



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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A Christmas Message

From the President on behalf of the Committee

Another year has flown by – a year of arranging and participating in many activities which brought members, wives and friends together to enjoy the fellowship each one brings to these gatherings.

In thinking of the spirit of Christmas I am reminded of a Christmas 40 years ago when we had our first son. As a baby, 20 months of age, and our first experience of sharing Christmas with our family. I am sure many other Unit members would, at that time be similarly enjoying their families.

Some days before Christmas a parcel arrived by post addressed in a handwriting we have all got to know so well. It would not fit in our small country private P.O. Box so a card called us to the Post Office counter where we received a gift from the 2/2 Commando Association. Seven years later, five parcels arrived in similar manner. This happened to hundreds of families and included approximately 240 children.

What a marvellous expression of love and caring by past Presidents and Committees. It would not be possible to guess how many hours of love were spent shopping, wrapping, addressing and posting parcels just for names, for that is all they could have been for those involved in these acts of love.

Ladies and gentlemen, just ponder those festive seasons from say, 1952 to mid 1960. Need we say more about the spirit of Christmas. I express the wish of the Committee that you will all have a merry Christmas with your families and friends and that your discomforts will be minimal and your enjoyment be to the fullest.

Bernie Langridge, President

VALE TOM O'BRIEN

All of us in 7 Section were privileged to have Tommy O'Brien with us as a valued member of our team. He served with great distinction and was respected by one and all for his courage, ability and manliness.

He was also a great sportsman and played the 'greatest game of all' at five eight in the Unit Rugby League team.

Tom O'Brien was a great friend and a great soldier.

For some time he has been in ill health but suffered, as he served the Unit and his country, with great fortitude.

Muriel and his family have our sincerest sympathy in their sad loss and we hope they will get some comfort in the knowledge that Tommy was regarded with great affection by all his fellow Unit members.

Tony Adams

VALE RONALD GEORGE ORR

Ron passed away on the 15th October 1992 at Grafton from a brain tumour. He had not been in the best of health since his retirement in February 1989 when it was found he had diabetes.

Ron was born at Grafton on the 7th July 1925 and married May in September 1947. He had been baptised and married at the same church in South Grafton where his funeral service was held.

Ron was a good family man and he and May had three sons, Ron, Ian and Phillip. Ron junior recently retired from the army with the rank of Major.

Ron and his brother Jim were founding members of the South Grafton Ex-Service Club and Ron had served a period as President.

Ron joined us at Canungra in 1943 and was a member of 8 Section 'C' Troop until our redundancy at Rabaul in New Britain. He was always very proud of his association with the 2/2 and travelled many times to be with his old mates on Anzac Day in Sydney.

After the war Ron worked in the Hardware Stores at Grafton and became the Manager of several of them.

Ron's eulogy was delivered by a boyhood friend who is the President of the local R.S.L. The church was packed to overflowing. Members of the 2/2 Association present were Harry Handicott, Bill Walsh, Russ Blanch, Jim Cullen, Tom Yates, Ted Cholerton, George Greenhalgh, Eric Herd.

George Greenhalgh

COMMEMORATION SERVICE

Our sacred area, Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, was the scene for the most important day on our yearly calendar. It was a mild, pleasant day which attracted a crowd of 130 members, families and friends. It was great to see so many young children, teenagers and our supportive widows roll up in such

numbers to pay their respect to our Departed Comrades. The interest shown by our younger people augurs well for the future being in good hands and the continuity of homage being paid to our boys who paid the supreme sacrifice.

The Special Air Services Regiment mounted a Catalaue Party at our memorial, adding dignity to the service and directing attention to the fine type of young man that makes up this elite outfit. Appreciation of this continued support was shown by sustained acclamation and we thank W.O.II Alan Williams, Squadron Sergeant Major, and his enthusiastic group of young soldiers. A thrilling surprise was a R.A.A.F. fly over at 3 p.m. as our service was beginning.

Age did not bar our members from putting on a good marching performance for which they received a round of applause from all present and a 'thank you' from President, Bernie Langridge, who took the salute along with Warrant Officer Alan Williams.

Bernie's thoughtful address over a fine P.A. system is appended:

"Ladies & Gentlemen, our valued young people, friends and supporters, members of the S.A.S. Regiment and Association members.

I am once again greatly honoured to be the person charged with welcoming you all to this very special place where we assemble annually to remember our fallen comrades and to deliver the commemoration service address.

We are here to say a retrospective thank you to those who paid the supreme sacrifice on various battle fields so that those of us who survived and those who come after us can live in comfort and security. This is the most important day of the year for Unit members and, I am sure, for our attached ladies and the widows of deceased members. On this day we recall, with vivid memories, the circumstances under which we lost those we left behind almost 50 years ago. We again today extol the service these grand young men rendered their country. In commemorating our fallen we do so with deep sorrow but also with tremendous pride. We were only a small Unit but an intensely proud one which was given a difficult task. In this commemoration service we acknowledge the bravery and achievements of other Independent Companies. Those larger Units who were fighting, in time, along with us in the Kokoda campaign and elsewhere.

This is also the 50th anniversary of many historic battles of the 1939-45 World War and hence commemoration services to honour the fallen of those battles have been held in allied countries. Included in those services was one held this year to honour the fallen in the Vietnam War, a war in which sons of our own members took part.

Let us vow again today to honour those long lost mates by trying to live honourably and deal justly with all with whom we come in contact. I know most

of us are constantly aware and appreciative of all the good things, great opportunities and wonderful friends we have encountered along our roads through life. We must strive to ensure these same opportunities are available for the generations which follow us.

There is something we can all do, in fact, must do, if we are sincere in our vows today. I quote from 'Ausby Guide' published by The Australian Owned Companies Association Limited. 'If every Australian resident spent \$50 per week buying Australian made products from Australian owned companies we would save \$20 billion a year on our foreign debt. We would create 500,000 new jobs and we would no longer have a recession.'

The hardships of the recession have unfortunately been unfairly distributed through the community. Little businesses sent bankrupt through ridiculously high interest rates and other impositions deserve our sympathy and support just as much as the genuine young people who can find no employment. It is difficult to comprehend the emptiness of a life without the enjoyment of a full time occupation.

We, and the young people must also regard as a high priority the need to preserve the environment of which we are all custodians. We can do this and maintain some sort of economic stability without further depleting the resources of this generous country by using sparingly all the products of this amazing planet.

On reviewing the world scene over the last 12 months one must feel some concern about the political instability of many regions. I am sure you are all sadly aware that three days ago was the first anniversary of the Dili massacre. So far, regretfully, we have not been able to achieve much in the way of retribution. During the year the Association and many individuals have done their utmost to alert U.N. forums and world opinion to the injustices and cruelty meted out to the Timorese people. Unfortunately, there are now so many countries where racial and border conflicts are taking place, little impact on world opinion has been possible.

The message for the young people today is 'speak out and protect our democracy'. We must ensure top public servants cannot attend international forums and commit the Australian Government to issues which have not been discussed by our own people. Changing the flag is still an issue. Becoming a republic could happen without a referendum. Changing the Constitution could likewise happen without discussion and approval. We can no longer be apathetic on these issues. You have the alert minds and young, energetic bodies. Don't let uncaring governments squander your heritage."

We were invited to the S.A.S.R. Sergeants' Mess at Campbell Barracks for afternoon tea and refreshments. It was a delightful finish to an excellent day, made doubly so by the contribution of our modern

counterparts, the Special Air Services Regiment.

Archie Campbell

MEN'S ANNUAL DINNER

Lions Club Hall, Mandurah

Mandurah 2-2s were our hosts and what a fine job they did on a day of brilliant sunshine that matched the warmth of their welcome. Forty five members came from near and far to enjoy exceptional hospitality.

It was a men only reunion but believe me, Helen Poynton and her team of ladies turned on a luncheon fit for a king and we thank them for a superb catering effort.

The guest list was short but distinguished – Major Jeff Kidner, 2 I/C S.A.S. Regiment, with the fine record of 26 years army service including two stints in Vietnam and a period in New Guinea, W.O. II Alan Williams of the S.A.S.R. and Fred Cheesmur who was a member of the English Marines. Our guests were introduced and welcomed by John Fowler.

Archie Campbell presented The Ode which is an integral part of all our functions.

President Bernie Langridge proposed the toast to the Unit and the Association – 'Gentlemen. It is again my pleasure to propose these toasts. The Unit's performance is recorded in the official history of the areas we served in and was written in part by one of our Unit members. The Unit's exploits and some of its service conditions are regarded in military circles as being somewhat unique.

The strength of the attachment to each other is an amazing and lasting bond made by a mixture of deep friendship, respect and tolerance and knowing that we lived through common hardships together. As we encounter the various health problems of aging we become aware of sharing common hardships again.

At the conclusion of hostilities, late 1945, we were rather unceremoniously disbanded and so ended the Unit as such, but its record lives on in the memories of each one of us.

In many ways the Association is the Unit by another name. It also has an enviable, in fact unique record of service to its members. It has been fortunate in having some distinguished members whose enthusiasm has lasted from its beginning 47 years ago. Its official name is The 2/2 Commando Association of Australia. Est. 1945. Its objects are:

To encourage and strengthen loyalty to Australia and the British Empire. To maintain the spirit of comradeship among all members and preserve the memory and traditions of the Unit. Where possible, give aid to genuine indigent members or dependants of deceased members.

Gentlemen, I am sure a review of any of the events and activities of the Association would be convinc-

ing proof that it has carried out the objects energetically, sincerely and with rare dedication.

I am proud to be the current President of this grand Association.'

Don Murray, M.C. for the day, performed each task with humour and sincerity and put everyone at ease with his easy going manner.

Don Turton presented Helen with a basket of beautiful flowers created by Babs Langridge, as a 'thank you' from us all for a perfect contribution. In reply, Helen graciously introduced the ladies who supported her, assuring us that it was a labour of love. It was a reluctant but happy group who boarded the bus for home.

A heartfelt thank you from us all to the Mandurah 2-2s.

Archie Campbell

REPORT ON CONDITIONS IN EAST TIMOR MAY - JUNE 1992

By Paddy Kenneally

I arrived in Kupang on 20.5.92 and spent Thursday, Friday and Saturday making enquiries about a permit to go to East Timor, to no avail as all banks, public offices, apart from telephone exchange and police closed at 2 p.m. The police said yes but no one would give me a signed statement to that effect. The Immigration Dept wanted photocopies of several pages of my passport and I complied. They then stated I could proceed to East Timor. I went to military H.Q. seeking a permit - much questioning and examination of passport. A straight refusal to me and one other applicant, a German. I didn't bother making any further efforts as I knew I would not get a permit, and without one I would be turned back at all border check points. I made up my mind to try another avenue.

I went to Flores Island, spent a couple of days sightseeing thence by passenger boat from Maumere to Dili, a voyage of about 20 hours. On the wharf at Dili I asked three military policemen where the officer was as I wished to see him. Each one waved me away, the fourth pointed to the gate and ushered me through. I thought 'good, you have not ordered me back on board, I'll accept that as permission to stay in East Timor.'

I met a friend and his first words were 'Paddy, things are far different now from when you were here in 1990. Since November 12th all has changed - tighter security, untold numbers of people in various gaols, including my brother-in-law and his cousin.'

On the advice of a man who has spent years in East Timor I reported to the police. As later events proved, it was just as well I did. He told me 'even now they will be aware that you are up here talking to me. To save yourself and us trouble, please report.' That was the theme everywhere in East

Timor - 'they know.' By the time I left for Australia I had no doubts whatsoever.

Walking amongst the people, or waiting in the market place, even taking part in a procession to wind up the devotions to Our Lady for the month of May, all the students spoke to me about was 'we don't want the Indonesians. The United Nations recognise Portugal as the legitimate administrators of East Timor, we want them back and then we want independence.' I heard it so often from the young people. They are suppressed and rebellious.

A new fear has arisen in the lives of the older people, the parents of the students, the fear that the Indonesians will goad the students into further demonstrations and will make sure that the next time there will be no foreign witnesses present. They ask 'why is East Timor sealed off and no tourists allowed in?' They fear the young people will be annihilated and the Timorese as a people will cease to exist. To us that appears to be exaggerated but they look back over the years since December 1975 and see 200,000 dead Timorese because of Indonesian actions - their fears are justified.

From Lospalos to Tutuala is a big upland valley bounded by high mountains north and south. I saw no native villages apart from a few groups of huts. I did, however, see four or five Indonesian resettlement areas. The Timorese have been taken from their villages and gardens, resettled in these communes where they have electricity and water and no gardens. When I asked about the gardens I was told they were in the mountains. I pointed out that it was a long walk to the mountains and there would not be much time to work in the gardens, oh, there are herds of goats, cattle and horses. I am certain no Timorese owned the big herds I saw. No, the Timorese are housed in those settlements for one reason alone, it is easier to keep them under control. Furthermore, this part of Timor sheltered many people opposing the Indonesian military takeover and by herding the villagers into settlements the Indonesians hoped to deny the guerillas food, shelter and information. About all it has achieved is to deprive the Timorese of the products from their gardens.

In two places the only accommodation available was in police billets and I got some insight into the lives and minds of the police. Most of those I spoke to are Balinese, religion Hindu, personable, likeable men who could turn from charm to suspicion in an instant. They are lonely, particularly the single men. They have girl friends far away in Bali or try to form friendships with the Timorese girls whose parents usually object, ostensibly on religious grounds. More than likely the real reason is that objections are based on what the Indonesian military has inflicted on them for almost 17 years.

I was told that since November 12th accommodation in private homes is hard to get, even in religious establishments.

The reason I was given 'the police visit and question the householder when the visitor has departed.' Whether or not this applied to 'Losmems' I do not know. Losmems (guest houses) are scarce in the mountain villages. In Laspalos Rata or head man has one room available for renting – I stayed there.

On my return to Dili a friend made enquiries on my behalf. He informed me I had to get two photocopies of page one and two of my passport. One went to the person from whom he got the information – I do not know what position this man held, or what authority he wielded but my friend believed his instructions should be obeyed. They were. Next day my friend drove me to Police H.Q., well out of Dili near the airport where I reported once more. The officer examined the form of my first report, noted the details and wrote a similar form out relating to my report to H.Q. He gave me no copy of this, telling my friend the copy of my first report was adequate to take me wherever I went. In the light of future events, that was not correct. He asked what my future movements would be and where I would be going. I told him and he copied out the names on the back of the form. They were Lilotai, Remexio, Bazartete, Aileu, Maubisse, Same, Betano, Hatu-udo, Ermera, Atsabe, Villamaria, Leftoho. I was unable to get to some of those places, however, Police H.Q. had an accurate idea of what my intentions were, they raised no objections so I presumed all was clear.

Ermera, I was no sooner off the bus when I had to produce my passport twice and then report to the Police Office. This in a village where one quick glance took in all there was to see. Next day I set off early for Lilotai and Remexio, showed my passport at the check point at Lau-Laura. The Timorese produced their identity cards. I left the truck at the Lacado track to walk to Lilotai, about a four hour walk. In that time I had to produce my passport three times. At Lilotai, a native village, I had to report to the police and fill in the appropriate form – not bad I thought, five times in as many hours. I had to give reasons for being there so I told them I had been in all those places in 1942 when I served with the 2/2 Independent Coy, AIF. Men in my Section had been killed and wounded at Bazartete and Lilotai. Mostly I achieved what I set out to do and to see what East Timor was like in 1992.

The track to Remexio little used these days, much of it overgrown. Remexio was the start of my troubles. The police went through the usual ritual, filled out the form and got on the radio telephone. I don't know the language but guessed I was the subject. I was offered a ride to Dili and this suited me as I had been walking on tracks for over eight hours. The vehicle, which I took to be an ambulance but could not understand why it had a black cross, turned out to be a vehicle for carrying the dead. Why it should be in Remexio daily I don't know, I saw nothing like it anywhere else. During my visit in 1990

and this one I've been practically all over East Timor.

Anyway, the vehicle deposited me at an army post in Tibessi. I was surrounded by police and taken to the office. A Timorese was brought in and he said 'you are Portuguese and you speak Portuguese.' I replied 'I am Irish, I do not speak Portuguese, but I do know a few words of the language.' He repeated 'you are Portuguese, you are espion (spy)' I said 'you are a bloody lying bastard.' Didn't do me much good apart from pumping the adrenalin. I was no longer tired or hungry, I knew I was in trouble and that's a good recipe for everything including self preservation. 'Komoro' said the officer, so off to Police H.Q. once more, well protected with four policemen in the back with me.

Five hours of questioning and detailing all my movements from when I landed up to that evening. My questioners were two English speaking Timorese. I was well treated, one of my interrogators left the room and purchased rice and water for the three of us. I was insistent that all should be as I described it, I was telling the truth and that's unchangeable. If I was questioned at a future date the story would be unchanged, that's the great advantage of the truth. When I told them I had been in this building two days ago and had given a detailed account of my future movements they asked 'where?' When I replied 'the office at the end of the corridor' one of them went out and returned in a short time and said 'he is right, it is in the records down there.' That seemed to change things. At 11.30 they took me to where I was staying and that was the last I saw of them for a week. The night prior to my leaving for West Timor they called again to see me. I thought 'you may not be leaving East Timor yet, Paddy.' I asked the policeman 'good news or bad?' He said 'good news, the man who said you were a spy is stupid.' He wished me well and left, so did I next day.

I did not leave East Timor after I was questioned, I carried out the itinerary I had mapped out. Two plain clothes policemen accompanied me to Same – they wanted to buy chickens. I thought 'a tough old rooster you could be buying too.' I was the chicken. On arrival in Same they asked where I would be staying and I showed them the address I hoped to stay at, no use concealing the fact, the only white man in Same is difficult to conceal. Another trip to the police, another two hours giving the whys and wherefores. Can't get to Hatu-Udo or Betano as it is the wet season and no paved roads. Back to Maubisse, no transport there for today or tomorrow which would be Tuesday the 9th June. Election day all over Indonesia, nothing open, nothing doing and I am sitting on my pack in Maubisse thinking what will I do and where the hell will I go, lugging that pack on my back? The police made up my mind 'come with us' down to the office, passport and out comes the same form sheet. I could do it blindfolded – another hour. I'm stuck here until Wednesday un-

less I can get transport out. At my age I know I can't hump that pack over those mountains to Turuscai or Aituto or anywhere else.

Without the pack yes, but it is cold up in those mountains at night and I don't want to spend the next two days talking to policemen who are really army men. A truck comes along bound for Dili, I don't wish to go there but it's the only choice of being sure of transport on Wednesday, June 10th, so I go. That night, Monday June 8th, I attended a barbecue with a friend and was introduced to three members of the assembly and a fourth man whom I was told was a very important man. What made him important I don't know but hope to find out one day as he is married into a family I know well. The three members were up for re-election next day. There was plenty of meat, fish and Tiger beer and much discussion. One of the members was speaking most emphatically, punctuating his statements by pounding his right fist into his left palm. I asked my friend what he was saying, and he told me. This in effect was his subject. 'One day Timor will get autonomy from the Indonesians but not yet. It will be a form of independence in which we run East Timor. However, we will always be within Indonesia and part of it.' The younger men of the assembly said little, the others did not seem to wholly agree, the very important man made a remark with a smile which could have meant anything. At that moment I wished I could understand Portuguese, the language they were speaking and, I believe, speaking freely. They were among their own, within their extended family group, their loyalty to each other beyond all doubt.

Many of the students have not been back to their schools or colleges since the massacre on November 12, 1991. They are still hiding as they fear they will be arrested as many Timorese have been since that event. People who are in a position to know have told me of those. I know relatives of quite a few of the men who are now in prison. I don't know the total number and doubt if anyone in Timor does, but few Timorese believe in the finding of the inquiry into the events of November 12th. They say the number of killed, wounded and missing was far greater than the figures given - 50 killed, 90 wounded and 90 missing. The Timorese believe those figures were given to the world to make it appear Indonesia carried out a full impartial finding.

The number of troops in East Timor I couldn't even guess. In 1990 I reckoned about 12,000, now it's a question mark. Nowadays troops always have their weapons if outside the town limits, I believe many are in mufti; I reckon you could almost bet everyone you see in a blue track suit with gold stripes on sleeves and trousers, in shirt and shorts of the same colour are soldiers or police and in my opinion there is little difference between them. I also believe that the police or soldiers in each area have increased. The tracks I walked seemed to have police every-

where. The Timorese are under constant surveillance. They must produce their identity card on demand, this has their name, address and photo, very much like our new drivers licence. If they travel and come to a check point the vehicle driver collects all identity cards, gives them to the policeman who scrutinises them, calls the name on the card, looks at the person who claims it and hands it back. Fifty years ago I saw Timorese bowing to Portuguese and saying 'dissenca Senhor' if they had to walk past the senhor, today the Timorese almost cringe if being questioned by Indonesian police or soldiers. The fear is there for all to see. I asked my Timorese interrogator what is there to spy in Timor. I see the soldiers, the police, the people, that's all anyone can see in Timor. I'm sure that Timorese man working for the Indonesians knew exactly what I had in mind. It's there for all to see if one is looking for the truth. People kept under control by an army which has demonstrated over the last 17 years its ability and willingness to wipe a whole people out of existence if they do not comply with the invaders' rules and laws. They are ruling by fear and the fear the people of Timor feel is not for their own welfare or lives but the welfare and lives of their children. There are plenty of informers in Timor, for money or whatever material gain will come their way from the invader. Others are blackmailed into informing by threats to their families. The former deserve no sympathy, the latter will not be condemned by me. I have seen more courage displayed here in a day than I would see in Australia in a decade. It has ever been so amongst a persecuted people.

The world has abandoned Timor, Australia and the United States in particular. They give the Indonesians millions of dollars for development, dollars that are milked all the way down the line, what's left goes for the project. Indonesia is a rich country. On the ship I was studying the map of Indonesia and the purser who spoke excellent English, joined me, pointing out areas of mining, oil wells, raw materials, food, fishing. I said that Indonesia is a very rich country with many wealthy people and millions of poor ones. He said 'Oh yes, we are nearly 200 million. Now Australia and Indonesia get on better Australia is a little afraid of Indonesia' and laughed. I laughed too and said 'you could be right'. To myself I thought 'I know you are bloody right, worse luck.'

I was told a certain organisation offered one million dollars to a Religious Order for the treatment of Lepers and T.3. sufferers. When the Indonesians heard about it they said 'we will do this together, our Health Department and you.' The Order declined, thanked the would-be donors pointing out if they couldn't do it alone the Indonesian Health Department could do it themselves - the offer was withdrawn. That, I think, speaks volumes. Unfortunately, governments do not seem to monitor their grants in a similar manner. As for Timor, God only knows. He

has a habit of taking a minus and turning it into a plus – only time will tell. In the meantime we must and should do what we can.

Timor 1992. All the resettled communities have electricity and water, the former is cut off during the day, the latter is pumped at certain hours. The roads are better than they were in 1990 apart from some very bad sections, understandable in this mountain country with rivers that are raging torrents in the wet. The road to Baucau improved beyond belief – it took 2-3/4 hours from Baucau to Dili. All the old time Postos have power and water. Health, judging by what I saw in Maubisse, the mountain people do not appear all that healthy, the women in particular look as if you could crush them between thumb and forefinger. Betel nut playing havoc with their teeth, even young people displaying blackened stumps. A vast difference in appearance between the people of West Timor, Flores and East Timor. The Timorese in the east far worse off. The people in West Timor and Flores look bigger and healthier, their housing is better, roads far better and the towns along those roads are far more substantial, their buildings and inhabitants looking in better condition than their counterparts in East Timor. All the old Postos we knew in 1942 clean, neat and tidy, today are dilapidated and decayed, looking neglected. Same and Remexio the only two I saw which looked better than in 1942.

The change in population was also ominous, Ermera and Ainaro now have Muslim mosques, Suai a Hindu temple. In 1942 there was, to my knowledge, only a small colony of Arab Muslims in Dili. The only Hindu I met was Indian Joe who claimed to be British. We confiscated his car cum truck to move ammunition after the Japanese landed in February 1942. I believe the Japanese buried him up to his neck and left him there, claiming he had aided the Australian enemy, the poor bastard had no say in the matter. We brought a lot of trouble on Timorese, Portuguese and Chinese in 1942 and deserted them in 1974 and ever since.

The Indonesian Army. I asked a friend 'how good are they?' He replied 'can't be much good or the war would have been over years ago.' Bear in mind right through history conventional armies have always had trouble against guerilla fighters and in Timor today that still applies. However, when one looks at the disparity in numbers and the small area in which the guerillas are confined, the Indonesians should have wiped them out long ago. All I could see was their webbing and boots and close inspection showed much wear and tear. Whether or not the same applies to their morale and fighting spirit I would not know.

The Church and Clergy. In 1990 I noticed how confident the Clergy were that the Indonesians would not take the Church on in a head on confrontation. The Clergy no longer believe that. One Priest voiced what many believe 'it is possible we could be

expelled if it suited Indonesian policy, then what little protection we afford the Timorese would be gone.'

In 1990 I wrote that I had looked across at Bobonaro and there, high up on the summit of the mountain behind the town was a huge white Cross visible for miles. I looked down the valley thousands of feet below, ridged and ringed by towering mountain peaks and above them all the white Cross standing like a sentinel on the highest peak. It was symbolic for in truth the only protection the people of East Timor have today is represented by the Cross, their cause kept alive by a few hundred resolute men facing enormous handicaps and odds. I felt more optimistic about Timor's ultimate fate. That Cross renewed much of my faith. The Indonesians, in their desperation to conquer the minds of the Timorese people, are now prepared to attack that Cross and all it stands for. In April Brigadier General Syafei identified the Roman Catholic Church as the principal source of tension within East Timor and stated that he would take a hard line against all dissenters. He also warned Bishop Bello to keep out of politics.

I was told that Catholics were being offered money to change and conform to Muslim beliefs. How wide spread and accurate this is I have no way of knowing. If true, it shows how desperate the Indonesians are, despite their claims that only a few malcontents do not want integration for East Timor. I found far more people against it than for it – self determination was still their goal.

Our Government and the U.S.A. Government believe that massive aid to Indonesia for development in Timor will satisfy Timorese aspirations, they keep telling them to accept their conquerors. Would Australia and the U.S. be prepared to accept a hypothetical conqueror of their country? I doubt it. Why be so insistent that the people of Timor should.

The elections on June 9th 1992 for Members of the Provincial Assembly passed off peaceably. Police were present but they were standing well back from where the voting was being carried out. In one area there were 1400 people eligible to vote and only 1200 did so. I told a Member of the Assembly that in Australia if a person who is eligible to vote and does not do so, that person is fined. He was amused that voting is compulsory in Australia. The Provincial Assembly has 45 members, 36 of those are elected by the people, nine are military men appointed by the military. A strange arrangement. In Indonesia no member of the armed forces has a vote, yet a proportion of seats is reserved for serving members of those forces.

A pointer to the waste and lack of efficiency was the amount of earth moving equipment sitting in the bush or on vacant ground near the Postos. I did not see any depots where this machinery could be parked, serviced and overhauled. I mentioned this to the road train driver who was taking me from Darwin to Alice Springs. He said 'a friend of mine

was operating road plant in Indonesia. The company he worked for had the contract, and he told me the same thing about earth moving plant left lying around, not the Company's but the Indonesians.'

Out of Baucau on the Lospalos road, I saw huge dumps of round rocks neatly stacked in what appeared to be huge squares. There must have been thousands extending into five figures. The only conclusion I could come to was it would be crushed into gravel and used for concrete or road base, or to build headwalls, retaining walls or storm water drains to control the run off in the wet and protect the roadwork.

There is much more could be written about East Timor, the people and the Indonesians and the methods used to keep the Timorese people in subjection. I am sure the world is well aware of what is happening, or rather the governments of the industrialised countries, but for various reasons they ignore it. Australia in particular has been to the fore in defending and supporting the Indonesian stand in Timor. Various parliamentary delegations have not reported the truth and distorted many facts. From 1975 Australian Governments and their Foreign Affairs Department share the guilt with the Indonesians in the death of over 200,000 Timorese men, women and children.

PROJECTED VISIT TO EAST TIMOR JUNE/JULY 1993

Following my visit to East Timor in August I am planning a trip in June/July 1993 and have discussed with Tom Nisbet the possibility that some members and/or their families may be interested in accompanying me on an organised visit. The tentative itinerary would be – first two days in Dili, acclimatise, look around, visit Dare memorial etc.

Trip 1: First day – Dili, Same, Hatahudo, Betano, overnight at Same. Second day – Same, Ainaro, Suai, overnight Suai. Third day – Suai, Bobonaro, Maliana, Balibo, Bazatete, Liquisa, Dili. The road from Dili to Same is said to be mostly sealed and in reasonable condition. A Japanese colleague who has travelled extensively over the territory in the last two years assures me this trip is not only possible but relatively painless. The suspect areas as far as roads are concerned are Hatahudo and Betano. On my recent visit I travelled the coast road to Batugade, then inland via Balibo, Maliana to Bobonaro. The road is sealed and, apart from river bed crossings, in excellent condition. In Dili I discussed the possibility of a trip such as this with two INTEL (Security Police) 'Public Relations' (a new name – for it!) agents. They also assured me it is not difficult, one of them having accompanied a group of Japanese tourists on a similar trip this year. Hopefully one of them would accompany us, which would make absolutely sure we had no problems with bumptious police or soldiers!

Trip 2. First day – Dili, Tutuala (east end), overnight either Lospalos or Baucau. Second day – Bacau, Viqueque, Dili, calling in at the technical college at Fatamuka.

The road between Dili and Lospalos is sealed, with bridges virtually over all river crossings. Most of the road from Bacau to Viqueque is sealed.

Visits to other places of particular interest could be included during the tours or on the remaining days. All this would depend on permission from the relevant Indonesian authorities, but that could be obtained before we left and I do not foresee problems. Places like Lacluta, Emerera, Remexico, Ailieu etc, can be managed as day trips from Dili. Vehicles would be comfortable four wheel drive mini buses. The overnight accommodation, in what is referred to in the tourist literature as 'homestays' I do not imagine is crash hot, but would equate, I guess, with four star camping without tents!

I would recommend that we travel Australia, Denpasar (Bali) then Denpasar – Dili (daily flights and on five days, two flights a day.) However, it is easy to go Darwin, Kupang, Dili. This route requires an overnight in Kupang as there are only two flights a week from Darwin to Kupang (Wednesday and Saturday). Cost would not be more than around \$2,000, all inclusive.

If anyone is interested they could contact me at 6 Park Road, Middle Park, 3206 or phone (03) 690 6761. I will need to know definitely by the end of March 1993 so that I can make the appropriate arrangements. Tom Nisbet has indicated that he would assist me in the planning and organisation and would also make the trip.

Regards,
Patsy Thatcher

REPORT TO 2/2ND EAST TIMOR TRUST FUND

Members of the Trust Fund should visit East Timor before making any decisions regarding sending any substantial aid to the territory. I would be willing to accompany them if they wish. The situation in East Timor is difficult to describe. Under normal circumstances an organisation such as ours would contact the locally run non-government organisations (NGO) in the country and seek suggestions from several diverse groups regarding projects and how to get aid in. For a variety of reasons this is not possible, nor are the local conditions conducive to normal common sense approach solutions.

The largest non-government organisation in East Timor is the Catholic Church. Although Bishop Belo made it clear the church would endeavour to help, it was clear that he was not wildly enthusiastic about the contact. It could be argued that he had other things on his mind (threatened student demonstrations during the NAM conference in Jakarta which

he was trying to prevent). It is also possible that he was reluctant for the same reason the other 14 non-government organisations would be, that is that any contact with Australian organisations, at least as far as East Timor is concerned, is actively frowned upon by the local authorities.

However, it is possible to work through the parish priests on small projects. For example in Bobonaro the local priest indicated they could use help regarding educational books for the children. I had shown him a small English/Tetum travellers dictionary and asked if he thought there was a need for them there. He indicated there was a need for all educational materials. He indicated we should write to him if we required his help. I asked the nuns in Bobonaro what sort of help was needed and the nun in charge indicated medicines and clothes (second hand), particularly for the children. I saw many small children without clothes, although none in Bobonaro itself. She indicated she would write to me specifying what was needed. This letter has not arrived yet, but I know from past experience one will come. A way the Association might be interested in helping would be to pay for the transportation of clothes if there was a response to a call for them. It occurs to me that some of the lady members of the Association or relatives of ex-commandos might respond to a plea for second hand clothes for children.

At Maliana I visited the junior and secondary Catholic College where English is taught as the major second language. I was introduced to five of the classes and each one the children indicated they were desperately short of books. The teachers, all Timorese, showed me the books they were using and when I expressed surprise at the type, Indonesian-English texts of poor quality, they explained that was all they had. They knew what books they needed so I suggested they write to me with a formal request of titles, publishers, etc., and I would see what could be done. They would also be interested in books in English for the use of the children, and in Tetum-English dictionaries. They pointed out most of the children came from low income families and by the time uniforms were bought there was no money for extra books.

In Dili I spoke with the nun in charge of an orphanage. The story was the same, no money for books, shortage of all educational equipment and supplies and medical supplies. I am sure the same story would have been repeated wherever I went, probably more so in the non-church schools. Unfortunately, I could not visit a selection of these because when I planned to do so they were surrounded by military. This was due to the level one alert the military had instigated to prevent student demonstrations. Incidentally, I would hate to see a level three alert, level one was awesome). I was told by other sources that in those schools where English is taught, particularly the University of Timur Timor, any donations of books or any other educational aid

would be warmly welcomed. Also any medical supplies, or money to buy them, given to the nuns would never go astray. Most Timorese go to the nuns when they are sick or injured because they get poor treatment at the government clinics who rarely give medication because they do not have any.

In connection with the office and hospital equipment, I met with the head of the largest non-government organisation on East Timor, Florentino Sarmento. This organisation is called the East Timor Association for Development. It is generously funded by U.S. and Canada NGOs. He was highly recommended to me by many people including academics at Victorian and N.S.W. universities, ACFOA, Timorese leaders in Melbourne, on both sides of the political fence, and by members of the Chinese community. It is extremely rare to get the Timorese to agree about anything and to get an endorsement from all sides speaks volumes about this man. He is certainly impressive. I sought his help as perhaps being a good contact person for us, for advice and someone who could formally get any aid we sent in to where we wanted it to go. I also asked if he knew of Timorese clinics which could use office equipment or hospital equipment. He promised to make enquiries and would have the information when members of the Trust Fund visit East Timor. He is also willing to give any other advice at a personal level. However, he made it quite clear that it would be dangerous for his, or any of the other NGOs to have formal links with an Australian organisation. He had refused funding from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta for this reason. He is constantly under surveillance, presumably because he has a lot of contact with foreigners and goes abroad at least once a year. He had recently returned from a course at the University of Sydney on development organisation and ways of assessing programs and results. This was paid for by the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. The only time I was conscious of being followed was when I visited him. He is sanguine about the surveillance but it is obvious he is under a great deal of stress. His organisation has been responsible for many projects, including clean water projects, farming projects, self help schemes. He has an excellent reputation and I found out from Red Cross, priests, Timorese who work at the Hotel Turismo, local bank manager and other Timorese friends, that he is a man of high integrity and can be trusted. He had just received news that a seminar he had organised for representatives of all other NGOs, the military and government departments, to at least learn about what each organisation was doing and to start talking with each other, had been cancelled. It was planned in an effort to break down the mistrust which exists between the military, government departments and the NGOs. The seminar was to be opened by the Indonesian minister of the environment. Several international speakers had been invited, two had arrived. The military cancelled it

without explanation two days before it was to commence. No doubt their action was linked to the threatened student demonstrations, but this sort of high handed action by the military occurs often enough to contribute to an atmosphere in which the local people dare not plan ahead, let alone work at breaking down distrust between various groups. The atmosphere of fear which permeates the place is not conducive to the locals attempting to harness, and use rationally, the human and other meagre resources at their disposal.

It seems to me that one of the biggest barriers we will have to overcome is this last point. Who can we find to trust, who is also in a position to help and will feel comfortable about working with us, given the climate of mistrust and suspicion that is endemic in Dili and the implied danger for them if they consort with foreigners. Mr Sarmento would have been ideal but this does not look like being a possibility. The ex Governor, Mario Carrascalao would have been worth approaching (as Tom intended, but the planned meeting did not eventuate), but he is being posted back to Jakarta. Perhaps Andre Lemos, nephew of Nicalau Goncalves, but I am not sure what influence or power he might have, or how far he can be trusted. He is a pleasant man, a government employee with the provincial parliament. By his own admission he reports to INTEL about his contacts with foreigners, but I suspect this would be the case with anyone we deal with and since we are not attempting to be subversive, then it should not matter. I believe Andre is a Timorese nationalist (i.e., not an Indonesian sympathiser) and feel he would help his own people if he could. How hard he can be leant on by the authorities is not clear, but in the absence of anyone better he is the logical choice. Whether or not he would accept is another thing, but since we have an opportunity to put him under an obligation to us, and given the importance of obligations within the Timorese cultural system, we could be reasonably sure of his co-operation. His son is reaching the danger age of 15 (youths between 15 and 18 are at high risk from the military) and Andre is keen to get the boy to Australia to finish his education. The rest of the Lemos immediate family are in Sydney and would take care of him. The Association would be required to sponsor him vis a vis the Immigration Department, and pay for his school tuition – not a great sum. The Immigration Department is currently making it almost impossible for people in Timor to come to Australia either for family reunion (this boy does not qualify because his nuclear family is in East Timor) or as tourists. The Association would have little problem getting the boy in on a student visa.

It seems to me that the Association should aim at small projects in which we are able to directly control the aid, something like supplying a particular college with books, or projects with families of

proven ex criados, such as buying a kuda so they can get their produce to market, a serious problem in the mountains. Or, if we know of a need by a village trying to build a road to enable kids to get to school or their produce to and from the markets, we could give them a small sum to buy materials such as cement, with the local priest or someone appropriate handling the money so that it is only used to buy materials. Perhaps a donation to an agency such as the Red Cross who are also involved in putting clean water projects in remote villages might be a way to go. There is a protestant church organisation which also carries out aid work and might be worth pursuing as they have strong support from the military. It is going to be a long and difficult process to decide on and implement projects. I will consider it an honour to help in any way the Trust feels appropriate.

Patsy Thatcher

SEQUEL TO ADMIRAL TOM MOORER'S QUERY IN OCTOBER COURIER

This was answered by Tom Moorer himself after digging deep into his war records held in the old oak chest in a real historic manner.

Tom wrote to me and sent a copy of his actual Flight Log of May 1942, showing how our boys, so badly injured and desperately ill, were snatched off the coast of East Timor at Beco.

At the foot of the copy of the Log, Tom wrote a note to me as follows: 'This is an extract from my Flight Log for May 1942. Note that I flew from Perth to Melbourne to see General MacArthur on May 16. Then from Melbourne to Darwin, Alice Springs and Daly Waters on May 19, 20 and 21. I then went by car from Batchelor to Darwin Harbour to join my plane crew and support ship.

On May 22, I took a seven hour flight in a RAAF Hudson to the Beco, Timor area to examine the coast line and select my landing spot. On May 23 and 24 I took short flights simply to check out my plane and familiarise myself with the Darwin area.

On the night of May 24 I made the rescue flight to the Timor coast near Beco, returning to Darwin precisely at midnight. All the six men were in bad shape and my crew had some difficulty loading them aboard. I remained at the aircraft controls in case a Japanese patrol boat showed up. I never did get a good look at all of my passengers and that explains why I could not remember exactly how many we rescued. I did remember Brigadier Veale. I returned to Perth on May 25, having gone full circle – Flight time 64.3 hours.'

Thanks Tom for your co-operation in making this a part of history related to the campaign of the 2/2 Independent Company in East Timor, it is truly appreciated.

EDITOR

CORRESPONDENCE CORNER

P.G. Spillett
GPO Box 706
Darwin N.T. 0801

Dear Mr Carey,

I am sorry to have taken so long to answer your last letter but have only just returned to Australia from Timor where I have been studying for the last nine months. I was granted a visa for 12 months study in East and West Timor, Sulawesi Seletan, Tenggara and Jakarta, which I commenced in January and have been on the move ever since. I have been living in Kupang for a lot of that time and have made a couple of short stops in Dili. Went to Mass in the old church of Motael and had a beer in the pub! Two essential services. As far as I could see and from talks with others, life appears back to normal for the general public with no overt signs of military or police although no doubt still around.

If you are still of a mind to help some of the young people I may be able to assist you. From my own experience and knowledge of some of the problems and aspirations of the young people I could suggest that an approach to the Church authorities at Belcora, where the priest is attempting to get some of the young men particularly in to schools throughout Indonesia where they can get training in trades and skills which are not readily available in East Timor. Whatever resources there are would be in heavy demand and no doubt have a long waiting list of potential students. Some have in fact enrolled in various universities around Indonesia and many in the Catholic University in Kupang. I am in normal contact with these students and know something of their problems. Transport and study fees are the real expenditure. When I get the chance I use one young student as a research assistant when I am in Timor and know his background.

Should you still wish me to give a hand I am happy to help out. I could see the priest who organises these things and has a knowledge of where help is needed, or I could see the Bishop or Governor if you want to go to that level. However, I am returning to Timor in November and will be away for two or three months. Should you want to contact me in Kupang I am living in Jalan Basuki Rahmat No. 16, Kupang, N.T.T. Indonesia. You can phone through on 0011-62-391-2139, leave a message for me and I will ring you back.

I was in Kupang for some time before the official dedication of the new memorial to the Sparrow Force and 2/40th Battalion which was organised from Jakarta. It was badly organised in that although the ceremony went ahead well, no veteran from Sparrow Force was in attendance. Apparently bad organising in Australia. I tried to get things together but it was too late and then I could not get

to the ceremony myself. However, I have been asked to organise a pilgrimage to Kupang next year for Anzac Day and am hoping, if there is a demand, to include Dili in the tour and visit Dare for the veterans.

Yours sincerely,
Peter

New South Wales News

The sad saga of '92 continues and, as with W.A., we have lost more members in the persons of Ron Orr from South Grafton and Tom O'Brien of Cabramatta. We have extended our sincere condolences to the widows and their families, and the Unit was well represented at their funeral services.

I also report the death of Adelina Encarnaceo, niece of Pat de Luz, and Anselmo Almeida, who worked in the Bank of Portugal during our time in Timor. He was able to assist our Unit finances when Bernie Callinan was C.O. Jack Hartley and Paddy Kenneally attended to represent us.

In the current RSL paper 'Reveille' list of those who have made their Last Patrol, appears the name of W.O.I.I.A. Coupland, WX12137, 2nd Ind. Coy. I have been in touch with State Office but they will not release information over the phone so will follow up in writing and advise in due course.

On a happier note I'm pleased to say that my Edith had an abdominal operation at Mona Vale Hospital on 22 October. She is back home and progressing quite well, but still has a way to go. Our thanks to those who phoned to enquire about her.

We had an unexpected visit from Tom and Mary Foster when their trip was interrupted by a visit to St. Vincents Hospital, but pleased to say Tom was much better when they left to return home.

Denny and June Dennis have both been in Albury Hospital for a 'grease and oil change' and are convalescing at home. Best wishes again. Ron and Dorothy Trengove are on the way to visit them, after a delay due to Ron's own health.

Betty Craig had a rough couple of weeks recently but has bounced back and is in South Australia with her daughter.

Our Christmas gathering this year will be in the form of a luncheon at the Harbord Diggers Club, 11.30 a.m. for 12 noon on Wednesday, 16th December. Members, wives, widows and families will be welcome. Please let me know by Monday the 14th.

Timor continues to receive much press publicity but nothing meaningful from the Government - will send some copy to Col Doig. There was a Memorial Mass

held for the Timorese last Saturday at St Mary's Cathedral, followed by a Silent March to the Town Hall. Paddy, Nora and I attended to pay our respects, as well as Bill and Frieda Tomasetti.

Sincere greetings to everyone for a Very Happy Christmas and the Best of Good Wishes for the New Year 1993.

A.E. Friend
29 Rushton Street
Carnarvon 6701

I have in the past had a lot of good thoughts and intentions of putting pen to paper and they have only come to good intentions but I cannot put it off any longer (pure laziness on my part).

It's surprising that I can receive the Courier, sit down, enjoy reading it and think that's my effort put into the Association, but the last couple of Couriers have opened my eyes a bit and I realise how slack I am.

Thank you for sending the Unit plaque, and thanks to Ralph Finkelstein for producing the finished article. I have two grandsons in the army, one an aircraft engineer and the other a carpenter and both boys would like a keepsake of my time with the Unit.

As I hark back to the subject of the Courier, I must thank somebody for reminding me, or pricking my conscience, of the fact the Courier does cost a great deal of money to produce, not to mention effort etc., and I was just happy to put in my two bobs worth now and again. Because I now know its worth to me and its costs, I am happy to enclose a cheque. Please split it between the Timor Trust Fund and a contribution to the Courier.

I've had my annual visit from Keith and Val Hayes, it's always a great pleasure, and Daphne and I look forward to it every year. They must know the secret formula for staying young, both look the picture of health. It's great to hear all the news of Unit happenings first hand.

Jack Fowler is another regular visitor when he's in Carnarvon to see his kids on the plantation. Both have reminded me of the 1994 Safari and if I'm O.K. I, or we will be there. Talking of health, I'm all right after my second upset and am assured by the doctors that I will see the year 2001.

Best wishes to all.

Albie

A. Bowers
9 Talbot Close
Mandurah 6210

Enclosed is a cheque for the Courier.

Would like to thank everyone on the Committee for all the good work they have done and a special thanks to Alan Luby for his effort at Port Macquarie.

Had a good weekend at Wongan Hills, the country looks lovely at this time of year.

Regards to all.

Tony

Mrs B. Craig
PO Box 234
Young 2594

I am a little early with my Christmas greetings but I will be busy over the next few months, so thought I had better write now or I will not have time. My very best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year and may it be a very happy and healthy one for us all.

The highlight of this year was the Port Macquarie Safari. I left Young some time earlier and spent a few days in Gilgandra with Keith's aunt who is 94, then spent about a week with Jack and Marj Peattie, who took me for some lovely drives around the district which I hadn't seen for years. Then I followed the Peatties to Port Macquarie. It was wonderful to see everyone so happy to be together. It was a great venue and there was always plenty to see and do. Jess Epps and I then went back to Tamworth and spent some time with Jack and Marj before leaving on our trip. Spent a few days in Young, a couple of days with Phillip at Wodonga and then off to Adelaide through Shepparton, Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Avoca and Ararat where we stayed for a few days and friends of mine took us up around the Grampians, Halls Creek etc. then off to Stawell, Horsham, Nhill, Bordertown, Keith, Tailem Bend and finally found our way to Tea Tree Gully. We had a lovely ten days in Adelaide including lunch at Dignums with the 2/2 group. We then had a good trip to Melbourne via the Coast Road and the views were spectacular. During our four day stay with Ken and Margaret Monk we went to Campbells and Petersons and their gardens were beautiful. Called on the Clanneys at Wangaratta and then to Phillip at Wodonga. We went to Canberra to see Jim and Joan Fenwick and stayed with Rolf Goodacre in Sydney where we spent Anzac Day. Jess left to return to Perth and I stayed a few days with Rolf then a week with my sister in Goulburn before driving home.

Have been playing bowls, weather permitting. It has been a long, cold, very wet winter but Young is a picture and the crops and fruit are doing well.

I had to have all the cancer tests again and came through 100%. Doctors were pleased that after 17½ years I didn't even have a scar.

Have been doing a bit of dancing again but no teaching now. Have also become interested in playing cards with two friends and one of the retired sisters at the convent.

In August I woke up at midnight in severe pain. I phoned a friend who called the ambulance and I was taken to Canberra arriving about 5.30 a.m. I had nothing to eat or drink for six days as they didn't know what was wrong. They thought it might be an infection. I was in hospital for 12 days, then with Jim and Joan Fenwick for eight days and then home to Young. I feel really well now except that I get very weary.

On September 22nd I flew to Melbourne with Bill and Dell MacGregor to attend the funeral of his mother Alma who will be remembered by quite a few of the 2/2nd as she came to some of our safaris with her brother George Greenhalgh. Also at the service were Harry and Olive Botterill, Ken and Margaret Monk, Tom Nisbet and Fred Broadhurst. George was pleased to see so many 2/2 members there.

We are having meetings to set up a Carers' Group at Young to help people who have to care for folk with Alzheimers, wheel chair patients or very elderly people. It is a great burden on a lot of people and we hope to be able to help.

Best wishes to everyone.

Betty

Young Safari Saturday/Sunday 13 & 14 March 1993 at 43 Edwards Street Young

Colonial Hotel, Cherry Blossom Motel, on site vans and cabins all in Zouch Street, one or two blocks from 43 Edwards Street.

Friday 12th Dinner from early evening at 43 Edwards Street.

Saturday 13th Barbecue lunch at 43 Edwards Street
Official Dinner 7.30 p.m.

Sunday 14th Barbecue lunch at 43 Edwards Street
Evening meal at 43 Edwards Street

Monday 15th Morning tea for anyone who calls.

R. Conley
24 Byambee St
Kenmore 4069

Greetings from Queensland. We gathered for an impromptu barbecue at Slaughter Falls late August to welcome Bernie and Babs Langridge and their daughter and granddaughter who live in Brisbane. Present were Neil and Margaret Hooper, Butch and Pat Barnier, Gordon and Joan Stanley, George and Edna Vandeleur, George and Bettye Coulson, Ralph and Sheila Conley. We were delighted when Jack and Julie Fox and Norm and Fran Tillett joined us unexpectedly. They were enjoying their annual winter trek to the sunshine. A happy few hours were spent enjoying the fellowship and family togetherness that has grown over the years. We were en-

tertained with some of the hilarious adventures met by Gordon and Joan Stanley on their recent trip to Bali.

We met again for a great day at the North Pine Dam on Monday 7th September, our regular get-together. The group included George and Edna Vandeleur, Alex and Esse Veovodin, Gordon and Joan Stanley, Paddy Wilby, Butch and Pat Barnier, George and Bettye Coulson, Neil and Margaret Hooper, Col and Jeanette Andrews, Ralph and Sheila Conley.

Ron Archer has had great difficulty in being at the same place and time as the rest of us. This is probably my fault for not keeping tabs on him. Hopefully we will see him at our Christmas function on November 25th at Sunsets Spinnaker Sound Marina Seafood Restaurant.

Alan Luby advised us that Denny Dennis is having a rough time on the sick list. Our thoughts are with him.

In the unlikely event that we do not correspond in the Courier before Christmas, we take this opportunity to wish all our mates, their wives and families the very best of good health, good cheer and good fortune for the Festive Season and New Year, from the Queensland Contingent.

Ralph Conley

Mrs E. Fullarton
13 Riverview Rd
East Victoria Park 6101

Am enclosing a donation towards the Courier. I have always enjoyed reading about the 2/2nd activities.

I guess time will help me adjust to losing Doug – it was a great shock at the end, as he seemed better the last few weeks.

In time I hope to join you all again and meet up with good friends.

Hoping you are all keeping well.

Edna

Mrs A. Butler
88 Annandale St
Keperra 4054

As I am the daughter of Arnold Barnier, I would very much like a copy of the reprint of Col Doig's book for which I am enclosing a cheque.

Dad and Mum look forward to receiving the Courier so they can keep up to date with what's happening to old friends, although sadly, so many of them are passing away. I would like to thank you for the time and effort that goes into keeping a publication like the Courier going – it really is appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

A. Butler

J. Lillie
 23 Riverview St
 South Perth 6151

It seems a long time since I made any sort of contribution to the Courier which I appreciate highly.

Am enclosing a cheque.

John

H.A. Sargent
 134 Simpsons Rd
 Eaglehawk 3556

Hope this finds all of you in the best of health and able to enjoy life to the fullest possible.

The nuts from the Austin Hospital reckon I'm a problem. My wife has been telling me that for years but am still able to squeeze in a game of golf now and again – bleed like hell after it but still enjoy a round. Still looking after the two grand kids 7 a.m. to school time, into our 6th year now, buggered up our retirement but they're both top at school so some satisfaction for the trouble.

Enclosed is a donation for the Courier.

Regards to all.

'Blue' Sargent

K. Dignum
 24 Selkirk Ave
 Seaton 5023

Its about time I put pen to paper and let you know how we are in South Australia. We have two here who are not shaping up too well.

Shorty Stevens health has gone down hill, he is now in a nursing home attached to the Cummins Hospital. Margaret is out on the farm at Yallunda Flat which is half way between Tumbly Bay and Cummins on Eyre Peninsular.

Ron Mackey is not sparking on all six, a hard man o contact, he now seems to have disappeared, no doubt will surface again somewhere, some time.

In a couple of weeks we will be heading south to meet up with Ron Gurr and stay a few days. We will y and look up Babe Webber.

The rest of the chaps are O.K. most of the time. We had a couple of evenings here recently which is not bad for S.A. The first was the vagabond Irishman, and seeing he was an honoured guest we let him in all discussions. When he left he dropped in on Ron Gurr and stayed a couple of days. Tom and Mary Foster also called in and while passing through they all dropped in on Ron Gurr so now we feel as we in S.A. have been put on the map. Mark Jordan has left S.A. for the West – our loss is your gain.

Now, after all that activity we will just drift back to our normal activity of hibernation.

Enclosing a couple of bob for the Courier.

Regards, 'Dig'

R.G. Snowdon
 4 Nilmar Ave
 Wodonga 3690

I would like a copy of the revised edition of Col Doig's book for which I am enclosing a cheque. Whatever is left over could go into the Courier fund. That is one little paper I always look forward to, although unfortunately it doesn't always provide the best of news. Far too many members seem to be answering the final call. I guess that is only to be expected as age catches up with all of us. I am lucky to be keeping pretty good health and hope you are all the same.

All the best.

Bob

J. Keenahan
 34 Duncan St
 Huskisson 2540

I am still doing O.K. after the by pass operation.

Received the latest Courier and it is really sad when one reads of such great mates of our Unit who have passed on.

Enclosed is cheque for the Trust Fund, will send further payment later, the balance is for the Courier.

Regards to all.

Jack

Mrs B. Flockart
 Box 22
 Merredin 6415

Enclosed please find my contribution to receipt of the Courier for the next few editions. I was very pleased to receive my first one in August and to see my article included.

I was sorry that Jim and I couldn't make it to the Wongan Hills Convention. Our football team was playing in the grand final, and as we are dedicated supporters, just had to be there to see them win (beat Stan Payne's team).

I hope to be at the Commemoration Service in November.

• keep up the good work on the Courier.

Bev

Editor: We were very pleased to meet you at the Commemoration Service, Bev.

Mrs V. Nichols
 59 Seacrest Drive
 Sorrento 6020

Just a line to say how much my family and I appreciated the attendance of your members at the funeral of Mal. I know how much he thought about his army days and the many friends he made during those years. His one regret was that he never made the trip to Timor with you all, although he did go there privately many years later.

Enclosed is a cheque towards your Christmas fund to have a drink on Mal, a thought which I'm sure he would approve of wholeheartedly.

Many thanks to all.

Yours sincerely,

Verna

F.W. Bone
25 Abalone St
Lakes Entrance 3909

Enclosed is a cheque towards the Courier.

We hope everyone is well, as we are at the moment and look forward to seeing everyone at the Safari in W.A.

Yours faithfully,

Bluey

M. Miller
156 Wilson St
Burnie 7320

Another Safari at Port Macquarie and Mini-Safari at Tucumwal have passed and, as usual, they were both very successful. It is great to be able to meet old friends and make new ones, but I wish there could be more Tasmanians at these functions.

The information you asked for re the passengers on the Catalina, I can name three 2/40th members, Major J. Chisholm, Sgt Jack Sansom and Sgt E.M. (Dusty) Miller, no relation to me. I think Denny Dennis could supply this information.

Enclosed is a cheque for the Courier.

Yours faithfully,

Max

B.F. Dennis
614 Sackville St
Albury 2640

I have a few chapters on my mind at present.

1. Health. I have been poorly, had 26 days in hospital and six hours on bench with bowel operation. Am slowly on the mend but have 12 months of chemotherapy up the track.
2. 'Where are the Sparrow 20?' Without going into too much detail, my movements at that stage were 1 April 1942, hunted out of Atamboa with Frank Rose, George Smith, Ralph Taylor. Two Jap tanks with machine guns at the ready was the cause. I met up with other Aussies and drifted into Beco where I was in charge of pick up of goods dropped by Lockheeds. Some of the goods recovered were rubber boats and many old car tyres which later became a jetty for the Catalina.

May 24th saw the Cat come in and the officer who threw the pick failed to let go and of course the Aussies had to laugh.

The names mentioned in the Courier I confirm, but add one other, J.B. Sansom, Transport Sgt of the

2/40 Bn, a digger from 1st AIF and very sick at the time. When more gear was being dropped Sgt Joe Garland became QM of area and I moved on to other duties.

Sorry to have rambled on, but unless we talk nobody knows.

Yours sincerely,

Denny

J.G.Porter
50/29 Victoria Drive
Gray N.T. 0830

Am enclosing a cheque for a copy of Col Doig's book. Thank you for 2/2 Courier. Of special interest was Reg Griffiths' account of his activities regarding the 'Voyager'.

I sent Jess Epps a photocopy of the 'Inquiry into Loss of HMAS Voyager'. I hope she got it. In return she was to send a photocopy of 'Sitting Ducks for Zeros'. Peter Spillett, writer and employee of N.T. Museum, much travelled in Timor and other parts of Indonesia, told me of looking for the Voyager recently at Betano Bay, and unable to see any sign of it from the road. He found out later that it was part way into the mouth of a river and hard to locate. He is going back for another look.

All the best,

Jack

Mrs M. O'Brien
100 Cumberland St
Cabramatta 2166

The Members

2/2nd Commando Association

Thank you for your floral tribute and kind expression of sympathy at the passing of our beloved Tom.

We are comforted by the wonderful support and kindness shown to us by his mates in the 2/2nd.

Muriel O'Brien & Family

1994 SAFARI

Busselton, a popular coastal holiday resort 224 km south of Perth, will be the venue for our 1994 Safari.

The W.A. Committee has fixed the date for the Safari which will commence on Thursday, 7th April and conclude on Thursday, 14th April, 1994. Full details regarding accommodation will appear in the February 1993 Courier. Arrangements re functions will be made known in the Courier later in 1993.

Congratulations to Elsie Wares and Mark Jordan who were married at the All Saints Anglican Church, Dianella on Saturday, 7th November. The happy couple who honeymooned in Mauritius will live in Ballajura.

**Telling. East Timor
Personal Testimonies 1942-1992
by Michelle Turner**

This book tells directly what the Timorese have lived through for the last 50 years, probably our two worst nightmares, invasion by Japanese and Javanese, which is worse than any of us could imagine, interspersed with 30 years of peace.

Four generations speak through the book, and many of the stories they tell are not pretty, but their words still leave me amazed at the resilience of the human spirit. It is dedicated to my grandfather, Arthur Hickman, a Kupanger who joined you and stayed until December 1942 and, though he's not alive to read it, I believe he would approve.

Best wishes to all.

Michelle Turner

The above book is now available at all book shops and is recommended to all who are interested in and support the people of East Timor in their struggle for freedom.

Donations to Courier

Albie Friend, Tony Bowers, Blue Sargent, Peter Krause, Edna Fullarton, Keith Dignum, Bob McDonald, Col. Criddle, Bluey Bone, Stan Sadler, Charlie Sadler, Bev. Flockart, Colin Hodson, Max Miller, John Lillie, Verna Nichols, Mick Mannix, Paddy Kenneally, Bob Snowdon, Jack Keenahan, Dot Boyland, John Chalwell, Tom Martin, Ross Shenn, Muriel O'Brien, Ernie Bingham, P. Foote, George Smith, Paul Costelloe.

SICK PARADE

George Fletcher has had a rough time for quite a while with an illness which has been hard to diagnose. He has been a stalwart on the Committee and his efforts as Warden of the Memorial area in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park have been outstanding.

Charlie Sadler was laid low with a lung congestion but he was looking fit and well at the recent Commemoration Service.

Albie Martin continues to fight his health problem with courage and determination. Living alone makes things even more difficult.

Lew Thompson has had a series of set backs in his battle to beat a serious skin problem. However, that big smile of welcome is always there despite the disappointments he is experiencing.

Keith Dignum had a serious bowel operation on the 17th November.

A big cheerio and best wishes to you from us all for a speedy return to the best of health.

**GREETINGS FROM
THE COURIER TEAM**

Archie, Len and Betty take this opportunity to wish all readers a Merry Christmas and Healthy Happy New Year.

We look forward to hearing from you in 1993.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

Mrs M. Orr
May
27 Vere St
Sth Grafton 2461
066 42 3029

Mr J.C. Porter
50/29 Victoria Drive
Gray, N.T. 0830

Mr & Mrs G. Cluett
11 Foxtan St
Maddington 6109

Mrs M. O'Brien
Muriel
100 Cumberland St
Cabramatta 2166
02 72 9538

Mr R.M. Shenn
Ross & Beth
2/1 Kilpa Court
City Beach 6015

STOP PRESS:

ALF COUPLAND

News has just come to hand re the passing of the above who was Platoon Sergeant in the original "B" Troop.

Very little has been heard of Alf over all the years post war. A VALE will appear in the February '93 issue of the Courier.

The Editor