



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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Price 1c

COMING EVENTS COUNTRY CONVENTION TO BUSSELTON

OCTOBER 22-25, 1985

ITINERARY:

- Tues., October 22:** Arrive Vasse Hotel
- Wed., October 23:** Bus to Shell Museum at Witchcliffe. Two hour cruise on Augusta Ferry of Blackwood River, including lunch. Visit Catholic Church at Margaret River — afternoon tea included.
- Thurs., October 24:** Bus to Dunsborough and Old Mill. Cullen's Winery including lunch. Newtown House and afternoon tea. Evening function at Vasse Hotel.
- Fri., October 25:** Leisurely drive home.

Cost of the above, including B/B accommodation is approximately:

Single — \$146 plus drinks
Double — \$185 plus drinks

Please advise the following by August 31 if you will be attending:

Wilf. March (Metro area) 330 3131
Len Bagley (Country) (095) 35 6186

ANNUAL DINNER

Friday, October 4 at Anzac Club 11.30 a.m.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE

Sunday, November 17. Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, 3 p.m.

CANBERRA SAFARI 1986

8-16th March (inclusive)

Get your deposits in NOW. Time is running out - Be there.

Send to: DAN THOMAS, 21 MACKINALTY STREET, SCULLIN, A.C.T. 2614
or phone: (062) 54 3536

Attendance figures to date for Canberra Safari, 120. Please advise Danny Thomas if you are staying privately. Please do it now.

"MAKE CANBERRA CLICK IN 86"

DAY WITH TIMORESE

Sunday 20th October 1985
 DON TURTONS PROPERTY
 - KEYS BROOKE
 10.30am Bring Barbeque Lunch
 Great Family Reunion

EPSS MUSEUM Family Outing

Jess Epps has kindly offered her home for a combined; Social and Museum visit on Sunday 15th September from 11am. Members are asked to bring their own lunch and refreshments. A barbecue is available for those wanting a barbecue lunch. This is an excellent opportunity to see just how much work Peter and Jess have done in setting up the 2/2nd Museum. Members who have photos or other mementos of army days and are prepared to donate them to the museum are asked to bring them along on the 15th. Please give the outing full support.

EULOGY Francis Michael Devlin 18/4/85

Rev. Father, Betty, sons Gary and Michael, daughter Gail, Jacob, Wendy, other relatives and friends.

I don't need to remind you that this is indeed a sad occasion, as we gather in this place to say our last farewell to our relative, friend or brother, Francis Michael Devlin.

Whatever our relationship, Frank or Mick, he was as well known by either name, according to no particular pattern, was a true friend and brother to all of us. Above all Mick was a man in every sense of the word.

He loved, and was proud of his family. He had high moral principles and conducted himself in the best possible manner, as a worker in his industry, as a community worker, as a soldier and as a sportsman. He had a great sense of humour, and I am sure he never spoke ill of anyone.

I first met Mick in 1943 when he joined the 2/2 Aust Commando Squadron. He served with the Unit through the New Guinea campaign mainly in the Markham and Ramu River areas, and the jungle clad mountains to the north, then east to Wau and Bulolo.

Through 1945 the Unit moved on to the island of New Britain where it remained until the cessation of hostilities in August of that year.

He was a good soldier who acquitted himself well in every situation and upon demobilisation held the rank of L/Corporal.

In civilian life he held a unique record too, in that he spent all his working life with the one firm, Plesseys, manufacturers of electrical and communications equipment, where he served from 1937 until his retirement in September, 1983. With his 4 years in the 2nd A.I.F. he is credited with 46 years service, and was the longest serving employee in the Company. Some years ago he was elected President of the Plesseys "21 Club", a group formed to acknowledge the service of employees who achieved 21 years with company - their reward was a dinner and presentation.

At the time of his retirement Mick was, and had been for several years, Production Supervisor.

Mick also held a deep interest in R.S.L. affairs, and held various offices in his home Sub-Branch at Epping.

He had a particular interest in their Youth Club and in more recent years the Indoor Bowls competition where, among other things he competed with some distinction with Betty in the Mixed Pairs.

He was also a member of the Carlingford Bowling Club where he again proved to be not only a capable bowler but an active worker on Committee, and qualified as a National Umpire.

Closer to our hearts, and I speak now for my colleagues from the N.S.W. and 2/2 Commando Associations, once again he demonstrated his keenness to do his best, firstly as Vice President and always as a worker when there was a job to do. He and Betty were always welcome attenders at Unit Reunions, even at places as far apart as Brisbane or Perth, and solely to maintain enduring friendships with Army mates.

In the past couple of years he lost some of his brothers and an uncle, and was responsible for their affairs - he too had his share of sorrow.

So this was the Man for whom we gather to pay tribute and our last respects today.

Mick was a humble, self effacing person who had much love for humanity, a worker whose happy disposition brought much joy to those who knew him, loved and respected him.

When this recent illness became evident late last year he faced it with good humor, dignity and courage. Even last Monday afternoon when Jack Hartley, Harold Mowle and I visited him at R.G.H. Concord, although it was obvious he was in some distress, little did we think that we would be gathering here today to say this final "goodbye".

Apart from personal friends and relatives the number of representatives of various organisations is indicative of the esteem in which he was held.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on your behalf I extend to Betty, her family and relatives our most sincere condolences, with the hope that the Good Lord will comfort them in their bereavement.

We come now to the R.S.L. part of our service and I quote

"O valliant hearts who to your glory came,
Through dust of conflict and through battle flame.

Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved.
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved."

The hour has come for rest.

This poppy, an emblem of sacrifice, the symbol of a life offered in the service of one's country - is a link between our comrade and us who remain.

I invite those of you who have poppies to now come forward and place them on the casket.

Let us now observe a few moments in silent prayer in memory of our comrade and brother.

Ode of Remembrance.

They shall grow not old
As we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them
Nor the years condemn

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

Lest we forget.

Thank you Father.

FAREWELL TO LT-COL. Chris Roberts A.M.

The man who has done so much to cement the relationship of the 2/2nd Commando Association and the S.A.S. Regiment has been posted to America. He will indeed be missed. It will be au revoir for in excess of two years an no doubt will ultimately see promotion for Chris in the ranks of the Armed Forces. He will be Military Attache in Washington and will attend a comprehen-

sive course in the area of modern warfare. He has thoroughly earned his posting and will be accompanied by his charming wife Judy and their two daughters.

The Association paid Chris a fitting tribute by organising a farewell luncheon to say "thank you" to a man we have come to admire as a soldier and a friend. He was accompanied by his 2 i/c, Major Gordon Hill who has also earned our respect and thanks. An excellent roll up of our boys was testimony to the esteem in which Chris is held.

Our President, Doug Fullarton, spoke of the impact Chris has made on our Association and how much he will be missed. He also spoke of Chris's ability and enthusiasm in welding a crack modern unit - the S.A.S.R. - to our Association as their 1939 - 45 counterparts. This is treasured by us all and has been made a positive and lasting fact. Doug wished Chris, Judy and their family tons of good luck, good health and real success, on behalf of us all.

Len Bagley spoke in support of Doug's speech, saying that he had known Chris as a school boy. Even then he was keen to read and listen to stories concerning the Army and its exploits - and today he is a Lt-Col. Len said he was very pleased to be associated with Chris once again after so many years.

Chris responded after the presentation of a suitably inscribed pen which, Doug stated, was something he could carry on his person so that the 2/2nd could be a small part of his every day activity. He was delighted with the gesture and could only reiterate what he had said many time "It is an amalgamation of two fighting units that should have happened years ago." Now it was established it would carry on into the years ahead to the benefit of both the S.A.S. Regiment and the 2/2nd Commando Association. His unit was proud that we were to be an integral part of their existence. His cherished hope was to see the "Double Red Diamond" one day being a part of their Regalia, then a picture would be complete. He wished the 2/2nd all the best in its every undertaking.

It only remained to drink his health and sing "For he's a jolly good fellow", both done with much gusto. Farewell, Chris Roberts, we are the better for knowing you. Our love to Judy and your family - may God bless you all in your new and exciting challenge.

Those present were:-

Messrs Bagley, Burns, Carey, Campbell, A., Doig, Dook, Fletcher, Fowler, Fullarton, Hancock, Holder, Kirkwood, King, Maley, March, McKenzie, Napier, Parry, Poynton, Ryan, Scott, Sparkman, Studdy, Turton,

Varian, Watson, Wheatley.
S.A.S.R. Hill, Roberts.

From: Lieutenant Colonel
C.A.M. Roberts, AM.

Dear Doug,

Thank you very much for the lovely lunch on Friday and for the opportunity to say farewell to the members of your association. It truly was a great day for me, and I really did appreciate the efforts that you and the boys went to.

It is with a great deal of regret that I leave this REgiment and say farewell to the men of the 2/2nd. We have achieved a lot in the last two years and one of our proudest achievements is that we have brought the men of the 2/2nd into our Regimental fold.

Also, thank you so much for the very fine biro pen that you presented to me during lunch. I shall always treasure it. Doug, would you please pass my very sincere thanks to your boys and their Ladies, and Judy and I wish them well for the future. I hope it is not too long before we can come back to share the very fine spirit and camaraderie of the 2/2nd.

Warmest Regards,
Chris Roberts

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

This is part of a quotation from the Bible —
"Let there be light, and there was light".

It applies very aptly to a letter received from Bob Smith, which is a story in itself, an unbelievable trend of events which occurred one on top of the other.

It tells of a family's lifetime dedication to "Lighthouse Keeping" for those in peril on the sea. One can only wish that a bright light guides Bob and Joyce through the sea of darkness they have experienced, then continues to light up their lives as they bravely greet each day with a smile.

All members offer heartfelt sympathy in your sad losses. May God bring you peace of mind in the days ahead.

The Editor

Shortland, 2307
17/7/85

After so long without writing I feel I must get moving to answer all the letters from many friends of the 2/2 and to bring you up to date with our doings.

The last time I wrote was when I found out that my problem was on the move again and

I had to undergo another course of Chemotherapy etc. After another period of feeling miserable (Chemotherapy has that effect on one) I finished the course in November and had to wait around for results of tests held at monthly intervals. In March I was given 2 months clearance so Joyce and I decided to go to Brisbane to visit her brother who had been ill. A friend asked us to go to Melbourne with them for a week so we decided to go to Brisbane via Melbourne.

We had four days in Melbourne, stopping with John and Cath Roberts who treated us to a wonderful time with a get together with a lot of our good folk in Victoria.

From the Roberts we visited Norm and Sheila Parker who also gave us a grand time. However, our stay was marred by vandals who took out their frustrations on our car to the tune of \$400-\$500. I still haven't replaced all the items they demolished.

We didn't have much time up our sleeve so we headed for Brisbane via the mid-western highway through N.S.W. At West Wyalong we contacted our daughter who gave us the news that Joyce's brother had passed away. Joyce was very distressed as she was close to her brother. We headed to Brisbane in a hurry and spent a week with various members of Joyce's family. We travelled to Byron Bay for a few days rest and it was there that we were again in contact with our daughter Beryl who informed us that my mother had passed away two hours earlier. We packed up straight away and headed back to Newcastle, arriving the next day.

Mum's funeral took place at the Norah Head Cemetery, within a mile of the last lighthouse that Mum and Dad lived on. Did I tell you that my grandparents, my parents and Joyce and I all were lighthouse keepers, plus my uncle, my brother and a brother in law.

A short while at home and with another clearance of a few months up my sleeve we decided to go away again with Ron and Dorothy Trengrove. We were away for five weeks with most of the time spent fishing and just browsing around. Fishing was both good and bad but all in all we didn't do too badly. We had headed for Brisbane again and it was here that Angus MacLachlan rounded up a heap of good people for a barbecue. What a day - it was a wet miserable experience - but we had a great time being under cover all day. That mighty man Fred Bryant did a fantastic job. He stood out at the barbecue the whole time and cooked everyone's meat and would not allow anyone to assist even though the rain poured down all the time. He protected the meat with a large beach umbrella. In all there were 17 at the get together - Angus MacLachlan, Neil and Margaret Hooper, "Butch" and Pat Barmier, George and Edna

Vandeleur, Ron and Dorothy Trengrove, Fred and Phyllis Bryant, George and Bettye Coulson, Mel and George Mathieson (both being well after their bad accident) Joyce and myself. Ron, Dorothy, Joyce and I thought it was a most wonderful gesture of friendship for anyone to come out on a day such as it was, with some having to travel long distances. It certainly makes one proud to be associated with our group of 2/2'ers.

Joyce had more bad news of her sister having another stroke and her younger brother having a close call, just getting to hospital in time. He is still not out of the woods and needs close care.

Should my coming examination at hospital be O.K. we will be going to Brisbane again around 4th August to visit Joyce's family. We hope during our 10 days away to get to George and Bettye Coulson's get together at Maroochydore.

Our holiday away with Ron and Dorothy went to expectations - they are beaut to be with and we had a very happy time together and will do it again. However, our homecoming was lousy - Joyce and I went under with this bad flu that is sweeping N.S.W. and have been battling it for about a month, but at last we are on the mend.

Apart from our sad happenings as related we have had a lot of laughter and happiness most of all when we have been with a meeting of our group. Most of all we try to greet each day with a smile.

I nearly forgot - we travelled to Keith and Betty Craig's at Young for a weekend get together and had a beaut time as expected. This was in early March. I do hope that with all the running around we do the wheels on the car never wear out - we would have to stop travelling and that would be disastrous as far as we are concerned. I hope the car lasts till next March for we are booked in at Canberra and looking forward to the Safari.

May I add that our few days at Ballina were most enjoyable with Ron "Babe" and Nancy Teague's hospitality.

I will enclose a little something for the Cougar Arch, and with that will bring this diatribe to a halt.

Our sincere good wishes to yourself and all in the west.

Joyce and Bob Smith

NEWS FROM THE CROWEATER COUNTRY

I thought I would fill you in on the Anzac Festivities the Association always hold their

annual dinner on Anzac Eve; this year it was held at the Gothic Hotel, and was well attended by the Units of the Commando Sqdns.

Credit must go to Bert Bache, who just happens to be the Association Secretary.

The cuisine was excellent and the atmosphere beyond par, all enjoyed themselves and were reluctant to leave.

Those who fronted up for the 2/2 were, Bert and Sylvia Bache, Kel and Ruby Carthew, Ross Smith, Keith and Betty Dignum. What the 2/2 lacked in quantity made up for in quality.

Anzac Day dawned fine and sunny, we had a short service at the Association's Memorial in Keswick Barracks officiated over by Padre Botterill. After the service we moved off to the March, the 2/2 represented by:- Bert Bache, Lofty Timcke, Bob Williamson, Ross Smith, Kel Carthew and Keith Dignum, the day could not have been better.

See Allan Hollow too frequently, I am afraid he is not like wine, does not improve with age.

We are looking forward to the next trip he makes to the West, we will then have a bit of peace.

All the best,
Keith Dignum

Hereunder is a letter sent to Senator A.T. Gietzelt, Minister Veterans Affairs:-

AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

April 1985

Dear Sir,
Reference your recent address at the Bienial Congress of the Australian Federation of T & P.I. ex servicemen and women, the Australian Commando Association was most concerned to read that the Government is under pressure from some quarters to cut the budget deficit and that such cuts would or could affect Veterans Affairs.

The Australian Commando Association whose membership covers all States in Australia will advise all members to support you in your claim that Veteran Affairs budgeting should be interfered with.

We shall also ask our members to approach their local Member of Parliament (irrespective of his Political Party) and advise that they would vigorously protest against any reductions in allocation of funds to Veterans.

Most war veterans (those surviving) have now reached a critical stage in their lives where age, plus ill health, mostly caused by war service such as wounds, injuries, nerves and having to live under arduous and unhygienic conditions is taking effect. Now is the time that the Government and the younger generation must accept the responsibility of assisting the war veteran the same as the veteran accepted the responsibility of defending this country during the Second World War and later campaigns.

Wishing you every success in your portfolio as Minister for Veteran Affairs.

Yours Faithfully,
Arthur Littler
President

ANNIVERSARY & BIRTHDAY

Merv and Dulcie Ryan celebrated their 39th wedding anniversary and Merv's birthday at their home on Sunday, June 9th.

Those present to help them celebrate the two occasions were son Brian and his wife Maureen, daughter Vicki and her husband Greg and children, Dulcie's sister Alma and husband Jimmy Fitzsimmons, Beryl Griffiths, Keith and Val Haynes, Gerry and Mary McKenzie, Millie Bowden, Elsie Wares, Jack and Hazel Wicks, Fred Napier, Len Bagley, Betty Illsley, Roy and Vera Watson, Mick and Jean Morgan, Jack Carey, Ron and Gwenda Kirkwood, Bernie and Babs Langridge, Doug and Edna Fullarton, Jess Epps, Jack and Norma Hasson.

During the afternoon they had phone calls from their daughter in Darwin and Neil and Margaret Hooper in Queensland.

A very enjoyable day was had by all.

On Friday, June 25, Merv and Dulcie flew to Darwin to spend a few weeks with their daughter and family. We all wish them a safe and pleasant holiday.

DISABILITY PENSION Application for Increase

This was sent in by Bill Wade who is well qualified, through his own involvement, to give such advice:

Following are suggested guide lines for an application for increase in disability pension. They can be expanded as required for a particular case.

Deterioration.

Pain and discomfort.

Employment — interruption to, early retirement from, missing out on chances of promotion to or of working overtime, etc. Social and recreational — disabilities such as deafness interfere with business conferences, family TV watching, a social drink, etc.

How often see local medical officer.

What can do to alleviate.

Sleep patterns.

Domestic relations - irritability etc.

Personal outlook - upset by tooting or cat-calling motorists, etc.

Use of walking aids etc., walking stick, back brace.

How does use recreational time - reading, radio, TV, bowls, visiting relatives, etc.

Rest during day?

Can use public transport?

Shopping etc. - how is this done?

Newspapers delivered?

Home and garden maintenance.

Does veteran intend to work again?

W.W.C.P.

News in this division is much more encouraging and optimistic; may it long continue.

HENRY SPROXTON has had a real run of outs and has been hospitalised on a few occasions. He is now at home and improving but awaiting a decision on heart surgery. We have been right behind you Henry in your fight to get on top of your problem. Likewise we have prayed for Thelma in her bid to help you back to good health. Have tried to keep as many off the phone as possible to help to lighten the load. God Bless you both, may the trip back to good health be short.

MERV RYAN is holding his own and gone with Dulcie to Darwin to see his daughter and her family. That is good news. Keep plugging Merv you have got what it takes. Good luck from us all to both of you.

FRED NAPIER is still in good fettle and able to move about really well on two walking sticks. Like Johnny Walker Whiskey still going strong. Best of good health Fred from all members.

COLIN DOIG is still going along very nicely and Joy continues to be a great cog in the keep well wheel. Colin is still looking for "Original Copies of our news letter which we received prior to the printing of the Courier". Best of good luck and health Colin and our love to Joy.

VALE RON McARTHUR

We regret to advise of the passing of Ron McArthur of South Grafton, N.S.W. Ron had not enjoyed the best of health for some time and spent his last years confined to a wheel chair.

Ron joined the unit at Canungra in 1943 and served in 9 section during New Guinea campaign. Ron or Joe as he was more affectionately known in the section, possessed a keen sense of humour and along with his good mate Jim Foot, could always be relied upon to provide some lighter moments when army life grew tedious. He was unfortunate enough to contract scrub typhus in New Guinea and this affected his health in later life.

Happy Greenhalght and Ron Orr represented the Association at his funeral which took place at the South Grafton Cemetry on Wednesday, 3rd July last.

To his wife Violet, sons Terry and David, daughters Dianne and Joanne, we extend our deepest sympathy on behalf of all members of the Association.

Lest we forget.

VALE DICK PEPPER

We have to report with regret the passing of Dick Pepper.

Dick joined the 2nd Independent Company from the Heavy Battery at Koepang on Dutch Timor. He served as a cook with Capt. Rogor Dunkley's Hospital until the unit was evacuated to Australia. Although he joined the Army in Sydney N.S.W. he was a West Australian and was discharged in W.A. He was in business at Mingenew for some time after the War. He then went to N.S.W. and became caretaker of a Youth Camp on the Hawkesbury River at Little Patonga.

We did not see much of Dick after the War but he was a real good bloke and an efficient cook on Timor.

Lest we forget
Col. Doig.

CLASH OF DATES — WHAT A PITY!

It is a shame some liaison was not sought when the Commando Association (Victoria) decided to hold their National Reunion.

Our dates 8th to 16th March inclusive were

decided about three years ago and I am sure many of our boys would have gone from Canberra to Melbourne to take part if this clash of dates had not occurred.

As it is our 1986 Safari does not finish until the 16th March and they have programmed their National Reunion from Friday 14th March to Thursday 20th March. The National Reunion Dinner, a highlight of any reunion, is planned for Friday, 14th March.

This article is promulgated to make sure our boys give priority to our Canberra Safari in its entirety. It is one event where we can all, Australia wide, get together to sustain old friendships and continue a function which has been part of our planned calendar over all the years.

We wish the Commando Association (Victoria) a highly successful Reunion in every way, which we are certain it will be. We too are sure you will understand the commitment our boys have already made to our Canberra Safari.

DONATIONS

Messrs.

Sharp	Poynton (Joe)
Peattie	Studdy
Wheatley	Lehner
Campbell A.	Smith (Bob)
Wicks	Elmore
Scott	Orr.
Fitzgerald	Dorrington

CORRESPONDENCE CORNER

Dee Why, N.S.W.
21/5/85

I've been trying for weeks to write but somehow just could'nt put my mind and my pen into gear.

I guess the illness and subsequent death of our brother, Mick Devlin, touched us so very much, and as with others, it is hard to accept the fact that he has gone. He was accorded one of the greatest farewells one could imagine, and a fitting tribute to a really great person. Over 500 people from every organisation he had any contact with, attended his Requiem Mass and the Crematorium. I was greatly honoured to be asked by Betty to propose a eulogy, and how inadequate I felt, to try to put into five minutes of words sufficient to say 'thank you and farewell' to our dear comrade.

We have been in regular contact with Betty

and family since, and she seems to be coping very well. Even as recently as last Sunday, and because the Craigs were down, a few of us gathered at Goodacres for a very pleasant couple of hours. Included were Bill and Coral Coker, Betty Devlin, Paddy Kenneally and Majorie's sister Jean.

Shortly after Mick's demise came a very grey and cool Anzac Day. Compared to other Units we had a pretty good roll up and after completing a somewhat arduous march, repaired to our usual water hole outside City Ford at Woolloomooloo (top that in W.A. boong talk!) Most of us then proceeded to Circular Quay and boarded our hired ferry which, because of industrial trouble, could not leave the wharf! However, we enjoyed the good food, grog and company the day brought forth, and between times remembered our good mates who were not able to be with us.

On the Commando Association front you would have heard from the new national body on the protestations regarding any reduction in Veterans' benefits arising from bright ideas departments in Canberra, and especially in regard to petroleum pricing policies.

Our friend Bill Wade, War Compensation Officer from Paddington/Woollahra R.S.L. recently passed on to us a list of things which he considers are relevant to all of us in respect to pension applications or increases - copy enclosed. When you look at them, consider how many of these items apply to any or all of us, as we get older.

I know some of our other regular correspondents have been having a rough time. Bob and Joyce Smith attended the gathering at Young and proceeded down to Victoria. Whilst there they had their caravan and car damaged by vandals. Then they received word of the death of one of Joy's family - raced up to Brisbane to do the necessaries.

Have for posterity some photos taken by Bob Bollinger at the No. 1 Commando Regimental birthday exercise at Balmoral and George's Heights on the occasion of the last year's event on 27/6/84 when a number of us attended. Our liaison there is similar to that which you have fostered with S.A.S.

On Easter Sunday night we were invited to attend a function at St. Michael's, Daceyville, organised by the Timorese group in Sydney. Unfortunately, only Paddy Kenneally and myself from 2/2 were able to attend, along with Merv Ripley and wife Kath from 2/4 and Don and Dulcie Latimer 2/7.

Apart from their Easter celebration this was also an occasion to present trophies for their successful season in the Eastern Suburbs Soccer Competition. Merv and I were pleased to assist the President of the

Timorese Association to perform the presentations. Our hosts for the night were Pat de Luz and his wife Linda, accompanied by Nina Encarnaceo (widow of Deolinda), Father Airos and President John Carrascaleo. Altogether a great night with over 500 Timorese and friends present.

Jack Hartley has also been having some problems - his youngest brother Norman has a terminal cancer and Jack has been making the trip to Newcastle two or three times a week to see him.

"Snow" Bernie Weir had a spell of over 5 weeks in R.G.H. Concord with some circulatory problems in his legs - when I enquired last week he had been discharged and presumably returned to his country estate at "Spencer".

Otherwise, as far as we know, everyone is well and enjoying life.

We have a quarterly meeting due on Monday week, June 3 and look forward to a good roll up of all our regulars plus any one else who cares to blow in.

Time is getting away and the Canberra Safari will be upon us before we realise it. I've expressed some concern that the Victorian Association has seen fit to organise a reunion that clashes in part with ours, but both groups have set their dates and ours of course will take priority. I note the list of starters from W.A. includes most of the regulars and would like to see in a future Courier as complete a list as possible from all states.

Am pleased to report that Edith shows some improvement in health, and I can keep the right end up in the air. Our warm greetings to all our good friends wherever they might be and with a sincere hope that we can all gather in Canberra next March.

I know this is too long winded for the Courier but hope you can pick some items out for use.

We hope all who have been on the sick list have overcome their ills and have been restored to as good health as possible.

With best wishes, sincerely,

Alan Luby

29/5/85

Marj and I have been in Sarawak for the last three months and don't look like getting home until the end of September. Our daughter who lives here with her husband and family, was expected to have routine operation a few days after we arrived in February and we were to look after the children for three months. However, Sue

picked up an infection that necessitated the postponement of the op until a week or two's time so we have been living the life of tropical leisure and enjoying our stay.

Sue and Mike have built their home at the foot of a jungle clad mountain ten miles from Kuching, a really beautiful spot, on the edge of a Malay Kampong, quiet and secluded. Tracks lead off from the front gate straight into jungle and up the mountain to a deserted tea and coffee plantation, developed at the turn of the century by the white Rajah Brooke. The Indian labourers build a temple on the plantation and still keep it in repair so that the track is still open with small places of worship all along at intervals of a mile or so. The tracks are very much like those in New Guinea, but without the sloppy mud.

Being about 1 degree off the equator the weather here is very predictable - 15 feet of rainfall on average each year and a constant 100% humidity. You seem to spend much of your time going to or from showers.

As this is our third trip over a six year period it has been interesting watching the changes in a "developing" nation and watching a government at work that would make all of our politicians look like lily whites. Great strides have been taken in what could be called prestige developments to impress other nations, while what appear to be essentials are being ignored. Still, one would have to admit that because of cheap labour there appears to be quite some progress in the industrial and commercial areas. When Sue first came here 12 years ago the exchange rate was \$3.6 Malaysian to \$1 Australian. Now it is \$1.6 Malaysian to \$1 Australian. There is a definite shift in wealth within these countries.

In many parts things go on almost as they have for centuries. Marj and I were able to hire a guide and travel back into Iban (Sea Dyak) country near the Indonesian border and stay in a long house where they still kept about 200 heads from old days. Probably contained heads from early European explorers, and of course in later years some belonging to the Japs, who were attacked with poison blow pipes as they tried to make their way inland, but decided that the area was strategically unimportant.

These are a small people of beautiful physique and gentle nature. The older men's bodies are covered with intricate traditional tattoos. They still live by subsistence farming, fishing and hunting and treat visitors as honoured guests.

Of course the other thing that strikes a visitor is the intense and lasting dislike of the Japs for what they did during their occupation of Borneo. This appears to be greatest

among the Chinese and Indian groups where the older folk are quick to tell of the atrocities and harsh treatment dealt out. Of course, mingled with this is gratitude to the Australian troops who liberated them.

It was great to get the February and April Couriers sent on with our other mail and get the news. The Mini Safari with the Craigs at Young looks like it was another great show. Sorry Marj and I had to miss it Keith and Betty.

It was wonderful news to know that Col Doig was feeling so much better.

I'm looking forward to the Canberra Safari so until then, best regards to all from Marg and myself.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Peattie

Dubbo, N.S.W.
3/6/85

Hello to all our good friends from all states near and far and its good to see so many names in the Courier who will be attending the Canberra Safari. I feel this Safari will be another wonderful get together and we boys from N.S.W. will be able to return the same good hospitality that has been extended to us on so many occasions over the years.

Phyllis and I have just returned from a fortnight in Brisbane and the far north coast. I received an invitation from Ron Archer, a former member of our unit, to join him and a group of Queensland bowlers on a bowls tour. We journeyed to Brisbane and met the group of men and women bowlers, then travelled down to Ballina, a lovely coastal resort on the north coast of N.S.W. This was our headquarters for a week and each day we travelled by Greyhound Coach to the following clubs - Lismore, Evans Head, Alstonville, Woodburn and Ballina for mixed bowls each afternoon. The mornings were spent doing scenic tours of the area.

Thanks once again Ron, for a wonderful week and great credit to you for your organisation and your hospitality to Phyllis and myself on our return to Brisbane.

Whilst in Brisbane, time being limited due to a heavy schedule, it was not possible for me to see any of the boys. I did phone Fred Bryant, George Mathieson, Alex Veovodin and Angus McLachlan and had a good yarn to all of them. I also made several attempts to ring Tony Adams but no luck. While speaking to Fred Bryant I told him that Mick Devlin was very sick and he broke the sad news to me of Mick's passing the day before. It was a shock to both of us.

It is sad to see so many boys of the Unit being robbed such a short time after their retirement of the ability to enjoy life after years of hard work and war service.

To Betty and family we extend our deepest sympathy in their sad loss. He will always be remembered as a great mate, good soldier and such a likeable personality. They were a lovely couple and it has been my pleasure to enjoy their company on every Safari since 1968, we do hope Betty that we will see you and June Bennett in Canberra next year, also other wives of our departed mates.

My old mate from 6 section, Fred Broadhurst and Mavis have asked us to share a unit with them at the Canberra Safari. I was a bit dubious after the Pertha Safari - Len Bagley and I told him we wouldn't go to any Safari if he was present!!

He kept us up late every night, made us unpopular with our wives and never repeated a yarn or story in the whole time we were together. I had bronchitis at the time and my ribs were really aching from coughing and laughing at him. Seeing he is such a nice bloke I weakened and said we would join him so Len, don't get so close to us this time if you want some early nights - he has already told me he has a string of new ones to tell us!

In passing I would like to let our members know that my cousin Frank Jackson who has attended several Safari's with me has also had bad luck since retiring. His wife Maisie is at present in Prince Henry Hospital, Sydney and has undergone three heart by-passes — she is progressing satisfactorily.

To any of our sick members wives and families, may each and all have a speedy recovery to good health.

Bye bye for now, God willing see you all in Canberra.

Frank Sharp

Cloverdale, W.A.
4/6/85

A few lines to say hello and hope you are all keeping O.K.

I had a nice trip to Christmas and Cocos Islands a while back. Two brothers went with me and the three of us had a great time with V.I.P. treatment in both places. If you ever get the chance to see them I can assure you it will be well worth your while, but you will need an invitation as they are not on the tourist list.

I've been up and down to Mandurah quite a lot lately helping out at the Peninsula Caravan Park that my brother Harry has. I get a bit of fishing and a chance to have a few drinks with some of the Mandurah boys.

I've written a letter to Scotty Taylor and his brother Jock is delivering it for me when he goes to Scotland this month. I asked Scotty to write something for the Courier.

Am enclosing a cheque for the Unit and a big Hello to everybody.

Cheers and beers for now and all the best.

Regards,

Doc Wheatley

Portarlington, Vic.
16/6/85

Just a note to change our address - at long last after all sorts of delays, we have our home built. Inside is beaut but the mess outside will take some taming.

Portarlington is a small seaside town on the Bellarine Peninsuar, Geelong being the closest city about 15 miles away.

Our greetings to everyone and should anyone be passing this way, the welcome mat will be out.

Bill and Eileen Sharp

Launceston, Tas.

Thank you for sending me the 2/2 Commando Courier and address book. I've been going to make contact for a long time but have kept putting it off.

I don't know if you remember me - Walter is my name but you chaps always called me "Snow", even the creados.

Please to say I keep pretty well except for a few aches occasionally but I expect they are part of the ageing process. Trust you are keeping well, also Dookie, whom I well remember and Teddy Monk.

Let me know how much the sub will be so that I can be financial. Another chap near here, L. Nicholson who was with the 2/2 would also like to become a member.

Regards,

Wal (Snow) Elmore

EDITOR: Thanks Snow, have registered L. Nicholson in the June Courier.

Capt. D.N. Hasson
Proof and Experimental
Establishment
Port Wakefield, S.A.
1/7/85

Please accept my belated thanks at being able to be on the mailing list of the 2/2 Commando Courier. It is terrific being able to read about the activities in the West and the interstate correspondence.

I have recently returned from a course at the Land Warfare Centre in Canungra. I was accommodated in the Officer's Mess there and was extremely surprised and proud to find a 2/2 plaque glaring at me as I walked into the billiards room. I guessed it was presented during the Queensland Safari some years ago. I thought you would be interested to know that it appears to be in the very centre of all the other plaques on the wall. Attempting to be unbiased, this certainly seemed like a position of prominence to me.

Before I went on course I had the pleasure of having Mrs Epps visit. It was excellent to see her again and my wife Cheryl, son Ryan, Mrs Epps and I were able to pay a quick visit to the Barossa Valley before returning to Adelaide. I also met Mr and Mrs Hollow whom I had not met before, although they had visited my parents in the West.

It is very pleasing to read of the close association that the Unit appears to have established with the Special Air Services Regiment. I certainly wish you the best in a continued liaison with the Regiment and its new Commanding Officer. Two members from the class that I graduated with from R.M.C. are currently serving with the Regiment, I believe.

My family and I are well and will probably be moving from Port Wakefield at the end of the year. We do not know to where yet.

Let me once again say thank you and wish good health to all members and their families.

Yours sincerely,

Doug

Irevallyn, Launceston Tas.
6/7/85

Dear Everyone,

I received the April and June edition of 2/2 Commando Courier and your Association address book for which I thank you very much.

Please find enclosed cheque as a donation for the Courier.

My health and memory are not the best these days however my wife Enid and I count our blessings.

Good luck and good health to all.

Col Lehner

South Grafton N.S.W.
July 1085

Sadly to inform the Association of the passing of our member Ron McArthur.

Ron had not enjoyed the best of health for some time and although his death was a sad moment at least he is out of pain.

Our local R.S.L. sub-branch took care of the military side of Ron's interment and did him proud. A wreath was sent on behalf of our Association and George (Happy) Greenhalgh and myself represented for 2/2nd Association.

Ron served with 9 section in our New Guinea Campaign.

Tried to ring other members on our north coast, but the only person I spoke to personally was Col Knight who reports being well, apart from Rheumatics and that he has missed his last 2 Couriers.

Regards to all

Ron Orr

North Balwyn, Vic.
30/6/85

Am enclosing an article which appeared recently in "Mufti" the Victorian R.S.L.'s periodic publication.

Like many others I was not aware of the background leading up to the formation of Independent Companies or those responsible, and no doubt it may be of interest to Association members.

Kind Regards,

Tom Nisbet

EDITOR: Thanks Tom for your thoughtful contribution to the Courier - most interesting.

MUFTI, June 13, 1985

The origin of The Independent Companies (COMMANDOS)

By: J.P. Buckley, OBE

The recent visit to Melbourne of Brigadier Michael Calvert, DSO and Bar, has revived interest in the beginnings of the Australian Commandos, previously known as Independent Companies.

It will be recalled that Calvert was a brigade commander under Major General Wingate in Burma. He was regarded as an expert on Commando type training and operations. He still is!

The man responsible for setting up the Independent Companies in Australia was Lieutenant General Vernon Sturdee (later Sir Vernon Sturdee) who in September 1940 was Chief of the General Staff.

Perhaps it's best to quote the forward of Sir Berard Callinan's excellent book "Independent Company" which gives the details of the formation of the elite units. Sturdee stated:

"Far too little is known by the Australian general public about the operations of the Australian Independent Companies and in particular of the activities of 2/2 and 2/4 Independent Companies in Portuguese Timor. It is a campaign complete in itself in which some three hundred Australians waged a successful war against thousands of Japanese and held them in Timor when they could have been employed more profitably in the Japanese interests in other parts of the Pacific — they might even have been used for landings on the mainland of Australia.

"The origin of the Independent Companies is of interest. Shortly after the fall of France in June 1940, the British War Office was secretly organising units for raids into German occupied Europe to gain information, carry out sabotage and to assist the French Underground. About this time they offered to send us a special Military Mission to train Australian personnel for Independent Company work. Little was known here at that time about such units, their organisation, equipment or operation beyond the fact that they were some form of "cloak and dagger gang". Negotiations were carried on by cable on the highest "Top Secret" level between the British C.I.G.S. and the Australian C.G.S. and were somewhat protected owing largely to the need for British secrecy and partly to our uncertainty as to what it was all about and whether such units would be of value to the Australian Army.

"In the middle of these negotiations the then C.G.S. Sir Brudenell White, was killed in an aircraft accident at Canberra, and I look

over on September 1, 1940.

"After further exchange of cables we accepted the offer of the Mission, although we had little idea where or in what circumstances such units could be used by us.

"Until the British Mission arrived towards the end of 1941, little could be done beyond a few preliminary reconnaissances of likely training areas. Secrecy demanded an area well removed from centres of population, and Wilson's Promontory was selected.

"On arrival, the British Mission was given the task of getting organisation and training under way, with the assistance of Australian and New Zealand officers specially detailed for the purpose. Later, control was taken over by an Australian staff and the mission concentrated on technical training".

Calvert was a member of the Mission which came to Australia as result of General Sturdee's acceptance of the War Office proposal.

Brigadier Calvert recalled his first meeting with General Sturdee during a discussion with Sir Bernard Callinan, Sir William Hall, Sir Alfred Kemsley and the writer recently in Melbourne. Calvert mentioned that when the Mission (of which he was a member) arrived from the U.K. only General Sturdee (C.G.S.) and Major General Northcott (D.C.G.S.) due to secrecy knew anything about it. In fact, some more junior officers at Army H.Q. had "suspicions" about the members of the Mission.

However, Sturdee and Northcott were most interested in the information provided and the weapons used by the Mission (Thompson and Bren).

Sturdee and Northcott took the team to a range where they both fired the weapons. Then Sturdee brought out the untried Australian "Owen" which had been submitted to the Army for examination. According to Calvert, both Generals fired the "Owen" under various conditions then Sturdee turned to Northcott and said "Order 1000 immediately". Northcott mentioned in alarm that the Government would have to approve the order, but Sturdee countered this comment by saying "If the Government won't approve the order I will pay for the bloody guns myself".

Calvert was amazed and spellbound at the whole proceedings, especially as the C.G.S. and D.C.G.S. could fire and evaluate such weapons and that Sturdee would give such an order to Northcott about the acquisition of the new Australian made and designed "Owen" gun. This could not have happened elsewhere!

However, worse was to follow when Sturdee directed the Mission to prepare War Establishments and War Equipment Tables

for the Australian Independent Companies forthwith, a task for which Calvert and the other officers had little if any experience. However, with the oversight of Sturdee they got every possible help to complete the task with urgency and to commence training at the "Prom".

I hope the foregoing information will be of interest to members but for those who have a copy of Bernard Callinan's book I suggest you read the whole foreward written by General Sturdee who rightly could claim to be the "father" of the Australian Independent Companies, yet his name and deeds are unknown to most members of the Association.

Sturdee was always very proud of the magnificent performance of the early Independent Companies, particularly in Timor and other islands. Likewise, he was an admirer of Bernard Callinan and forecast in 1953 that was well as being an excellent soldier Callinan would also become a dis-

tinguished citizen and a brilliant engineer. Sturdee's forecast has been confirmed. He would have been very proud of Callinan's subsequent achievements.

The Commando members can be justifiably proud of Sturdee and Callinan. Sturdee went on to become Head of the Military Mission in Washington, G.O.C. 1st Australian Army, for the last year of the war, Acting Commander-in-Chief on the retirement of Sir Thomas Blamey. In March 1946, again Chief of the General Staff, serving in that position until his retirement in 1950.

As Sturdee once said: "It is rare that a Chief of the General Staff has the opportunity to set up a new and elite Corps. In the case of the Independent Companies he hoped his name would always be associated with them. Hopefully, the Association remembers Sir Vernon Sturdee! (whose outstanding record was covered in "Mufti" in September 1983).
