Kalgoorlie, and of his friends.

We were notified of Ern's death by Peter Campbell via Dud. Tapper for which we are very grateful.

After the necessary phone calls and arrangements had been made Ern's brother Bruce, his sister Betty and yours truly set off for the West. Having never been to the West we were not sure how we would find the inhabitants across the border. True, we had met some sandgroppers passing through to the eastern states, and no doubt they were on their best behaviour.

We arrived in Kalgoorlie late at night, booked into the Palace Hotel. Next morning we were met by Ian Loxton, one of Ern's mates, and then for the rest of our stay in Kalgoorlie, 4 days in all, we were royally entertained by his mates and their families.

At the funeral the whole atmosphere was awe inspiring. The Unit was represented by Peter Campbell, Peter Alexander and Keith Dignum. His friends numbered approximately 150-200 people, 90% men in dark suits or sports coats. Ern didn't win any medals in Timor, but he won many friends in Kalgoorlie - it was incredible.

After the funeral Ian Loxton threw open his home, women in the house, men on the back lawn. We had a wake that old Ireland would find hard to beat. As the stubbies were emptied the beer flowed, the tales flowed, all little escapades that they and Ern were involved in, each had a different story to tell. It would have been good to capture on tape. He was well thought of.

A little bit of Ern's history. He was the ninth child of a family of 12 children, of which five are still living. Ern, left the family home in 1937, worked on a couple of stations before settling in Kalgoorlie - joined up from there and returned after demob.

If the rest of W.A. is as hospitable as Kalgoorlie, you have a great state, mates.

Please find enclosed a cheque for the Courier.

All the best  
K. Dignum

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Para Hills West, S.A.  
4/11/84

Please find enclosed a donation for the Courier.

An evening was held at Keith Dignum's home two weeks ago to welcome to South Australia two visitors from West Australia.

Kel Carthew

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Kew, Victoria  
6/11/84

Looking over the proposed itinerary for the 1986 Safari, I suggest the inclusion of a visit to the new Parliament House. By 1986 it should be well on the way as it is due to be opened in 1988.

Such a visit would take about two hours and would be well worth while. I am sure it could be arranged even if I was not then on the Authority responsible for the construction.

With all good wishes  
Bernie Callinan

Epping N.S.W.  
25/9/84

Attached is a cheque being a donation for the Courier from Ron McArthur. Just recently Ron was admitted to Concord Repat. Hospital to undergo checks and tests for respiratory problems he has been plagued with over the past 30 years or so. He asked me to drop you a line on his behalf and to convey to all in W.A. his very best wishes. Ron resides in South Grafton, N.S.W., and requests anyone passing through that area to please drop in.

During the time I have been writing this note Jack Hartley called to advise the passing of Arthur Smith, Jim Ritchie and Ernie Hoffman. May I, on behalf of all N.S.W. members, extend sincere condolences to their families.

On a happier note we hear that Col Doig is home after his bout in hospital. Great news Col, keep smiling.

Must close now with kind regards to all  
Betty and Mick Devlin

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Curtin, A.C.T.  
24/10/84

Have been talking to the T.A.A. people over the last day or so. There are a few ways to get discounts for air fares but the message which came through loud and clear was it is much more to the travellers' advantage to arrange as a group or organisation in the city of departure. It appears that the 45 plan is the cheapest but the passenger can be put on almost any flight the airline arranges. Again, this is up to the individual.

I have had a look at the accommodation and it is good. The advantage is that anyone who wants to do their own cooking will be able to do so. There is a "shop" on site which opens from 7.30 - 10.00a.m. and 4.00 - 8.00p.m. There is a dining room with a varied menu and not greatly expensive. Today there were no dishes in excess of \$9.50.

Danny is on the trail of buses for our use and other things seem to be setting into place but only time will tell.

The motel I had thought of using, being so close to the shops, would have proved a bit difficult and we would have been split up into groups. This way those with caravans can book in as well. Most units will accommodate 6 people - normally 1 double and 4 bunk beds. This should suit the single blokes and couples who do not mind sharing. We would like firm bookings as soon as possible for obvious reasons.

Will endeavour to write when I have anything new to tell you.

My regards to all 2/2 Sandgroppers  
Jim Fenwick