



# **2/2 COMMANDO COURIER**

Registered by Australian Post Publication No. WAS 0270 — Category "A"

Address all Association Correspondence to: Box T1646, G.P.O. Perth 6001

President B. Langridge. Secretary J. Carey. Treasurer G. Bayliss.

**Vol. 100**

**APRIL 1993**

**Price 1c**

## **COMING EVENTS**

### **ANZAC DAY**

**Sunday, April 25, 1993**

- |            |                                                     |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 9.30 a.m.  | Assemble at usual place in St. George's Terrace.    |
| 9.45 a.m.  | Fall In.                                            |
| 10.00 a.m. | March Off.                                          |
| 12.30 p.m. | Get-Together at Airways Hotel, 195 Adelaide Terrace |

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 11, 1993 at 11 a.m.**

at Anzac Club

Members are asked to try and make this meeting.  
Refreshments and snacks to follow

### **NORMA HASSON SOCIAL**

**Friday, July 2, 1993**

at Anzac Club

Refreshments from 11 a.m.  
Luncheon at 12.30 p.m. Roll up – Hail – Rain or Shine!

### **COUNTRY CONVENTION IN ALBANY**

**August 30 - September 3, 1993**

**Details inside**

### **SAFARI 1994 BUSSELTON, WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**Thursday 7th - Thursday 14th April 1994**

**Details inside**

## VALE JACK RICE

Advice has been received from Mrs Wells in Tasmania of the death of Jack Rice on 6th March 1993 at the age of 72 years.

Jack had attended a reunion of the 2/40th Battalion and had an aneurism soon after and never recovered from its effects.

As a member of the 2/40th Battalion Jack was among those who got through to the 2/2nd when the Japs landed.

I first met up with Jack when he joined me at Maliana. He was a big robust lad and a very keen performer. Later he was to link up with 'D' Platoon and he operated as a Bren Gunner with that irrepressible soul, 'Smash' Hodgson.

Jack did not rejoin 2/2nd after Timor but I understand he joined up with the 2/12th Battalion.

After the war Jack worked in the timber industry as a feller; later with trucks of his own as a timber contractor.

Jack always took a keen interest in the affairs of the 2/2nd Commando Association and attended a couple of the Safaris.

He was an excellent soldier, a loving husband and father and a top grade citizen. Another of that famous Maliana gang has gone to rest and he will be sadly missed.

We extend our sincere sympathy to his loved ones.

### Col Doig

NOTE: The information for the following three Vales was supplied by Paddy Kenneally.

## VALE ALFRED COUPLAND

Alf Coupland died on 14th June 1992 in Canberra where he had lived since 1978.

Alf was an original member of the 2nd Independent Coy and was Platoon Sgt of 'B' Platoon. He served throughout Timor and was appointed Company S.M. in October 1942 on the removal to Australia of C.S.M. Craigie.

Alf also served in New Guinea and was severely wounded on one of the patrols across the Ramu and was invalided to Australia. He rejoined the Unit in New Britain and was C.S.M. for a short while.

When demobilised Alf worked as a truck driver with Bell Bros. and then rejoined the permanent Army for a period.

The Association lost contact with Alf when he moved to Victoria in the early 1960s. From what Paddy has been able to learn from Alf's Executor and friends in Canberra, the following story arises:

When he moved to Victoria he was friendly with Polly Farmer, the East Perth and Geelong footballer and he probably worked for some time at Geelong.

He moved to Canberra about 20 years ago and worked with the Electricity Commission until 1978. When his left leg was amputated just below the

knee as a result of gangrene which he stated was brought about by excessive smoking, he lost his job and was given a government unit in which to live. His neighbours say he was extremely independent and looked after himself very well. He had trouble with his artificial leg and was provided with a wheel chair. He continued to have trouble with his other leg which he refused to have amputated. He was tested for cancer early in 1991 and the test proved positive cancer of the lung. He died, not of cancer, but of a massive heart attack, being found by callers from St Vincent de Paul soon after his death.

So ends the saga of Alf Coupland with whom we lost contact many years ago through no fault of the Association but apparently because Alf did not want to regain contact.

The Association's sympathy goes to any relatives who may be living.

### Col Doig

## VALE FRED (SANDY) EGGLETON

Fred Eggleton died of cancer on 15th February 1993.

'Sandy' joined the Unit in New Guinea and served with 'C' Troop. He also served in New Britain.

'Sandy' was an athlete of no small ability and probably never reached his true potential due to the war years.

Very little is known of his peace time activities as he did not have much contact with the Association. The N.S.W. Branch only had contact a couple of times, one that historic occasion when, along with Tony Bowers, he carried our banner in the 1968 Anzac Day march led by Geoff Laidlaw.

It is known that he took a deep interest in the executive side of athletics and the Writer's last contact with him was a phone call when he was in W.A. for an Australian Junior Athletics Carnival early in January 1993.

There was a very large gathering of his relatives and athletic friends at his funeral. The 2/2nd was represented by Alan Luby, 'Snow' Went, Jack Hartley, Mick Mannix, John (Icky) Iles, Paddy Kenneally, Gordon Hart and Ian Ronald.

'Sandy' is survived by his widow, two daughters, several grand children, two brothers and many nieces and nephews. We extend to his family our most sincere sympathy in their sad loss.

### Col Doig

## VALE ARTHUR (BLUEY) STEVENSON 2/4th COY

Arthur Stevenson was a Corporal with 4 Section of 2/4th Commando Squadron in Timor. Later he was one of many to join 'Z' Force and attained the rank of Captain. It was he who eventually parachuted into Timor to uncover the sad fact that the Japanese had controlled 'Z' Force in Timor since 1943. He gave great credit to his Timorese helper, Celestino,

for his success in getting into and out of Timor after the fiasco of 'Z' Force in that area.

Arthur continued his regard for the Timorese ever afterwards and was one of the first to become involved when the Indonesians grabbed East Timor in 1975. Even before that he did his best to mediate with the faction fighting between the UDT and Fretilin Apodeti. There are not many who have tried to advance the cause of the East Timorese more than did Arthur Stevenson.

Arthur Stevenson died on 16th February 1993. There was a huge crowd at his funeral service at St Peter's Church, North Sydney.

The Timorese community held a Memorial Mass for him which Jack Hartley, Paddy Kenneally and Gordon Hart attended.

Arthur is survived by his widow Helen and six children.

This Association extends to his family and also our friends in the 2/4th Association, our sincere sympathy on their sad loss.

**Col Doig**

## ALBANY COUNTRY CONVENTION

**Monday August 30 -  
Friday September 3, 1993**

**Accommodation** - Albany International Motel

**\$90 per night Double or Twin, Dinner,  
Bed & Breakfast**

**\$65 per night Single, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast**

Bookings to be made by May 31, with a deposit of \$100 per person. Cheques to be made payable to **Halls Head Coachlines** and mailed C/- **L. Bagley, 9 Curlew Street, Mandurah, 6210.**

Mandurah 2-2s have chartered a coach from Halls Head Coachlines who have provided the following itinerary which has proved popular with other groups they have taken to Albany. There are still ten seats available and if anyone is interested in driving to Mandurah to join the coach, arrangements have been made for private parking of your cars. It would be necessary to arrive in Mandurah no later than 8.30 am on August 30. The coach will leave Mewburn Centre in central Mandurah at 9 am.

**DAY 1.** Depart Mandurah at 9 am, via Dwellingup, morning tea at Quindanning, along Albany Highway to Kojonup for lunch, on to Mt Barker, through the Porongurups, past the King and Kalgan Rivers, arriving Albany approximately 3 pm.

**DAY 2.** Enjoy the Rainbow Coast, visiting the Natural Bridge, the Gap and Whale World Museum. After lunch the afternoon is free.

**DAY 3.** Visit Princess Royal Fortress on Mount Adelaide, then on to Strawberry Hill Farm for lunch. A rest period after lunch before we set out for a Twilight Cruise on the magnificent Silver Star Catamaran and a barbecue on board.

**DAY 4.** A free day at your leisure to stroll through town, do some shopping or whatever takes your fancy.

**DAY 5.** Depart Albany at approximately 10 am, via Mt Barker, Arthur River, Collie, returning Mandurah approximately 3 pm.

**TOUR COST:** \$690 Double or Twin Share. \$425 Single Supp. Includes 5-Star coach, dinner, bed and breakfast at the Albany International Motel, twilight cruise and barbecue, entry fee to Whale World and lunch, the forts and Strawberry Hill Farm and lunch.

For members making their own way to Albany, a small coach can be hired to follow the above.

Charge for the Twilight Cruise and barbecue - \$28 per person.

## BUSSELTON SAFARI

**7th - 14th April 1994**

There has been a good early response to the Safari with 40 members already confirming their booking for the big event.

Eric and Twy Smyth are leaving for a 3 month trip to the Eastern States at the end of March but this will not alter booking arrangements. Please continue to send your booking to 'Safari 94' C/- Mr E. Smyth, 23 Maryllia Road, Busselton, 6280, enclosing a \$50 deposit made out to 'The 2/2nd Commando Association'. Eric has arranged for his sister, Mrs Billie Perry, to handle the incoming mail and make the bookings with the respective motels. Her phone number is (097) 52 4563 in case of any queries. Clarrie and Grace Turner will be on hand to assist Billie should any queries arise.

Members who intend to book later are asked to keep their copy of the February 1993 Courier handy so that when they do decide to book they will know what to do.

An inquiry has been received re double and twin bookings. Double indicates the room has a double bed and a twin has two single beds, so if your partner snores go for the twin or better still, book an extra room. Joking aside, it would be a big help if members booked in early. A refund will be made on the \$50 deposit if you cannot make it.

The Kookaburra Caravan Park has advised that besides the on-site vans and van sites (see February Courier) they can offer four park homes for \$30 a night for two people. These units are fully equipped except for linen, and they are hoping to have linen available by April 1994.

As mentioned in the February Courier, Eastern States Branches are asked to take a close look at a block air booking. Australian Airlines and Ansett are always prepared to do business on a block booking basis and worth while concession fees can be obtained. It may mean paying for your ticket well in advance but it is still a good proposition.

Bookings to date are:

**Ship Resort Motel** – Joe Poynton, Roy Watson, David Brown, Len Bagley, Ron McAlpine, John Poynton, Jack Carey, Bert Bache.

**Gale Street Resort** – Jack Keenahan, Stan Payne, Bernie Langridge. If 10 units are booked, the charge for two people in one unit for 8 nights will be \$250 – extra person \$10 per night (not including breakfast).

**Paradise Motel** – Leith Cooper, Harry Handicott, Joyce Smith, Mark Jordan.

**Vasse Hotel** – Jim McLaughlin, Janice Adrian, Jack Hasson.

**Kookaburra Caravan Park** – Paddy Kenneally, Keith Dignum, Ron Trengove, Keith Blomeley.

Discount for Gale Street units is the only definite one so far but some concessions will probably be obtained on the others, such as – stay 8 nights, pay for 7.

### Reprint of Col Doig's Unit History

A further reprint of the above has been made. Due to increased printing costs it has been found necessary to increase the price to \$25 plus postage of approximately \$8.

This appears to be the final issue of the book so enquiries should be made as soon as possible as it will be first come first served.

As reported recently in 'The West Australian' Brigadier Terry Nolan, an ex Commanding Officer of the Special Air Service, scored a top Christmas present – promotion to the post of Army Commander Western Region.

He hasn't had much time to settle in but the quietly spoken Commander with a passion for sport has served in Perth previously and is an avid follower of the Eagles and the Wildcats.

**Brigadier T.J. Nolan, AM, Defence Centre, Perth.**

Dear Jack.

I very much appreciate the congratulations and best wishes that you passed to me on behalf of the President and Members of your Association. I sincerely appreciate your kind thoughts.

I managed to score two goals with the one kick by getting promoted and being posted back to Perth. I was naturally delighted to hear of the news.

I look forward to meeting with you and your members in the near future. My best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely,

**Terry Nolan**

## MANDURAH 2-2s NEWS

Although attendance at the Family Picnic Day at the Western Rosella Bird Park was disappointing, the 45 men, women and children who made it had a wonderful day. We were blessed with perfect weather and there was much to interest and amuse the children (young and old!). They talked to the animals and birds, went for numerous rides on the train, played mini golf, ate lots of ice creams provided by indulgent grandparents which allowed the adults to enjoy activities which required a little less effort. Members and families who came from the metropolitan area and Collie voted it worthwhile, and we thank them for making the effort.

## INDEPENDENT TRUST FUND

Fax from Dili.

Patsy recently received a fax from a Dili teacher who has received teaching material from Colin Doig.

The communication channel is one which would be under surveillance.

One paragraph is significant:

"Clothes and shoes are needed for all ages but 'the people controlling the business' would not welcome such donations because fewer would buy clothes and shoes from their Chinese 'business partner' " (message received).

He adds "you might have a lot of problems sending them here but there will be a lot of problems clearing the goods from Dili – Customs fees and 'other signatures'.

"In the 1980s donated goods were cleared free but now we have to pay a big amount".

We expect problems but we have time and ideas.

Colin Doig's Dili friend is organising an out of school training project to help jobless Timorese Youth. Courses include woodworking and electrical installation. They are then helped to function independently as tradesmen.

Manual courses (possibly also including Patsy's recommendation of plumbing) would be most appropriate in an open market.

A clerical vocation would depend on an Indonesian Administration which would favour their own people.

We plan emphasis on donations of technical trades, used text books, rather than the academic category.

As computer courses are also planned in Dili, Keith Hayes has access to a dozen or so units. We also have several hundred computer books. Possibly Dili clearance fees could inhibit donations of computers.

**(25/3/93) STOP PRESS:**

Colin's teacher friend has faxed again. This time an acknowledgement of Patsy's fax of 8/3/93.

We are advised the method of shipment following permission from Jakarta authorities.

The inclusion of a plumbing course into the curriculum is being considered. We trust that this line of communication will remain open.

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### SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS FOR EAST TIMOR

We continue pursuing channels for permission to ship the books to Dili. Also to get acknowledgement and/or expression of interest from a desirable recipient of our consignment.

Regrettably, owing to increasing stockpiles of wool, we had to re-locate our cartons. Jack Carey managed to persuade an acquaintance that help was needed and so we moved to a more convenient South Fremantle address – at least for the short term!

In response to Patsy's appeal on our behalf to the Indonesian Ambassador, we are directed to write to the Director of Education in Jakarta. A schedule of the publication showing titles and authors will then be considered.

We have had four working bees to relocate and sort thousands of books.

They are being correlated in subject, author and age or grade categories, listed and packed into cartons.

Acknowledgements and many thanks to the helpers particularly those who drove up from Mandurah and Safety Bay – George Bayliss, Ernie Bingham, Jack Carey, Keith Hayes, Bill Howell, Don Hudson, Bernie Langridge, Ted Monk, Don Turton, Roy Watson.

Tom Nisbet and Patsy Thatcher are going to Dili in June and Patsy asks if anyone from W.A. will accompany them.

**BOB SMYTH**

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**H.E. Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali**  
**Secretary-General**  
**United Nations**  
**New York, NY10017 USA**  
**Fax 1 212 963-1395**

**Subject:** United Nations Sponsored talks Between Indonesia & Portugal to take place in Rome on 20th April 1993.

Your Excellency,

We, the surviving members of the small allied Guerilla force which served in East Timor during the Second World War, come to you with a call for help. Our plea is on behalf of the people of East Timor to whose support and assistance, fifty years ago, most of us owe our lives.

We ask that you consider the following course:

1. To insist that the East Timorese resistance movement be represented at the Rome talks on 20th April.
2. That Your Excellency use your influence to obtain the release from detention of Xanana Gusmao and his presence at the Rome talks.
3. Unless Indonesia shows some interest in some form of self-governed and political independence of the people of East Timor, we ask that Your Excellency continue to use your influence to deny Indonesia U.N. sanction of their occupation of this Territory.

We trust that Your Excellency will look favourably on our request and we include the following notes.

Yours respectfully

**B.C. Langridge**  
**President**

### NOTES

1. The 2/2nd Commando Association represents the surviving members of the Australian Army unit which fought against the Japanese in East Timor in 1942.
2. Our Association has held the welfare of the Timorese people as one of its major concerns over many years.
3. To this end since the Indonesian invasion in 1975 we have given our help in non-military fields to Timorese refugees and immigrants to Australia.
4. Our Association has given financial aid on several occasions so that Timorese delegates could be present in New York to state their case at forums organised by U.N.
5. While it is obvious that we do not support the Australian government's attitude to the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, we are loyal Australians. However, we insist, as it is our democratic right to do, that the Indonesian presence in East Timor is illegal.
6. While the Indonesian presence in East Timor is anathema to us, we are sufficient realists to consider that this presence may persist. However it is with hope and faith in U.N. and the good offices of Your Excellency that we would see the Indonesians mitigate their attitude to the Timorese and the same form of self-determination should occur.
7. Earlier efforts by U.N. and Portugal have failed to bring Indonesia to accord seeking meetings. We think therefore that in the event of a last minute withdrawal from the Rome talks the world at large should castigate Indonesia for any such intransigence and we would hope that His Excellency would take the lead.

19th March 1993

**President Bill Clinton**  
**White House**  
**Washington DC 20500 USA**  
**Fax 1 202 224 2237**

**Subject:** United Nations Sponsored Talks Between Indonesia and Portugal to take place in Rome on 20th April 1993.

Dear Mr President,

We, the surviving members of a small allied guerilla force which fought on East Timor and owe our lives to the succour and support of the Timorese people, come to you with the following request:

1. Please use your strongest influence to support the participation of East Timorese Resistance in the above talks
2. We believe that strong representations by you, particularly in the area of military aid and weaponry could be the catalyst to obtain some amelioration of the Timorese plight.
3. The cause, Sir, is a worthy one. Fifty years ago the identification of 'Americano' or 'Australi' were passports to total acceptance. We doubt if the Timorese have changed. In our view we owe them a return of affection and our best support.
4. We have addressed a letter regarding these matters to the Secretary General of United Nations and include a copy here.

Yours respectfully,

**B.C. Langridge**  
**President**

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**News Release from the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Ben Humphreys – February 18, 1993**  
**Bullecourt Digger is Mission Symbol**

The bronze figure of an Australian infantryman which will be unveiled at the Australian War Memorial at Bullecourt in France on Anzac Day is the symbol chosen for the Return to the Western Front Mission planned for August-September this year.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the two Battles of Bullecourt in 1917, in which many Australians lost their lives, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Ben Humphreys, unveiled a memorial cairn near the French village on Anzac Day last year. The cairn was funded by the Australian Government and the Minister promised that a suitable statue would surmount it by Anzac Day this year.

The 2.3m statue of a World War I Digger, by Melbourne sculptor Peter Corlett, is sturdy, Arcadian, audacious and resolute – characteristics for which the Australian troops were best known. It also expresses the hope that the deeds of the Australian forces in all theatres of war will be of enduring relevance and inspiration to future generations.

The sculpture is authentic except in one detail – it bears the colour patch insignia of the four Australian Infantry Divisions that fought at Bullecourt – the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th. The symbol for the commemorative mission also includes the Rising Sun badge.

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**Uniforms of the World**

A Museum of Uniforms Badges & Medals  
 5 Brook Street, Gingin, W.A. Phone 575 2472

We hope it will be of some interest for you to hear of our museum in Gingin, a leisurely and safe one hour drive from Perth.

The collection contains more than 500 uniforms as well as medals, badges and information. While the bulk of the collection is of a military nature and is of the earlier more colourful varieties, we also cover Australia's involvement in two World Wars and the various conflicts since. We have not forgotten the women or the civilians who have worn uniforms over the years, and include Red Cross, Salvation Army and St Johns.

Apart from Australia and Britain we have uniforms from most foreign countries so there is something of interest for all our visitors. The best news is that entry is only \$2 for adults.

We do hope your group will come and visit us. We'd be happy to show you our 100 year old mud brick house while you're here.

Please advise your members we'd love to see them, individually or collectively. Discounts for groups or pensioners.

**Maureen and Tony Batten**

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**N.S.W. News**

We have not been able to obtain any information about John Francis Johnson who passed away on 28.8.92.

Also had an enquiry regarding Shaun O'Leary, Box 192 P.O. Ayr, Queensland, who died on 2.9.92. No one can recall him.

One of the Timorese, Anselmo Almeida, passed away around the New Year. He was one who helped establish a line of credit through the Bank of Portugal.

On the sick list, Denny Dennis continues his battle and is presently undergoing chemotherapy in Melbourne over a 5-6 week period. June maintains her usual supportive role in spite of her own problems. Everyone else managing to get by and cope with their personal ailments, aches and pains – who'd be without them?

On a happier note, Edith and I celebrated our Golden Wedding anniversary on 13th February with a family luncheon and then just a small party with close friends. Not many of the original attenders left, but we are quite proud of the achievement, as I'm sure

all of those who have done so, and who will also qualify in the next few years, will be too.

Ian Ronald is holidaying in N.S.W. from London where, until retirement, he was a practising dentist. He has bought a holiday house at Umina on the central coast of N.S.W. where he and his wife Margaret plan to spend a couple of months each year to escape the Pommy winter. They lead a most active life, have four children, two boys, two girls. Ian's hobbies are gardening, gourmet cooking and camping holidays in Europe.

Ian joined us from Port Moresby in New Guinea and served through the New Guinea and New Britain campaigns. He studied dentistry at the University and practised for a time at Broken Hill and later went to London where he worked until retirement.

Ian sends his best wishes to his mates in the Association.

### COMING EVENTS

April 17, 1993: No. 1 Commando Coy will be doing a Range Shoot at Holdsworth Training Centre from 0900. Cost \$5 per head. B.Y.O. barbecue. All welcome. Own guns or supplied.

Anzac Day, Sunday, April 25, 1993:

Wreath laying 0830 Commando Memorial, Martin Place.

Later, assemble Elizabeth/Hunter Streets.

After march, thirst quencher at Royal Standard Tavern.

Thence board ferry at No. 4 Wharf.

Ferry, lunch, drinks, \$20 per head.

Hope this finds all of our 2/2 family as well as one can wish to be.

With best wishes – and a bit to put into kitty.

**Alan Luby**

### Young Mini Safari – March 12 to 14

Another very successful mini safari at Young with Betty Craig as our host. The weather was very good, lovely sunny days and delightful company. The following attended – Jess Epps, Harry and Olive Notterill, Wilma Tobin, Ken and Margaret Monk, Ron (Drip) Hilliard, Jim and Joan Fenwick, Neil and Margaret Hooper, Fred and Mavis Broadhurst, Roy and Joyce Martin, Ron and Dorothy Trengove, Arch and Dawn Claney, Bill and Coral Coker, Snowy Went, Marjorie Goodacre, Alan and Edith Luby, HESSIE Clark, Jack and Maria Hartley, Paddy and Nora Kenneally, Jack and Marj Peattie – four states and the ACT represented – a very good roll up.

We had the Friday evening meal, Saturday barbecue, Sunday barbecue and evening meal at Betty's. The dinner on Saturday night was at the Anchorage Restaurant which is run by Bill and Del

MacGregor. Bill is the son of Alma MacGregor, sister of Happy Greenhalgh. A very good night was enjoyed by all and our thanks to Bill & Del.

After our meal on Sunday night we had a good sing-along with Fred Broadhurst at his real best as M.C. and joke teller. Fred gets better with age and he excelled himself that night. It was good to see Jim Fenwick looking so well after his operation

He has lost a lot of weight and looks better for it. Neil and Margaret Hooper were surprise visitors. They were returning from a fishing trip in South Australia and making their way to Canberra before returning home to Brisbane, and Young just happened to be on the way.

We had apologies from Denny and June Dennis, John and Cath Roberts, Kath Press, George and Bettye Coulson, Frank and Judy Sharp, and Harry and Amyce Handicott.

A very successful safari and our thanks to Betty for her wonderful hospitality.

**Harry Botterill**

### CORRESPONDENCE CORNER

**R. Conley,  
24 Byambee St  
Bennettsville 4069**

We had a great Christmas gathering at Sunset Restaurant at Bribie Island marina. Roll call was answered by Tony and Iris Adams, Ron Archer, Col and Jeanette Andrew, Butch and Pat Barnier, Ralph and Sheila Conley, George and Bettye Coulson, Neil and Margaret Hooper, Alan and Joan Mitchell, Mervyn Murphy, Gordon and Joan Stanley, George and Edna Vandeleur, and Alex and Esse Veovodin.

The Restaurant is known for its seafood and the crew did justice to a smorgasbord beautifully presented. The bar was well attended and happiness and good fun was the order of the day. Our girls looked terrific!

I have been travelling about on Tourist matters so have been remiss in not being the best of correspondents.

Tony Adams has recovered from recent surgery, probably brought about by introducing too much power to his golf swing. The repair job will no doubt result in a lower handicap. George Vandeleur has had a knee repair and looks pretty fit.

The team met again on 1st February at North Pine Dam near Strathpine for our first regular barbecue for 1993. All the regulars were present, including Alastair MacLachlan and Win. Gordon and Joan Stanley, both looking well, were discussing their next overseas trip. Gordon has not looked better since his Bali expedition – it must have been a great trip. Hoop gave me a winner for Eagle Farm but it ran out of puff. We had a very happy day, as usual. Alan Luby keeps us abreast of news from N.S.W.

He is a good correspondent. Happily, Edith and Alan are improving in health.

Our next barbecue is to be held on 14th April and we will have Archie Campbell with us at that time.

Anzac Day will be with us soon and most of the boys will be marching and remembering. I will be away from Brisbane for a month so will miss being with them.

Herewith a donation for the *Courier*.

Best wishes and regards to all.

**Ralph**

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**A. & J. Chatfield,  
59 Coolibah Ave  
Mandurah 6210**

Please find enclosed our donation towards the *Courier*. Allan and I appreciate receiving the newsletter and enjoy reading it very much.

**Joy and Allan**

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**Mrs D. Lewis,  
106 South West Highway  
Armadale 6112**

If a copy of Colin Doig's History of the 2/2nd is available, could you please send it to Mr C. Tapper, 5 Goddard Way, Bullcreek, 6149. Clarrie is Dud Tapper's uncle and is married to my cousin Alma. He has been asking how he could get a copy as he has seen mine and found there's a lot about Dud in it. I enclose a cheque to cover cost and any over can go towards *Courier* expenses.

I had to have my little cat put to sleep last week so have not been very happy. She was 18 years old and not well, so it was time for her to go. She was my constant companion and I miss her very much.

It has not been a very good start to the year. My legs are still a problem and I have to go into hospital to have some skin cancers cut out. I will be glad when it is all over. It's 30 years since I was in hospital last so it will probably be very different now.

Best wishes to all in the Unit.

**Dorothy**

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**Mrs M. Blomfield,  
12 Sirius Key  
Forster Keys 2428**

Dear Mr Luby,

Thank you very much for your kind letter of sympathy on behalf of the members of 2/2 Commando Association.

Unfortunately I cannot send you a photo of Max in uniform – his family had those. I only got to know him in October 1944 when he returned from Papua New Guinea, a very sick boy, with all the tropical

nasties imaginable. I knew his family and he landed in Concord where I was in the A.A.M.W.S. waiting to go overseas with 2/5 A.G.H. I never did go. We were married June 1945, when Max had already been discharged medically unfit. We were on the land in N.S.W. most of our lives – a soldiers block at Walcha and then to Queensland.

We had three sons, all married. One lives in P.N.G., one in Queensland (both on the land) and one in Sydney.

Max often passed the remark that most of the ones in his section were from Western Australia, and didn't really know anyone much from over here. He talked very little about his experiences in the Commandos – only the lighter side of things – but still had nightmares until his dying day.

If you are ever up this way I would be delighted to meet you. A phone call beforehand would be a help.

Again, very many thanks for your thoughts for me and my family.

Yours sincerely

**Margaret**

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**W.J. Elmore,  
19 Cadorna Street  
Launceston 7248**

A few lines to let you know Isabel and I are still above ground and when one looks around we must consider ourselves very fortunate as we are still quite mobile, a little stiff in the joints perhaps, but we are over our three score years and ten, so every year is a bonus.

We had a good reunion again this year, 13 missing the roll call. We had just sat down when Jack Rice took ill and was rushed to hospital by ambulance, straight to the theatre. The aorta had burst and after a four hour operation which didn't seal it off properly, they had to operate again next day but it wasn't a success as he lingered on for two weeks before passing away, which was just as well as he would most likely have been in a coma as he never regained consciousness. His funeral on 10th March was one of the biggest I have attended. We will miss him a lot as he was our Northern Branch President for a good many years, a Life Member, and this year was made Vice-President of the Association. Although a quiet man, he got things done. Am enclosing a small photo, hoping it will be suitable for your Rogues Gallery, also a few bucks towards whatever.

Trust this finds most of you well as can be expected. Special cheers to my great boss, Arch Campbell, Ron Dook, Ted Monk, Col Doig, George Bayliss.

Isabel and I are heading to Alice again this year if everything goes according to plans.

Wishing all the best to all.

**Snow & Isabel**



**W.J. Connell,  
17 Sturt Street  
Cleveland 4163**

My husband is the most reluctant letter writer in the world. Hard to believe he wrote me hundreds of letters during the war! He said the *Courier* wanted photos of members and I endeavoured to take one, and here it is.

Bill has just turned 70 and can't believe that he is so old. We've been married nearly 49 years and he's still my best friend, so we aren't doing too badly.

Bill loves getting the *Courier* even though he doesn't do much to fill its pages.

All the best.

**Irma Connell**

---

**N. Mullins,  
15 Fitzgerald Road  
Morley 6062**

Just a small donation for the *Courier*.

Regards to everyone.

**Nellie**

---

**J. Hartley,  
62 Palmerston Rd  
Fairfield West 2165**

No doubt Paddy will have written about the passing of Sandy Eggleton so I won't repeat the sad news. It was good to see Ian Ronald who is here on holidays from Kent and came along with Paddy.

We were up in Kempsey in January to see David and Andrew on their farm and paid a quick visit to Bill and Beryl Walsh. They both look reasonably fit and send their love and best wishes to everyone.

Enclosed are two donations for the *Courier*, one from Bill Walsh and one from me.

Cheers.

**Jack**

---

**Mrs M. Stevens,  
R.S.D. 1941 Yallunda Flat  
Port Lincoln 5607**

Pages 10 and 11 of the February *Courier* gave me the best laugh I've had for months. Thank you.

A few lines to let friends know the current situation with Don, better known as 'Shorty', 7 Section, 2/2nd. He has been a patient in Cummins Hospital, Eyre Peninsula, since May 1992. After a series of strokes in March 1989 his health has been slowly but surely deteriorating. I feel that during the last two months his decline has levelled off. He has no sense of balance, and is only able to walk with support on each side. He can handle his wheelchair

for short distances. His short term memory has gone, speech is difficult, but he does have better days and he does still know who I am most days.

I guess there are quite a few of you who wonder how things are with him. I read bits of the *Courier* to him when I know he can understand.

Your magazine efforts are a credit to you all. Enclosed is a donation.

Cheerio and best wishes.

**Margaret**

*Thank you for your compliment Margaret and we are so glad you enjoyed the light hearted items in the February issue. We will try to do it more often.*  
**Len & Betty.**

---

**Jack Steen (Stafford),  
37 Chateau St  
Thornlands 4164**

A few lines to let you know the new address so that the *Courier* can be sent.

Enclosed is a cheque which may help in some small way.

Thanking you and looking forward to reading the *Courier* once again.

**Jack**

---

**C. & B. Criddle,  
124 Nanson St  
Wembley 6014**

This is the first time for me writing. We no longer have a private mail box and are now having our mail to the above address.

I'm writing for Col as he finds it just too difficult to use a pen. He's had such a bad run these last few months, but now seems to be on the improve, thank goodness. He spent nine days in Hollywood over New Year and onwards while they adjusted a fluid retention problem etc. etc. The twinkle's back in his old brown eyes again though, so how about that. Nice eh!

Am enclosing a donation from us for the *Courier*. Regards to everyone and may 1993 be kind to you all.

Sincerely.

**Bonnie (Jean)**

---

**K.B. Sargeant,  
25 Thomas St  
Gympie 4570**

Rather belated wishes for a Happy and Healthier New Year to all members.

It is always good to receive the *Courier* and read of the 2/2nd happenings.

I was very pleased to read in the February *Courier* of the Dedication of the Memorial to all mentioned,

that took place at Oesau near Kupang on 16th June 1992. One hears so little of the 'Men of Timor' in the news so it is only through the *Courier* one is made aware of such happenings to honour those brave men who served in Timor.

Enclosed is a donation towards the *Courier*.

Sincerely,

**Kathleen**

---

**G.I. Green,  
25B Seaforth Rd  
Shoalwater Bay 6169**

Enclosed is a cheque to complete our contribution to the Timor Trust Fund, and a cheque toward Unit funds to whatever cause you think fit.

Lal and I are both well, manage to go for walks without falling over too many times and we get away south when we can. You have to get among those big trees now and then to calm your inner self.

May this find you all in good health.

Regards.

**Gerry**

---

**P. Alexander,  
170 Forrest St  
Palmyra 6157**

Am still leading a very quiet life. Was disturbed for two weeks when the daughter and her family arrived down from Kalgoorlie. The son-in-law had me out playing golf at 5 o'clock – a bit of a shock to the old system. Even got the bathers out of moth balls, lucky for me Port Beach was nice and calm.

Keith Hayes still calls in for a yarn. It's nice to see Keith and he has usually got news about some of the Unit members.

Please find enclosed cheque for the *Courier*.

Best to Arch Campbell and Ron Dook.

**Peter**

---

**O.K. Dignum,  
24 Selkirk Ave  
Seaton 5023**

Am back home, much better now, have a course of treatment they think could take 12 months. Hope not.

Have heard from Lyle Litchfield from Maree a few times. All the wet they had up there, roads cut etc., Litchie got practically nothing. I believe when it rains up there they chase all the kids inside so the rain can hit the ground – it is a hard country.

Had a letter from Alf Hodge who has had a knee replacement. Reckons it's wonderful. He had just turned 80 so he thinks he had a good run out of the original one. After the war Alf was a rice grower but he got caught like a lot of S.A. farmers. Heavy rain

when the crop was ripening, causing it to sprout again, taking it off the A grade class.

No such worries for Ron Gurr at Coonawarra in the south east, retired and a gentleman of leisure and liking it. Howard Marks from Loxton is not in good health. Bert Bache and Kel Carthew are O.K. Ron Mackey disappeared from sight. His health wasn't the best, his heart and mental outlook not good. Alan Hollow in voluntary hibernation, no contact at all.

Have seen Bob Williamson a few times, he often calls in.

That's the extent of the news from here. All the best.

**Dig**

---

**Mrs W. Tobin,  
15 Beatrice St  
Burwood 3125**

Enclosed are two cheques. One is for the balance of amount promised for the Timor Trust Fund and the other is a donation to the *Courier*.

Yours faithfully

**Wilma**

---

**S. McKinley,  
49 Nairn Rd  
Coodanup 6210**

Attached is a donation towards cost of the *Courier* which is very much appreciated, or whatever.

Best wishes.

**Syd**

---

**S.R. Marsh,  
17 McGough St  
Glenorchy 7010**

Enclosed is a further \$50 for the Timor Trust Fund. Had a quiet Christmas for once. Joan and I will have a few days on the north west coast shortly with our son and daughter-in-law.

Received a Christmas card and short letter from Reg Griffiths. It was good to hear from him again.

Regards to all 2/2 chaps and wives.

**Swampy**

---

**C.G. Wood,  
R.S.D. 214  
Ulverston 7315**

Dear Colin,

It is a bit over 50 years since I wrote the last note to you from a place called Maliana in Timor.

I went to a 2/4th A.G.M. last week and talked to Max Miller who said you had written a book on the 2/2 and included 2/40 members who were attached to the 2/2nd. I would like to get a copy.

How has the world treated you in the meantime? I have not kept in touch. Too much to do. Regret it now but you cannot turn the clock back.

I would be very pleased to hear from you and if you would let me know how much the book would be.

Yours sincerely,

**Geoff**

**L.E. Coker,  
11 Kameruka Rd  
Northbridge 2063**

Enclosed are two cheques being donations to the Timor Trust Fund and the *Courier*.

Coral and I intend to come to Busselton next year, all going well. We'll be coming over by road with Roy and Joyce Martin.

Regards to all.

**Bill**

**W.E. Tomasetti,  
18 Claines Crescent  
Wentworth Falls 2782**

The piece written by Neil V. Harcourt and published on page 5 of the February 1993 *Courier* raises a most important matter, but gives only brief attention to the position that may emerge.

I feel that many members would agree first with Neil Harcourt's general sentiments on the site and the monument itself, and second, anything necessary to safeguard 'our own sacred site' on Wilsons Promontory that could be done, should be done. I wonder however if it would be best to think of the removal/transfer of the monument (as mentioned in the piece) only as a last desperate solution? Bill Taylor (and the descendants of the seagulls), other sentiments and cost would be prime reasons.

Assuming that the federal government decides that the title of the area will be transferred to the claimant aboriginal community, two possibilities present themselves. First: If the federal government was asked, it may agree to the excision of our site from the area granted to the community (above), and further, to provide for the monument/site's safekeeping by a suitable body – perhaps us! Second: If this is not acceptable and the entire area is to be transferred to the aboriginal community, then an agreement could be sought by the Australian Commando Association itself through negotiations between the Community and this Association – legal advice no doubt would be sought. This agreement would seek rights to our site that would satisfy us. Perhaps joint management by the Community and the A.C.A. could be contemplated,

Indeed, perhaps it could be expected that the relevant community customs would incline its

officials to view our attachment to and stand on our site with a great deal of sympathy. Public statements made by persons prominent in the aboriginal nation have convinced many of us that their culture places high value on diverse types of marks of respect for their dead. Ethnographic writings confirm this feature of aboriginal cultures. Not that we would wish to exploit it.

Could I suggest that the foregoing ideas, or a refinement of them, be considered as a basis for a plan to negotiate an arrangement with the appropriate organisations. Is this an urgent matter,

With best wishes – sincerely,

**Bill Tomasetti**

## DONATIONS TO COURIER

Bill Coker, Jack Steen (Stafford), Jack Hartley, Jack Porter, Gerry Green, Ron Morris, Kath Sargeant, Wilma Tobin, Isobel McCaul, Dorothy Lewis, Joy Chatfield, George Strickland, Albie Martin, Wilf March, Bernie Langridge, Colin Criddle, Peter Alexander, Ralph Conley, Syd McKinley, Margaret Stevens, Bill Walsh, Alan Luby, Snow Elmore, Nellie Mullins.

**J.D.T. Daniels,  
P.O. Box 40  
Scullin 2614**

**To Arthur Malone**

Received your letter dated 3rd February in reference to meetings being held in Canberra. We will comply with whatever you suggest as we know it will be for our betterment.

Jim Finn, one of the editors of 'Vetaffairs' and Ros Kelly, Minister for the Environment and I had a meeting. We would like to know the feelings of Commandos and Special Units if they allocated the nature strip dividing the two new roads on the Federal Highway as an honour strip with each two miles allotted to a Unit, with names of members placed at the foot of each tree. Jim Finn is approaching War Graves Department to supply the plaques, but each Unit would have to supply unit badge and name, the same way 2/2nd has done in Kings Park in Western Australia.

This is only a feeler at the moment, as I told them we do not have the money to build monuments like those built in Anzac Parade.

This would be a useful and environmental purpose to honour all Special Units.

I would appreciate if the feelings of all Special Units and Commandos are known before Jim and I, with Ros Kelly's help, do anything more.

**Dan Daniels**

### **A message for Tom Nisbet.**

Bob Cusack who now lives in Mandurah, sends his regards and wonders if you remember him from your school days in Fremantle.

Your Editor is enjoying a four week visit to Tony and Iris Adams and expects to be back in Perth in time for Anzac Day. Best wishes to Archie, Tony and Iris from us all.

### **June Courier Copy Deadline is 18th May 1993.**

### **Sgt D.A. Woolley TX2799 2/40th Batt. AIF.**

"Every man for himself" These were the words used by Brigadier Veale at Atamboia on or about the 27th February 1942 when it seemed obvious that any further resistance to the relentless push by the Japanese would be useless.

In hindsight it seems now to have been a mistake to divide up into small groups as we did, although it eventuated that most of the groups met again and organised into a most effective resistance force when coupled with the surviving members of the 2/2nd Independent Coy from Dili in the Portuguese province of Timor.

On the morning mentioned above about 120 members of the 2/40th and a few others from 2/2nd Ind. Co. left Atamboia and marched away from the camp for about an hour and received the message from Brig. Veale. I had come to know Charlie Dodge and Ted Potts a little and thought that with their specialist training we would have some chance of survival so I invited them to join me, along with a sniper from N.S.W. named 'Bluey' Hampstead, and a Pommy named Fred Berry. Charlie and Ted suggested we head north to Atapoie as they believed the Christmas parcels sent to the Independent Co. were stored in a building there.

We were fairly well equipped with ammunition etc. but had very little food. This seemed to me a good move so we headed north. I believe it was the next day when we arrived at Atapoie. I was recovering from my first attack of malaria and was too weak to travel far. On arrival we found no supplies and, determining it was of no advantage to return inland, we agreed to try and reach the island of Alor just north of Timor, and from there we had visions of returning to Australia.

With this in mind we acquired an outrigger canoe and just before dark that night erected the bag sail and headed north to Alor. I record here seeing the prettiest sunset I had ever seen and, in letters to and from Charlie Dodge since the war, we have discussed this beautiful sunset.

Our effort to reach Alor failed as a storm came up overnight and we were blown back on to Timor where we spent the remainder of the night among it seemed like millions of mosquitoes. Next day we were able to find an earthenware jar, I guess it held about 20 litres. We filled it with water and placed it in the bow of the canoe and set out once more. I think our destination this time was Australia – we had a compass and our canoe seemed fairly seaworthy. It must have been about 6 metres long or even longer, and about 1 metre wide with bamboo outriggers on both sides, with about 8 or 9 inches of freeboard. A large square sail was very handy after we learned a bit about using it. None of us were sailors. We seemed to make good headway during the night and it looked as though we would make it to Alor at least. The earthenware jar we 'acquired' in Timor must have been dry because by morning most of our water was gone. The weather was stinking hot and, being out in the salt air with salt water spraying over us we became very thirsty. About midday we were astonished to see a great convoy of ships heading east and as they approached it was easy to identify them as Japanese. In a letter from Charlie Dodge he informed me that some of the 2/2nd Ind. Co. also saw them from an observation post on shore.

They appeared to disregard us although we could see sailors moving about on deck quite plainly. I had binoculars but refrained from using them as we hoped they might mistake us for natives. Our wishful thinking was in vain. From memory we counted 84 ships – cruisers, battleships, destroyers, supply ships, hospital ship and numerous escorts etc. As they passed by some on each side of us we breathed a sigh of relief as we expected the worst, even expected them to turn a gun on us. With the convoy out of sight we continued to bale the water out of the canoe and sail and paddle eastwards. Some time towards evening we were again alarmed when a periscope came out of the water not too far distant and moved towards us. We didn't recognise it as such at the time but were soon enlightened when a conning tower emerged quite close to us. The Japanese officer spoke very good English and invited us to pull in to the sub. which we did without arguing, not much choice I suppose. We had discarded our rifles and revolvers when we first saw the convoy coming. I had a 38 'Luger' and I can still see it in my mind going overboard and sinking. I had acquired it somewhere in Timor, probably from a Dutch officer.

The canoe was towed by the sub. and was still there when it got dark, but was gone next morning. We were treated well on the sub. given drinks and one of the nicest meals I can remember. It included octopus tentacles and they were a real delicacy. We remained on deck all night with our backs against the conning tower with the understanding that if they had to submerge we would have to swim for it. They

didn't have to – I don't think there was much to worry them at that time.

I made one bad mistake in getting captured. You were much better off as a Private – three stripes turned out to be bad news. I was interrogated on the sub. It was not too bad but was an insight into what may come.

I don't know how long we were on the sub. but we were taken into Kendari on the eastern side of Celebes and there we saw much of the might of the Japanese navy.

They were so confident that their ships were lying anchored side by side. I think we caught up with the convoy which spotted us a few days previously.

We were blindfolded and taken off the sub and taken on board a Jap hospital ship, the 'Taka Saga Maru'. On boarding the ship Charlie Dodge sat in a deck chair and we were shown a little of the sort of treatment we could expect. Charlie never again took the risk of sitting in an officer's chair.

We were escorted to the keel of the ship and stripped of our clothing except our slouch hats, and put in two padded cells 6' x 6' x 6'. We certainly didn't need the clothing as the heat was stifling but it was a bit humiliating. Little Jap coolies poking an eye to the small eye hole in the door to have a look at their first POWs.

I can't remember how long we were on the 'Taka Saga Maru', maybe a few days, nor do I remember how we were taken to Macassa on the western side of Celebes, it was by ship I know but may not have been on the hospital ship. In Macassa we were taken to the prison camp and placed in cells, not padded this time. First night there Charlie got very sick with malaria and next day the Jap guards took him away and I remember thinking that maybe that would be the last we would see of him as we had already witnessed a Royal Navy officer being belted and I had been through another interrogation. We were kept in these cells a few days and then taken into the prison camp.

About a week later Charlie turned up again, having been taken to a Dutch hospital ship, the 'Optenoort', which the Japs had detained and kept in Celebes for about the next twelve months or so.

I don't want to dwell on prison life with the Japs, except to say that if I knew what was in store when sighted in the canoe I would have had second thoughts about being captured. Ted Potts and 'Bluey' Hampstead stayed with us for about 12 months and then were taken to another camp, I believe in Japan.

Three years and eight months working 12 to 14 hours a day – very little food, insufficient water, very few medical facilities, bashings almost daily to someone, sometimes whole parties, usually with

baseball bats, many belted to death, mutilated, berri berri, malaria, palagra, dysentery – you name it we had it. Yes, three years and eight months was just about too long. Charlie and I went into camp about as fit as men could be, and came out clinging to life.

The best thing that happened – if there can be a best thing in war – was the dropping of the atomic bomb, but unfortunately it came too late for many thousands of the best young men that the Allies could find.

In bringing this short narrative to an end let me pay tribute to a real friend who became closer to me than my own brother for those years. A man who shared a banana or an egg with me when he was starving himself. We lived together, worked together, slept together, endured together – my good mate and friend Charlie Dodge.

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## TIMOR CANOE

by Don Briggs

I've yarned a bit with old Don Woolley  
Told me of his life quite fully  
Told of accidents, mishaps  
Of being prisoner of the Japs.  
Don has always stoked the boiler  
Been a goer, been a toiler.  
Working hard has been his gladness  
Some might even call it madness.  
World War – paper – Don endorses  
Joined Australia's fighting forces.  
Worked hard at the Army's training  
Made a sergeant, sent campaigning.  
Australian army sent to Timor  
Fighting, running couldn't try more.  
Outnumbered ten to one by Japs  
Lost the battle, all the scraps.  
Don and four mates, all surrounded.  
Found a Chinese dugout grounded.  
Took it to avoid the slaughter  
Filled an earthenware jar with water.  
Filled a tin with army biscuit  
Tin for baler, thought they'd risk it.  
Dark of night, five shadow figures  
Sixteen foot canoe – outriggers.  
Set up bag sail how? succeeding  
Not used to sailing, land receding.  
Trying not to think of failure  
Set compass course – Australia.  
Head for Darwin, sort of fearing  
Used a paddle, somehow steering.  
Moving eastward, sailing, sailing.  
Not much freeboard, keep on baling.  
Choppy seas, waves curling, splotches  
Keep on going, midnight watches.  
Sea things, had no hooks to catch them  
Flying fish, wished they could snatch them.  
Lap of waves a mournful chorus  
Thirst – their water jar was porous.

Water level sinking, sinking  
 Soon no water left for drinking.  
 Convoy – grey ships all around them  
 Jap ships – waves near drowned them.  
 Capture? better perhaps than dying.  
 Waving, waving, no replying  
 Ships keep moving, keep formation  
 No ships showing hesitation,  
 not one of the convoy slowing  
 Keep the sail up – keep on going.  
 Sea waves changing, breaking, surging  
 Conning tower, Jap sub emerging.  
 Thirst crazed, mixed thoughts, fright and rapture  
 Hatches open – sailors – capture.  
 Treated on the sub with kindness  
 Japs not so bad, sort of blindness.  
 Harbour, troop ship, deprivation  
 Of their clothes – humiliation.  
 All except their hats took off them  
 Psychology perhaps to dwarf them.  
 Prison camp and slow starvation  
 Somehow survived the war's duration.

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 C/- Berrimah P.O.  
 N.T. 0828

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