



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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2/2ND CANBERRA SAFARI 1986

The arrival of the 2/2nd Commando Association saw the members encircling Canberra from all points of the compass. Not with the stealth manifest in the years of their training and war service, but with gay abandon full in the knowledge we were all to meet in friendship and with joyful anticipation of having 9 days of fun, laughter, and wonderful reminiscences of bygone days. Participating our ladies, who by their love, loyalty and devotion, have made these Safaris an unforgettable experience in which we can all share cementing for time eternal the camaraderie which is in total, the 2/2nd Commando Association.

Emotions displayed in meeting old mates truly indicated the affection we all hold for each other. Handshakes, a firm grip of the arm or shoulder, a kiss and a hug for the ladies, told a story of true and close friendship which neither time nor distance has shaken. At such a time, our thoughts fly to those who are no more, who by their example have given us the inspiration to carry on this great Association. To make it possible to keep the spirit won in wartime situations alive, the memory of supreme comrades permeates all our lives and they continue to share our love and devotion.

The starting point was the **Saturday night "Get-together Reception"**. Then it was, all noticed the terrific response Canberra received to its 1986 Safari, proving beyond doubt that the 2/2nd Commando Association had made a right choice in the venue—Canberra!

Over 200 graced the precincts of the Canberra Motor Village, O'Connor, to take part in a welcome that was warm and wonderful in every way, the scenes of emotion in all the welcomes had to be seen to be believed. Here was the 2/2nd at its very best, each one a part of the other so quickly, it was just like yesterday since last they met. They drank each others health with gusto reminisced at length, far into the night they continued to make sure Canberra Safari, 1986, started with a bang.

It was off on the right foot because the Canberra boys had performed a superb feat of organisation. The caterers turned on a meal par excellence and there was ample refreshments available to quench the greatest of thirsts. It was certainly hats off to our hosts who had performed feats of magic that satisfied even the sternest of critics. The Canberra members had achieved the ultimate in projecting an itinerary which had in it something for everyone each and every day. There was no doubt that from Day 1, everything was going to be just perfect.

Tuesday morning the 11th March, was the biggest attendance at a Safari Meeting to discuss Unit affairs that anyone can remember. It was excellently chaired by Neil Hooper and covered quite a bit of ground in a short time. Jim Fenwick and Danny Daniels gave a resume and instructions for coming events. Archie Campbell gave a run down on the Courier production, which the meeting maintained, was the lifeline of the Association.

Then came the decision on Safaris of the future. Colin Doig suggested it should be in two years time, not three, as time was creeping away. Resolved unanimously. The Chairman called for each State to speak on their ideas of future Safaris. Alan Luby, N.S.W., suggested participation in an Australian Wide Reunion of Commando Associations to be held in 1988, coinciding with Anzac Day, to be held in Sydney. He urged each State to give it serious consideration. His support came from Keith Dignum, S.A., who suggested as our members narrowed the Commando Association would provide an overall method of embracing all Commando Squadrons.

Angus MacLachlan, Queensland, put forward the proposition that we should never allow, after all the years of its existence, the 2/2nd Safari to lapse. He stated it was a wonderfully important event in the 2/2nd Commando Association calendar which has bound us into a tightly knit group of grand mates and in which our ladies take part with excitement and anticipation. It was firmly resolved that the 2/2nd Commando Safaris should continue.

We had to decide the venue. South Australia was put forward. Then came a fine presentation by Leith Cooper with reasons why Cowes, Phillip Island, Victoria, provided the ideal place. It was well constructed with a positive selling attitude, in that it could provide a compact situation for all types of accommodation akin to that of Canberra, which all agreed, had everything.

Victoria won the day with the proviso that they would explore any reasons that might prevent them from using Cowes as our next Safari venue. All are confident that Victoria will be our hosts in March, 1988. It was carried unanimously and enthusiastically.

The meeting closed with Len Bagley giving due and high praise to the Canberra boys for their organising of a first class Safari in every way, all achieved with minimum of personnel. Prolonged and spontaneous applause followed Len's timely recognition of Canberra's efforts.

11th March

Tuesday night saw a really spectacular **National Capital 2/2nd dinner**. What a sight, as over 200, including guests, sat down to dinner. The ladies adding to the brilliance of the gathering with their beautiful frocking. It was something we will never forget, for it was voted the biggest Safari crowd ever, happy, carefree, all contributing to an occasion where friendship reigned supreme. We thank God that our health and strength was sufficient for us all to witness a Safari with a difference.

Colin Doig, as Master of Ceremonies, and in his inimitable style, kept everything going with a swing. Wherever it might have lagged, Colin filled in the space with his wide ranging repertoire of tales. Thanks Colin for a fine contribution.

We remembered our "Fallen", we gave thanks with "Grace", we showed our deep allegiance to the "Queen", we welcomed the "Visitors". Then came "The Unit", the toast ably and sincerely proposed by Angus MacLachlan, who had given it deep thought and produced a theme that gave us cause to think deeply. Who better to make "The Response", than our Unit and Force leader, Sir Bernard Callinan, affectionately Bernie to us all. He detailed the progress of the Unit from its foundation to the end of hostilities, giving us all an insight into how it happened. It was tremendously well received. Thank you Bernie for being with us, for breaking a busy schedule. You always make us very much aware that the 2/2nd has a predominant place in your heart. Our deep appreciation for expressing what we all feel about our beloved Unit.

Here is the "Toast to the Unit", so ably presented by Angus MacLachlan:—

"Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Members. It is with a deep feeling of pride that I rise to propose this time honoured toast to the 2/2nd.

It is difficult to appreciate that just over 44 years have passed since our first Unit went into action against a hitherto invincible enemy. But as I look around at the diminishing numbers of well remembered faces, it is with sadness that I recognise that time has achieved what the Japanese forces could not.

Those of us who served in the various campaigns in which we fought, are tonight continuing the tradition of commemoration and mutual support which was created during the war years by the parents of our Western Australian Members.

In those times when the threat of conquest was ever present in the minds of the Australian people, when there appeared to be little cause for optimism because our forces were suffering defeat on all sides, and Burma had not yet been liberated by Errol Flynn, the Founders of our Association could not have foreseen that we would be meeting yet again in March, 1986. Because we fought independently of the major units, our history, although well documented and painstakingly recorded, may not be generally known to those who are with us tonight for the first time.

The No. 2 Independent Company was formed in mid 1941 at Wilsons Promontory and with subsequent name changes served throughout three campaigns as the 2/2nd Australian Commando Squadron. Trained along the lines of the British Independent Companies our destiny appeared to be to fight against the axis forces in Europe. However, the trend of political events of mid '41, which culminated in the destruction at Pearl Harbour and the invasion of South East Asia by the Japanese, determined that the theatre in which the unit would operate would be the S.W. Pacific with Portuguese Timor being the scene of its first campaign. On February 19th, 1942, the Unit first saw action against veteran troops of the Japanese Army. From that time until the evacuation to Darwin in late December, 1942, a continuous Guerilla campaign was waged against numerically superior forces, thus denying the Japanese valuable troops required for the invasion of New Guinea.

In the early part of this campaign, the Unit strength was augmented by members of the 2/24 Battalion and attached units who managed to make their way through Japanese lines and link up with our Unit. We also acquired in our ranks, a small group referred to as the International brigade consisting of political deportados of Portuguese Timorese origin. They all served with pride and are as one with us. Following the evacuation to Darwin in December, 1942, a period of re-grouping, reinforcing and re-training followed and saw us once more embarking in mid 1943 for the highlands of New Guinea, where, until late 1944, the Unit carried out mainly long range patrols in areas as far apart as Goroka, Bena-Bena area to the Markham and Ramu Valleys.

1945 saw the Unit again in service in the same capacity in New Britain which terminated at the end of hostilities in the occupation of Rabaul.

From the first encounter in February, 1942, until disbanded at the end of 1945, the 2/2nd Australia Commando Squadron was credited in the annals of the Official War History with having more front line service than any other unit of the 2nd A.I.F.

In proposing the toast to the Unit tonight, it is not only to those who served so gallantly and effectively in the various actions, nor to those represented by the survivors who will honour it with me, but, essentially it is to that intangible quality which has characterised each of our gatherings throughout the years, a spirit of unity, mutual respect and support, which has forged in the crucible of war and which will endure so long as one of us remains.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to charge your glasses, to stand with me and to honour the toast to the 2/2nd Australian Commando Squadron."

Apologies were received from quite a number of members and the reading of them led up to the toast of "Absent Friends". Following this was the mighty important toast to "Our Visitors". This was responded to with great enthusiasm. To complete the "Toast List", a sincere vote of thanks to our Toastmaster, Colin Doig, capably handled by Paddy Kenneally, in which he eulogised Colin's grand contribution over all the years to our Association. Colin's response was short, filled with emotion, it affected us all for Colin's heart was laid bare in his love for his ever present 2/2nd. You have a special place in our hearts Colin, Paddy truly conveyed that.

The meal was superb, refreshments were in abundance, we had some delightful and well earned presentations. Ron Morris, who has assisted our Canberra members to the enth degree in every area, without whom our Safari could not have eventuated, was made an Honorary Member of the 2/2nd Commando Association. So very well deserved Ron, thank you so much.

Then came our tribute to the boys who worked so hard to make the Canberra Safari, 1986, a grand show. Jim Fenwick, Danny Daniels and Tom Snowden, were awarded Life Membership of the 2/2nd Commando Association. It was thoroughly deserved and their combined efforts saw what many thought an impossible task achieved! Congratulations to you all. Well done!

Wednesday, 12th March, 1986, Canberra Day, saw our Commemoration Service at the National War Memorial. It was a fine and emotional spectacle as the boys paraded, they marched with heads held high, great proudness in their bearing, they relived all the years they were such a crack unit, they marched as one. An eyes right to Major General Smethurst, M.B.E. was followed by the Wreath Laying Ceremony which was performed by Sir Bernard Callinan. The wreath was one of real beauty, red flowers creating a double red diamond edged with white flowers as a border. It was striking in concept, its beauty laid bare when backgrounded by the Memorial. At this time, our thoughts turned to our comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice and to those who have since died. How we miss them! The "Last Post" played so very well by the bugler, followed by "Reveille", a March Past to salute those who were no more, saw an emotional moment, a deserved tribute, well and truly paid. It was a tremendously proud occasion in that we were able to pay our respects at the Canberra National War Memorial, a fitting and sacred place to honour our "departed comrades".

Alan Luby laid a wreath on behalf of the N.S.W. Combined Commando Association, and we thank that body for a kind and considerate action on this memorable day. Later, to celebrate **Canberra Day**, we all attended, by invitation, a ceremony held within the City Centre, to mark this important occasion. Sir William Keyes, National President of the R.S.L., welcomed us very warmly and applauded our participation in the Canberra Festival Week. He produced a telling oration taking in the History of Canberra and this Year of Peace. It was extremely well received by the large crowd.

The day finished on a high note as we were officially invited to the House of Assembly, which is a body in charge of Local Government. Mr. James Leedman, the Leader of the A.C.T. House of Assembly, welcomed on behalf of his colleagues, the 2/2nd Commando Association to Canberra, and in particular, to the House. He presented our President, Doug Fullarton, with a beautiful plaque to honour the occasion of our visit, stating they were extremely glad to have a Unit with such an outstanding record in their midst. Archie Campbell,

substituting for Doug, who was not 100%, replied in a suitable manner. He then presented to Mr. James Leedman, a 2/2nd Comando Association plaque made of Western Australian timber, plus a book by Sir Bernard Callinan, "The Independent Company". He said one was to show the 2/2nd had been there, the book to give them a background history of that UNIT.

This was indeed an historic and happy day. Thank you Canberra for accepting us all with such hospitality.

The day could not be closed without presenting to you all the stirring address by Major General Smethurst, M.B.E., at the National War Memorial. It was one to be remembered and we especially thank you, Sir, and Mrs Smethurst, for taking time out to participate and making this day a memorable one for the 2/2nd Commando Association.

Mr Ronald Morris
Sir Bernard Callinan
Men of the 2nd/2nd Commandos
Ladies and Gentlemen

May I commend you on your parade ground performance. After 45 years, and with no band, I thought you did extremely well. Above all your pride showed through.

I thank the members of the 2nd/2nd Commando Association for inviting me to join you this morning. It is a great privilege and pleasure.

A privilege because as a young officer one took great pride in reading of the success of the eight independant companies raised during 1941—42. The 2nd/2nd had a particularly distinguished record having deployed to Timor in December 1941 prior to the Japanese invasion in February 1942. The 2nd/2nd waged an active and highly successful harassing operation against the 10,000 man Japanese garrison. Indeed so successful that the Japanese reinforced Timor with 15,000 men from the 48th Division (a force ratio of 100 to 1). In 10 months the 2nd/2nd destroyed over 1,500 enemy for the loss of 40 men.

Having returned to Australia in December 1942 the Company again saw active service in the Central Highlands and Ramu Valley in New Guinea—from mid 1943 to late '44—in support of the 7th and 11th Australian Divisions. After a brief rest in Australia the Company landed in New Britain in support of the 5th Australian Division and undertook extensive patrolling in the enemy's rear areas—primarily in the Gazelle Peninsula. It remained in New Britain until the war ended.

You and your comrades contributed a fine chapter to our military history. It is interesting to note the similarity of roles that you had compared with those of the Commando and SAS regiments of today. More importantly it is the characteristics you displayed in adversity which the young soldier wishes to emulate. The attendance today is an indication of the comradeship and discipline developed in trying times.

Some would not understand why you all have kept in touch over the last 40 plus years and I suspect would misread your attitudes. Those who have been to war are the strongest supporters of peace—but—accept that if pressed we must be prepared to stand for what is right and just and clearly signal our resolve to preserve our nation's integrity. You demonstrated this resolve in the grim days of the 1940's and sent clear signals to all—that Australia was prepared to, and had the quality of soldiers, to defend itself. I believe this message has not been forgotten and that your actions have a strong influence in preserving our national interests. Those who do not understand discipline, comradeship and unity are probably those who also wish to change our flag. Perhaps they might think about this verse:

It's only an old piece of bunting,
It's only an old coloured rag,
But many have died for its honour,
And shed their life's blood for the flag.

At the same time they might also think of and thank those members of the 2nd/2nd and the many others who have spilt their blood for the nation and its flag.

Canberra is a long way from where you trained on Wilsons Promontory or served in Timor, New Guinea and New Britain but this National Memorial is a very appropriate and special place to remeber you comrades who did not return.

I thank you for the honour of joining you this morning. I wish you and your ladies a most enjoyable stay in Canberra and a safe journey to your homes.

Thursday night, 12th March, saw an event so very military in its flavour, something really unusual and exciting. Even the name gave no clue to what was in store for the Safari attendees, "1812 Overture", presented by the Royal Military College, Duntroon. It turned out to be a pot-pourri of many things with spectacular displays and beautiful music.

It all commenced with the "Beating of Retreat", a ceremonial tradition which had its origin in the 16th Century. It depicted the drum and fife players marching on the ramparts to warn

soldiers that guard duties would commence, that the gates were soon to be closed and all should return to the safety within the walls for the night.

The troops taking part in the second segment were cadets who marched into Duntroon in January, 1986. They included at least 16 women and that was an eye-opener! They drilled with precision, they formed ranks with discipline, this to fire three musket volleys in enacting an ancient custom of showing that skirmishing and the days fighting was over. Between the volleys, a hymn was played in honour of those who fell through the day. It was interesting and enlightening.

There was some magnificent music played, including Dixieland, by the combined bands of the Royal Military College and the First Recruit Training Battalion under the baton of Major N.J. Hammond. The soloist, Jillian Donaldson, sang "Memories", from the musical revue, "Cats", in a delightful and moving manner. "Amazing Grace" saw a fine vocal choir accompany Corporal Marshall and a stirring rendition by a Scotch Piper.

The "The 1812 Overture", by Tschickowsky! What a masterly performance it was. It included sound effects from the Royal Artillery, and, in the vigorous finale, a brilliant display of fireworks to set off the zest of the combined bands. It was a night to remember.

Guests of the Sergeant's Mess, saw the 2/2nd Commando Association partake of some great hospitality for which we say a big "thank you". Jack Fox ably, and with nostalgia, as years previously he was a Duntroon graduate, presented to Regt. Sgt. Major Smith, a 2/2nd Commando Association plaque to grace a wall in their Mess, plus Sir Bernard Callinan's book, "The Independent Company", to give the background to the Unit.

Thank you Duntroon for being so hospitable. Your performance over the whole night proved Australia is in safe hands with your training of our youth!

Friday 13th dawned with a temperature of 29 degrees being forecast. It was to prove a long interesting, exciting and humorous day.

Our first visit was to Cockington Green to view a miniature English Village, and what a delightful treat it was. Beautifully conceived and laid out in such a manner and so immaculately manicured, as to provide viewing of great joy. The miniature figures depicting the human side were just that, they provided great humour being in all sorts of lifelike poses. The village green cricket, the soccer match, the golf course, the town scenes, drew everyone like magic. A scenic train provided a panoramic overhead view of every aspect. It was certainly a unique experience, Cockington Green, seeing is believing.

Included in the complex was the typical "English Pub". What a delightful hour was spent sampling the wares available. Beer and Guinness Stout available in pots, plus other beverages to cover the tastes of both sexes. Old mates by sections, had a minor reunion in this warm hospitable atmosphere—it came to an end too soon. Sort of "English Pub" you could spend all day in then get poured out at closing time!! It was a great stopover.

Then came lunch at the Gold Creek Homestead all set up in country style, and what catering took place for the 2/2nd—it was superb! Beautifully carved at the table, roasts of all sorts dispersed with a myriad of salads, lovely farm type bread. No one could resist filling his or her platter. Hunger soon dissipated under cover of the big machinery shed and there was ample beverages with which to wash it all down. Congratulations to the caterers and the Canberra boys for providing something with such a difference. It was appreciated by every single person.

A minor hitch occurred on the way to Tidbinbilla Tracking Station. One of our buses broke down. It was unfortunate for the drivers had done a marvellous job over the whole Safari and we owe a great debt of gratitude to these boys and girls from Duntroon. There was an hours delay and this caused a disruption to a finely tuned programme, but it was all taken in our stride. Awaiting us on arrival a hearty afternoon tea, so very welcome on a very hot day.

Then we were transported in to the realms of the unknown within the Tracking Station. It was another world, with at this moment, the activity of "Halley's Comet" occupying 24 hours a day. This Space Centre has an important place in the tracking of the World, playing a big part in the ventures of Pioneer 6 through 9, 10 and 11, 12, Helios 1 and Voyager. A tremendous communication centre collating all the data from the aforementioned space vehicles.

One particular one, the Australian Landsat Station, launched in 1972, is used to help in the major problems confronting the World today, energy and resource supplies, food production and environmental monitoring on a global basis. It completes an orbit every 103 minutes at a speed of 27,000 km/h. With computer, an entire region can be mapped showing the precise location area of each crop in a matter of hours with an accuracy up to 90%.

What a place, staggering in its scientific know how, techniques the layman never hears of, they are right on the threshold of all sorts of space exploration. We saw as new World, not readily understandable, but showing what great potential exists; the decades ahead will be chock full of unbelievable achievements. Thank you to the Tidbinbilla Canberra Space Centre for letting the 2/2nd share in the terrific scientific happenings that are in our midst. Canberra, you have been so kind.

Sunday, 16th March—the final day.

It commenced with a Church Service at Duntroon for everyone, held in their beautiful Chapels. A fitting way to give thanks for what has been a tremendous 9 days full of everything one could wish for. We were warmly welcomed by the Pastor and the Priest, we felt at home in an instant. Ron Morris and Harry Botterill read the lessons, a moving address was given by a Duntroon man, Rod Tippet, introduced by the Church of England Padre, Murray Harris. His theme was wound around the 2/2nd Commando Association, their history as a fighting unit and the value of courage in peace as in war. We sang hymns, prayed for all things, then real hospitality on the church lawns in the form of tea, coffee and sandwiches, increased the warmth of our feeling towards the Royal Military College, Duntroon. Their contribution from the first day to the last, was nothing short of staggering.

Our thanks go out to the Commandant, Major Gen. Hockney and all those connected with the entertainment of the 2/2nd Commando Association, it was home from home. What a splendid sample of young men and women we saw, throwing full light on what discipline does for the young. All involved in their training are to be congratulated, this went right down to the drivers of our vehicles who were out of this World in their approach to all our requirements. Thanks for looking after us so well. Duntroon—we salute you!!

Sunday night saw our Farewell Get-together after a magical nine days. Drinks were available in quantity, the caterers put on and served to us a very tasty barbecue. Then came the "thankyou" part of the evening compared by Archie Campbell. It was a night for rewarding in our own way, the ability and achievements of our Canberra members. They had given to us a magnificent Safari, Canberra, 1986. It was nominated possibly the finest Safari ever. It attracted 87 members, a great response from such a small UNit, when added to by our ladies, families and visitors, it reached into the figures of nigh on 190. Ample testimony to its popularity.

Presentation time saw us able to give vent to our feelings regarding the performance of the following:

Jim and Joan Fenwick
 Danny and Sunny Daniells
 Tom and Bonnie Snowden,

all of the 2/2nd Commando Association. Then to those who contributed so much to the Safari's success with a great personal effort:—

Ron and Hazel Morris
 Maurice Ross

The value was intrinsic but the thought came from deep in all our hearts for a job so graciously and beautifully done. No value would have rewarded all the above people. God bless you and may Canberra Safari, 1986, be a part of your thoughts when wandering down memory lane.

Then came the goodbyes, the emotion, the depth of friendship showing through as strong men had tears in their eyes as the love for their old mates came alive. Time and space may keep us all apart, but when we get together again in 1988 at Cowes, Phillip Island, Victoria, it will be as though we never parted. This feeling was manifest in our wonderful ladies as they said their farewells. We all owe them a deep debt of gratitude for being what they are to us, an anchor and a lifeline of love and affection.

God bless us all in the intervening years, may our ranks not be too much thinner is our prayer to Him. He will, no doubt, take those He needs, and whom we will miss so much, making live our old Unit tribute to our departed:—

Stand to your glasses steady
 This World is a World of lies,
 Here's a toast to the dead already,
 And here's to the next man to die.

Until we meet again, take care, and here's to "AULD LANG SYNE".

THANK YOU SO MUCH CANBERRA

How does one convey to the organisations who helped our 2/2nd Canberra Safari, 1986, to go off as swingingly as it did. Without the tremendous support our Canberra boys received, it would not have got off the ground.

We are deeply indebted to the following sponsors, "thank you" seems a moderate word with which to express our feelings. However, it comes from the heart and goes with great sincerity to:—

Carlton United Brewery
 Canberra Motor Village
 Edmund Barton Motor Inn
 Kaiser Stuhl
 Gold Creek Homestead
 Statesmen Hotel, Curtin

Royal Military College—Duntroon
 Tidbinbilla Tracking Station
 Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve
 T.A.A.
 Orlando

IT WAS SO NICE TO SEE YOU

Faces appeared at Canberra we had not seen in a long time and this was a real bonus for everyone:—

Sir Bernard Callinan, (Bernie), Rolf Baldwin, (Baldy), David Dexter, Tom Nisbet, Tom Tierney, Alan Soper, Bill Tomasetti, Theo Adams, Goroka, New Guinea—plus a New Guinea boy Anton, who soon became one of us and we loved seeing him. Thanks Theo for a great thought. Then there was Jack Fox, Ted Cholerton, Reg Tatum, Arch Claney, Merv Coles (Cisco), Norm Tillet, Jack Hartley, Jack Peattie, Kel Carthew, Keith Dignum, Mark Jordan, Jack Rice. If I have missed any, my apologies, and, include yourselves!

Others came despite infirmities and joined in everything their health made possible:—Colin Doig, Merv Ryan, Bruce McLaren, Charlie Pierce, (Pigeon), George Humphreys, Keith Craig. Thank you for coming and may all go well with you in the months ahead. God Bless.

A double welcome to their good ladies, where applicable, in both categories. Then we had our widows, who, by their presence at our Safaris, show just what the 2/2nd Commando Association means to them. We welcomed seven in all and we are sure they had a grand time. Wilma Tobin, Dot Boyland, Betty Devlin, Joan Darge, Elsie Wares, June Bennett, Kath Press. See you all at Cowes, Victoria, in 1988.

JIM FENWICK PRESENTS A FINE RESUME OF CANBERRA SAFARI 1986

The Canberra Safari Committee set out to break new ground in presenting the Safari.

1. To restrict it to about ten days.
2. To give our members more free time to spend together and do their own thing.
3. To keep the functions at a minimum.
4. To centralise the accommodation.

The first aim was easy but I would, in future, recommend the arrival day be the day before the welcoming function.

The third aim was difficult. We had lots of suggestions about more functions and lots of offers for different types of entertainment. We resisted them and kept to:—

- (a) A welcoming and farewell function.
- (b) A wreath laying ceremony to honour our departed comrades.
- (c) A Civic Reception which we were fortunate enough to have right after the wreath laying ceremony.
- (d) A full day by bus viewing the many attractions the A.C.T. has to offer
- (e) A bonus night at the Royal Military College to see the "1812 Overture" and "Beating of the Retreat". This was followed by a visit to the Sergeants' Mess at Duntroon.
- (f) Church Services in the Chapels at R.M.C.
- (g) Our biggest function was the dinner at the Statesman Hotel, Curtin.

Our second and fourth aims were the most difficult.

The natural attitude has been to organise everything and it was becoming too much of a burden, not for the organisers, but for the participants, because of age and illnesses.

We were able to satisfy the accommodation centralisation by obtaining motel, caravan and reasonably priced accommodation in about a hundred yard radius. This gave us the opportunity to mix more freely and arrange outings to suit most interests. In this I feel we ensured the success of the Safari.

Despite our differences in personality we were able to work together. Where one person became ill another was able to step in and carry on.

We were fortunate enough to have Ron Morris as the President of the A.C.T. Regional Commando Association. He enabled us to go straight to the source instead of through channels.

The only disappointment was the inability of Bob and Joyce Smith to attend. Regards to all,

Jim Fenwick

P.S. Now that we have shown you your Capital City, come back and see what you missed, and urge your friends to come too!

ADDENDUM

FUNCTIONS TOTALS including wives, families and friends.

Welcome	180
Dinner	207
Gold Creek	162
Farewell	170
R.M.C. Sgts' Mess	150

ACCOMMODATION

Edmund Barton Motel	24
Canberra Motor Village	118
Private	10
Locals (Unit)	8
(Helpers)	6

Most unexpected and pleasurable, Tom Tierney and family arrived. Also we had to our Dinner, Bunny Anderson's daughter, Mrs Joan Fretus, and his granddaughter.

EDITOR:

Thanks Jim for the detail it makes interesting reading.

JIM EXTENDS CANBERRA'S THANKS

Dear Jack,

Herewith cheque for one thousand dollars to repay the Association for the advance you sent us. Thanks to a lot of people we seem to have come out in the black and once a few minor things are tied up we will produce a statement.

I am enclosing a tape which you might like to show at any of your functions. If you have the means to make copies of same you could pass it on to the other states. I am still waiting for the tape of the radio interview with Arch and myself. I will forward as soon as I can.

One query—are you going to replace those plaques we gave to the Duntroon Mess and House of Assembly?

I paid Bernie C. for the books he got me. He got them at a good price for us.

Letters of thanks have gone out to all who helped us, especially the Duntroon people. An advertisement should appear in the local paper next week.

I would like to thank W.A. people for their support and I am sure we all feel our efforts were worthwhile. I hope the Melbourne boys have as much enjoyment out of the next Safari as we did.

My regards to all over there and don't forget our home is always available to 2/2 visitors to the A.C.T.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Fenwick

ANZAC DAY, 1986.**DAWN SERVICE**

This was, as always, a moving and impressive service, held in our own Kings Park, so closely allied in formation to the famous cliffs of Gallipoli. It was emotional to the nth degree and attended by a very big crowd with the family unit predominant.

The moon and the sun vied to make the magical hour of dawn one to be remembered. The memorial obelisk was etched by their combined lights in a beautiful shade of bronze set off against a cloudless sky as if to attract the attention of all present.

Our President, Doug Fullarton, laid a wreath on behalf of all members Australia wide, done as usual, with dignity and pride. One never fails to shed a tear at this Dawn Service for the very atmosphere gives time for contemplation and remembrance.

Colin Doig attended the Dawn Service at the S.A.S. Regiment Memorial and Ron Kirkwood laid a wreath on our behalf and to honour our close alliance with this grand Unit. Thanks Colin and Ron.

THE MARCH:

There was an excellent Roll Call of our Unit boys to pay their respects to old mates who have passed to the vale beyond and to whom we owe so much.

Deep down, and to the heart of it all, to honour the men of Anzac who gave their lives in the bloody campaign of Gallipoli, France and Flanders, whose bravery was acknowledged world wide, who made Australia a Nation. They handed to the men of 1939-1945, a tremendous tradition to uphold. We had a problem when our Banner pole could not be found. There was the flag ready to signify that those who marched behind it were the men of the 2/2nd Commando Squadron. This tested our ingenuity and the answer was for two of our tallest and strongest looking members to carry it between them. Tony Bowers was to be the Standard Bearer, so along with him we chose Fred Sparkman as the second Bearer. What a job they performed, what applause they extracted from one of the biggest crowds for many years.

Behind these two giants the boys marched better than they have done in years, they gave the Perth people a taste of the disciplined approach that has always been a part of the 2/2nd. The "Channel 7 Band" gave us great support and we thank them for it. They extracted from us a spring in our step that lasted the entire distance, to the Esplanade and from it.

Pride of Unit was uppermost and we performed as though the clock had turned back forty years. We paid our respects to old comrades with dignity, led by our President, Doug Fullarton.

THE REUNION:

Against the venue was the Southern Mess of the S.A.S. Regiment at their Barracks in Swanbourne. They certainly did as proud and we are indebted to their C.O., Major Terry Nolan, the Officers, N.C.O's, and men of the S.A.S.R. for accepting us as their counterparts of another era. We are delighted to be associated with these fine young soldiers so well disciplined in every way, it is an honour we appreciate deeply.

The Luncheon table groaned with a magnificent selection of everything one could possibly choose, from any menu and so beautifully laid out by the catering staff of the S.A.S.R. Thank you for being such grand hosts.

Ample refreshments of every kind was available to get the tongues loosened and for each man present, young and old, to have a great chat about many things. How well we related to each other, one could easily have turned the clock back to our days on Wilson's Promontory when we were, as the S.A.S. boys are now, young and keen.

It was a great day from Dawn to Dusk and made these hallowed words a part of us all:—

"LEST WE FORGET"

VICTORIAN NEWS

Well, here it is into April, Easter been and gone and back from that wonderful Safari in Canberra. The boys from Canberra did a great job and our congratulations go to them and their wives. They can sit back and relax now, having done a marvellous job of organising.

It is our turn next at Phillip Island in 1988, at approximately the same time. I only hope we can do as well as Canberra. It will be a lot quieter Safari away from a big city and Phillip Island is a nice spot.

We had quite a large contingent from Victoria present at Canberra, will not name them all, suffice to say that they numbered 33 and all enjoyed it immensely.

Will not go into Safari details as that will be done by others. It was good to see Tom Tierney again and I had not seen him since the war. Very sorry that Bob and Joyce Smith could not make it but Bob is having a tough trot and we all know they had their hearts set on making it. Never mind Bob, we are all thinking of you. Just keep that courage of yours and we will see you again later.

Dot Boyland stayed with Olive and myself just prior to the Safari and we enjoyed her company, then we took her with us to Canberra. Had Alan and Hazel Hollow for tea then put them on the train back to Adelaide. They had a few days in Melbourne taking in some of the Combined Commando Association Reunion functions prior to us putting them on the train.

Jack and Jean Fowler, Ken and Margaret Monk and Olive and I came back in convoy via Cooma, Bombala and Cann River and stayed the night in Lakes Entrance. Jack and Jean stayed with Ken and Margaret for a couple of days, then on to us prior to leaving for home. We enjoyed their stay very much.

That's all for now. Fancy having to get back to mundane life again after all that excitement! Bye now.

Harry Botterill

W.W.C.P.

Fred Napier:—Going along in typical Fred style making the best of what mobility he has. Still retains his keen sense of humour and old English sharpness. John Burrridge paid him a visit, first for some time, he was greeted thus, "About bloody time you came to see me!!" A sign of affection from the old bloke, you have not lost the art of giving us the message Fred.

Wilf March:—Back to mobility, not 100%, but has put up a great battle to get back on his feet. Well done Wilf, no doubt Lorraine did a super job in nursing you back to what we hope is first class health and strength. Good luck from us all.

Merv Ryan:—The news is not all that good, but knowing his fighting qualities, and Dulcie's, Merv can be around for a long time yet. He made the Safari, anything is possible with his "G & D". We are all behind you Merv, love from us all to you both.

Harry Sproxtton:—Looking and feeling better than he has in a long time. You are a real fighter "Sprox" and deserve a big percentage improvement as a boost to Thelma and yourself. It has been a long haul. God bless, love from all the 2/2nd members right across Australia.

BOB SMITH MAKES EVERY DAY COUNT

Shortland 2306
23rd April, 1986

Dear Arch,

Just a note to keep in touch and to say how disappointed both Joyce and I were to miss the Canberra Safari. We had been looking forward to it so much and had worked hard towards getting there. In another five days we would have been on our way. However, it wasn't to be and so we had to be content with messages from some of our good friends in Canberra who relayed news of the doings to Joyce. There were many of our friends who contacted Joyce, but one I must mention, was Dorothy Trengrove. Between Dorothy and her sister Marge Jesse in Sydney, (who took messages from Dorothy), Joyce and I were kept well abreast of the daily doings. We thank all our friends most sincerely for the many 'phoned messages of good wishes and the dozens of cards with penned messages. It was simply wonderful and a great boost to me—I must admit that at that stage I was very low in health and one thing that mattered, was my many friends concern and good wishes.

The day after the Safari, George and Bettye Coulson and Elsie Wares arrived at the hospital and it was great to see them. We obtained permission for George to set his Video up in my room and so we were able "to be at Canberra" with the Safari. Later Ron and Dorothy Trengrove and Paddy Kenneally arrived, and so we believe we know everything that took place at Canberra.

My three weeks cobalt treatment was completed and although still very ill, I was sent home to recuperate. Through all this, dear Joyce sat at my side and subsequently nursed me at home where she fended off unwanted telephone calls and made sure that visits of concerned friends did not drag out. However, I was most pleased to have many friends stay with us for a while—some of those who called—Jack Hartley, (in Newcastle sadly attending his sister-in-law's funeral), George and Bettye Coulson, Elsie Wares, Jack and Marge Peattie, Angus McLachlan, Harry and Amyce Handicott, Ron and Dorothy Trengrove and Alan and Edie Luby—all a great tonic for well being.

Well Arch, we will not know how things are going with me until all the Cobalt effects have subsided, so at present, it is a waiting game. However, one thing we do know is that at present "it" has gone to both hips and although all the crippling pain has subsided, I have been told I must be careful of bone breakages. I asked my Doctor, "How do I get on with my love of fishing from rocks? (A "Rock Hopper"), and his smart reply was, "Fish from the beach".

For over three years, Jack and Marge Peattie, Ron and Dorothy Trengrove and Joyce and I have been planning a caravan trip around Australia. First postponement came with Marge taking ill, next year, it was Dorothy breaking her arm and it taking a long while to mend, and at the same time I had to undergo 8 months chemo-therapy. So, it looked 1986 was to be our year! Now it seems, that the Peatties and Trengroves will be doing it on their own, but Joyce and I have considered waiting till they are up in the N.T. and they flying up to join them for a week and then back home. We hope we can anyway, and are keeping our fingers crossed.

Well Arch, please forgive my scribbly writing and ramblings—must away now as I have a note to write to Jim Fenwick—I received a lovely surprise from him yesterday—a tape done by Jim and yourself on radio in Canberra. It was very well done Arch and I have played it over a few times and am waiting for my family to visit so as I can play it to them.

I was overjoyed that someone from our Unit won my painting, (will the Unit keep it?) And a West Australian at that, as the painting was of the Stirling Ranges in W.A.

Cheerio for now Arch, both Joyce and I wish all of the 2/2nd our love and best wishes and thanks for their kind attention and expressions of concern we received over these last few months.

How proud we are to be a part of "this bunch".

(Sgd.) Joyce and Bob Smith.

STOP PRESS

Prince of Wales Hospital,
Sydney. 2000.
9/5/86

This short note is a P.S. to my last P.S.—I think! Please excuse scribble and form of writing as I am rather handicapped with only the use of one eye.

My main purpose in writing is to acknowledge and thank all our friends of the 2/2nd for the many letters, cards, telephone calls and personal calls. Joyce and I are so overwhelmed with the many kind thoughts and best wishes expressed by all these wonderful people. It has been by greatest fortune to be a part of such a caring group.

As you can see, I am back in hospital after six weeks since my last visit. It was thought that things were improving and I was subsequently given a clearance for a short while. A short while it was too—only three days! Suffering some trouble I returned to find that I was affected in the area of the eye and brain. (A brain scan carried out and it was found—as many of my friends had realised for many years—I didn't have a brain!!!) However, the right eye and right facial area is affected and I am having Radio Therapy. I believe I will lose all my flowing locks again but hope they will return—possibly flaming red. Now wouldn't that be something?

Even though only in hospital a few days, I have had visits and phone calls from some of our mob. Ron & Dorothy Trengrove in yesterday, Paddy Kenneally will be in today and have been in touch by phone with Bill & Coral Coker, June Bennett, Alan Luby and Ron Trengrove has relayed phone calls from "Babe" & Nancy Teague and Col Grebert. "Babe" subsequently rang Joyce at the hospital as well. As you can see, I am not being given much time to feel sorry for myself.

Of course I have my "Rock of Gibraltar" with me at all times. Joyce is a tower of strength and never leaves my side for too long. She has had a very hard time over all these years (seven years, would you believe, since the cancer first struck) and I just wonder where I would be without her massive support. This also goes for my family, Jim, Christine and Beryl. At all times they are there lending a hand and always with support as well. We are all able to talk to each other about "it" and I suppose this is one way of being able to live with it and enjoy life.

Enough of this rambling. It was only a note to convey my deep feelings for all our lads and lasses who have been in touch.

Before I left home I had a call from Joe and Helen Poynton, Peter and Pat Campbell, Neil and Margaret Hooper and George and Bettye Coulson (all at the Coulson's home) and it was wonderful to talk to them all. They were having a great time (I don't know who paid for the telephone call—it went on and on) and were in great "spirits".

Must away, Arch. Please thank DON TURTON *PERSONALLY* for his very nice letter.

Sincerely,

Bob & Joyce Smith.

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ARCHIVES/MUSEUM
PETER EPPS PUTS IT ON THE LINE!

Peter Epps,
Box 39, Hilliarys, W.A. 6025.
27th April, 1986.

Dear Arch,

Now that things are reasonably back to normal, I wish to express my thanks to the members of the Unit that made myself, Sue and Fiona feel more than welcome on the recent Canberra Safari. We thoroughly enjoyed the company of many members of the Unit throughout the Safari.

I know I bugged the hell out of some people by continually asking "Have you filled in the Questionnaire yet?", but I cannot express the importance of obtaining a full nominal roll of the Unit. This roll must include every soldier who served with the unit, whether this be as an original, a re-inforcement, or as a member of any other Unit, who fought with them, such as 2/40th Bn, 2/11th Fd. Co. etc., on Timor, New Guinea, or New Britain, as they are as much apart of the Unit as the original members were.

The only way to obtain the correct information is by the forms being filled in and returned to me, and if possible, the relatives of deceased members, supplying the information required which is:—Full, Name, Regimental No. (obtained from medals, discharge papers, etc.), Rank, where served, (Timor, New Guinea, New Britain), wounded, and if known, whether Timor, New Guinea, New Britain, Awards and Decorations whilst with Unit including M.I.D., Awards with other Units, Service other than with Unit.

Even if only the member's No. and Name can be supplied, I can then follow up on research.

Once again, I must emphasise that I am only the Curator of The Unit Archive/Museum, and I am willing to devote my time to gather the material and correct information of the Unit's history, of which everyone is so proud.

During the Safari, quite a lot of people said that they thought the Museum was mine. This is incorrect, as it has and always will, belong to the Unit and their relatives, be it now or in the future.

Once again, thanks to all members for their hospitality.

Kind regards,
(Sgd.) Peter Epps.

VALE—HARRY FREDERICKS

It is with regret we have to advise of the death of Harry Fredericks in January of this year.

Harry joined our Unit from the 2/40th in Timor, was an R.A.P. Corporal and a good one. He was renowned for his dedication to duty and would rush off to attend the sick and wounded at the slightest sign of help being needed.

He remained with the Unit in the R.A.P. section both in New Guinea and New Britain.

We did not see much of him after demobilisation but he kept in touch with the Association through letters to the Courier.

Our Sincere condolences to his loved ones.

LEST WE FORGET

Colin Doig.

VALE—ARCHIE BOWMAN

I regret to inform you that Archie Bowman passed away on April 22, after undergoing an operation in a Caloundra hospital.

I arrived home from Canberra on March 27 and during the following fortnight I phoned Archie twice to describe to him some of the Safari's highlights and also to pass on Col Doig's regards, all of which he was pleased to hear. On both occasions he made no reference to any health problems. However, at a barbecue on April 21 Edna Vandeleur told me that Archie was in hospital at Caloundra. I phoned the hospital next day and was informed that his condition was satisfactory, but when I phoned on April 23 I was informed that he had passed away.

The attendance at his funeral on April 24 was not large because after he was admitted to the Caloundra Nursing Home he lived within a confined community, so, except for organised bus trips to give the inmates an outing to other localities on the Sunshine Coast or when any of his friends on a visit to that locality would call on him he was unable to make any friends in the outside community. He overcame this by writing letters to folk he'd known elsewhere before he entered the Home; in this way he developed quite a circle of correspondents; he also acquired a skill for handcraft hobbies—making bathroom floor mats and painting post cards to enclose when writing to his friends. One was enclosed with his last letter to me, dated 14.4.86.

Over the years of our mateship Archie and I maintained contact with each other and now like other departed troops with whom I was associated his rugged though humble personality lives on in the memory. The article in the April 1986 Courier covers Archie perfectly.

This is to show how Archie coped with life in a nursing home after an active outdoor life. Archie will be missed.

Col. Grebert

EDITOR

Thanks Colin for your kindness in letting us know of Archie's passing. Have used your letter as a VALE.

DONATIONS

Nellie Mullins

Messrs. Chapman

Mantle
Price
Tillett
Harper
Clancy
Burridge
Bingham
Burns
Aitken
Campbell Arch
Dignum
Dook
Jones
Herbert
Hudson
Macoboy
Margan

Rogers
McDonald
Langridge
Murray
Sparkman
Smyth Bob
Penglase
Thornander
Turton
Sproxtton
Callinan
Stevenson
Gregbert
Elliott
Taylor Scotty & Jock
Harrington
Cooper Leith

EDITORS NOTE

Because this June issue of the Courier is committed to the Canberra Safari, certain items will appear in the August issue such as:—Correspondence Corner—W.A.G.M.—Cowes 1988 Safari.

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"ARMY ART '86"

Where — Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne.

When — Friday 27th June. 7.00p.m.-10.00p.m.
Saturday 28th June. 10.00a.m.-6.00p.m.
Sunday 29th June. 10.00a.m.-4.00p.m.

Official Opening by Kay Hallahan, Minister for Community Services at 8.00p.m. Friday 27th June.

Opening Night tickets available by telephoning Chris Frost 384 9745 or Chris McCalman 387 5405

Cost \$3.50

This will be most interesting and being organised by the S.A.S. ladies Association and will be a first class presentation of an unusual nature. Members of the 2/2nd Commando Association and your friends, give it your wholehearted support. Thank you.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

FIELD, Mrs. M.
Madge
1/4 Henderson's Close
Coffs Harbour. 2450.

HANSON, J.
Jack
P.O. Box 357
Pialba
Hervey bay 4655

PIPER, G.B.
Peter
C/-Toorak House
1101 Toorak Road
Camberwell 3124

SPLATT, R.
25 Lascelles Avenue
Manifold Heights
Geelong 3218

BROWN, D.M.
David & Thais
9 Cleeland Street
Newhaven
Phillip Island 3925
Phone (059) 567393

PAYNE, S.E.
Stan
7 Todd Street
Merredin 6416
Phone (090) 411202

NEW ADDRESSES

THOMPSON, J.
Jack & Beryl
42 Hawkesbury Crescent
Farrar ACT 2607.

WILBY, P.
Paddy
166 Stradbroke Avenue
Wynnum 4178

DELETE

ELLAM, D.
18 Laburnam Street
Middle Brighton 3189