



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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President R. Finkelstein. Secretary J. Carey. Treasurer T. Monk.

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President's Christmas Message

Once again it is Christmas and if we're prepared to watch the television news we can see the most insidious side of man splashed across our screens. The wars, the starving and homeless millions all over the world. Strangely, at times you have to pinch yourself to prevent yourself from becoming blasé.

The amazing and precious thing we call life, whether it be the existence of a flower, a bird or even an insect. Each is special and deserves our respect. Life and death are nothing but the opposite sides of the same coin. If we see a puddle and it evaporates can we say the puddle is dead? No, it forms a cloud which ultimately rains and lo and behold a puddle is formed and so the cyclical process repeats, and so it is with us.

With Christmas we look to our families and friends so as to embrace in love and kinship. To our mates in hospital or ill at home, may The Lord help you to a speedy recovery. I wish for you all that the coming year will bring blessings, much love, happiness and good health as we age.

The Committee, Eve and I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year. May the good Lord bless you all.

Ralph Finkelstein

Vale William Baillie Tucker

Bill was a country boy. He grew up in the surrounds of Ballarat during the 1920's and 30's. When he was 8 years old he lost his father and when his older brother Den and his sister Joy had gone off to make their way in the world he was the baby with his mum in fairly isolated circumstances. He followed his sister Joy and her husband to the city and enlisted as soon as he was old enough.

Bill joined the 2/2 Commando Squadron with other reinforcements in June 1944 and was with 'A' Troop as a signaller. He stayed with the Unit in New Guinea and New Britain until the Unit was disbanded. He then ran a motor boat around New Britain for the Army at the end of the war until he received word that his dear mother was dying and he should get home to see her. Unfortunately he was too late. She died in her mid 50's.

After the war Bill bought a milk bar in Hampton. One day a tall, tanned leggy girl with thick black hair came into the milk bar for an ice cream. Consequently, Joan and Bill walked down the aisle at Holy Trinity Church in Hampton. A few years later their children Jill and Ross were born. Joan and Bill settled in Highett. Bill became a very successful salesman and worked with Sunbeam Turner Industries and Eureka Tile Company, achieving managerial success State and Nationwide.

Bill played tennis, cricket lawn bowls and golf. He lost his beloved Joan at the age of 46 – a big blow to Bill but life must go on and he looked after Jill and Ross until they were married.

Bill was a great worker for our Association in Victoria. He was a life member and even after he moved to Tocumwal he still came down to our functions and when we told him we would like to have a stay at Tocumwal for four days he organised the show and did a first class job which was greatly appreciated.

Bill settled in at Tocumwal, joined the local RSL and bowls club and the golf club. He helped start the miniature railway for Rotary and was a volunteer at the Heritage Centre.

Unfortunately, after a series of mini strokes he had a major stroke in March 1997. He battled to hold on to life at Shepparton Hospital and then to re-learn in the rehabilitation centre. Bill's last six months were spent in the Tocumwal Hospital's small friendly nursing home a few minutes in his wheel chair from his home which he visited regularly. He passed away on September 18, 1998 and will be sadly missed by all his army mates. He was a good soldier, father and worker for the Association. Our deepest sympathy to his daughter Jill, husband Ross and his son Ross and wife Adrienne and grandchildren Bianca, Riana,

Phillipa and Benjamin. Bill's funeral at W. D. Rose Funeral Parlour, Brighton was attended by Margaret Monk, John and Cath Roberts, Ed. Bourke, Leith and Marj. Cooper, Bruce McLaren, Wyn Humphreys, Jack Fox, Harry Botterill, John Southwell, Beryl Boast. Apologies from Tom Nisbet, Fred and Mavis Broadhurst, Olive Botterill, Alf Harper. Rolf Baldwin.

Lest We Forget

Harry Botterill

Vale Kevin Richard Millington

1920-1998

Kevin Millington was born in Bridgetown, W.A. His father was a well known teamster, originally using bullock teams and later horse teams to haul timber out of the bush with the old whim.

Kevin spent his boyhood in Donnybrook and his youth swamping for his father, clearing tracks for the teams. He joined the 10th Light Horse Regiment and stayed with them until they were disbanded in 1943. During that time he met his future wife.

He then went to Canungra training camp from which he joined the 2/2 Commando squadron as a reinforcement and was with them until hostilities ceased in 1945. He was discharged on the 15th December, 1945 and married Jessie Moore, his wartime sweetheart, on the 6th February, 1946 and moved to his old home town, Donnybrook. He then bought a farm in Noggerup about twenty miles east of Donnybrook where he farmed for about five years. Having some of his father's timber skills, he left the farm in 1951 and was employed for 11 years falling milling timber for one of the saw milling companies. At about this time he was having some back trouble so he joined the Main Roads in 1962 where he was employed on various highways doing traffic counts for 19 years until he retired in 1981. He lived in Bunbury where he was a member of the RSL, until his death.

Kevin was honoured with a military style service and cremation at which Reveille and the Last Post were played. The Ode was said by a friend, Mr. John McBeattie, also an RSL member.

Kevin is survived by his widow Jess, three daughters, six grand children and two great grand children.

Jess, like most Unit members' wives, was a great backstop all through Kevin's life, firstly doing part time nursing and later joining the Silver Chain Nursing Association, of which she was one of the originals.

Kevin, like many country people, had some hidden talents, one of which was his ability to recite. 'The Man from Snowy River' was a speciality of his. He was of a quiet disposition with wit and humour.

Kevin will be greatly missed by a loving family and many friends.

So long Kevin.

Bernie Langridge

Vale Norm Demmery

Norm passed away at Grafton on 15.10.98. Norm will be remembered as one of the reinforcements who arrived in Timor in January 1942. He had his 18th birthday on the island. He would have been 75 in January 1999.

As far as I can gather Norm served on Timor with 'D' Platoon and later in New Guinea with 2 Section 'A' Troop. He had malaria badly whilst in New Guinea when we were in Ramu Valley and was 'B' classed and returned to Australia where he served out the war.

After the war Norm settled at Cowra for a couple of years and worked at his trade as a carpenter on the Burrinjuck Dam. Later he went to Riverstone where he remained as foreman carpenter until his retirement. While he was at Riverstone Norm's wife passed away in 1979. They had a family of two boys and a girl.

Norm retired to a caravan at Keepit Dam near Tamworth where he indulged his passion for fishing. He stayed there for eight years before coming to Coutts Crossing near Grafton where his two sons and daughter live.

George Greenhalgh

Vale Theo Adams

Theodore Francis Adams was born in Victoria on 13th November, 1923 and died peacefully at his home at Kedron Brisbane on 17th September, 1998.

Theo's father was a hairdresser in the town of Nhill and Theo followed that calling. Aged nineteen he enlisted in the AIF in 1943 and joined the 2/2nd as a reinforcement at Fala in New Guinea as a signaller in A troop (HQ). After service in other areas he returned to Australia and later joined Ansett Airlines, married and had children. He returned to Papua New Guinea to join Ansett Mandated Airlines seeing service in Port Moresby and Goroka.

He re-married and together with Atu his wife and five children settled in Goroka. They jointly

ran a small Motel in later years. I knew Theo briefly in Papua New Guinea as an airline employee. He enjoyed Club life was enthusiastic in whatever he did and was very well liked wherever he went.

He unfortunately suffered ill health over a long period and this was a factor in his decision to leave Papua New Guinea for Brisbane where he lived for the past six or seven years. He underwent by-pass heart surgery which did not totally alleviate his condition but extended his time with us.

Two daughters Thea and Lisa live in Brisbane. Lisa who is in the Army is well known to Queensland members and has attended our functions.

Theo's funeral service was held on 22nd September well attended by relatives and friends from Papua New Guinea. He was a good friend and will be sadly missed.

Ralph Conley

QUEENSLAND NEWS

Our last barbeque was held at North Pine Dam on 7th September. The day was fine but attendance poor due to illness affecting a number of members. In fact only six turned up.

The survivors were Ron Archer and Lyn Love, Butch and Pat Barnier, and Ralph and Sheila Conley. We almost made a Prayer Meeting of the occasion in wishing a rapid recovery to our absentees.

Neil Hooper has had a rough passage over the last couple of months but is now in the clear and giving cheek. Butch Barnier is looking better and Alex Veodevin still convalescing after surgery. Tony Adams advises Iris not very well, and the rest of us as well as ageing permits.

Sadly our little mate Theo Adams passed away on 17th September after a long battle with heart problems. His funeral was attended by a large number of friends and previous workmates from New Guinea. Theo's wife, daughters and many relatives from New Guinea were present and our sympathy was expressed to them. We provided a wreath in the form of the Unit's double diamond, Happy Greenhalgh gave the Eulogy and Russ Blanch recited The Ode. The President of The Commando Association of Queensland organised Poppies for all members and it was touching indeed to see the expressions on the faces as members placed them on the Casket.

The Last Post was as always stirring and followed by Reveille was the finale to a very impressive service by two Priests one of whom, a Papuan New Guinean was Theo's nephew.

Members present included Col and Jeanette Andrew, Butch and Pat Barnier, George and Bettye Coulson, Ralph and Sheila Conley, Paddy Wilby, Fred Otway, Ron Archer and Lyn Love, Jack and Beryl Steen, Gordon and Joan Stanley, Margaret Hooper, (Neil was not well) Edna Vandeleur, Mervyn Murphy, Happy Greenhalgh, and Russ Blanch, and Win MacLachlan and Angus MacLachlan's daughter Jeanette.

Our next gathering will be at North Pine Dam on Monday 2nd November and our Xmas function still to be confirmed, is planned for Monday 14th December.

Best regards to all and Season's Greetings from Queensland.

Ralph Conley

VICTORIAN NEWS

We have a few members on the sick list. Jock Campbell has just returned home from ten days in Melbourne having thermo chemistry treatment. We are all thinking of you and wishing you a speedy recovery mate. John and Cath Roberts are also having a tough time. Cath is hospitalised and John is to go into hospital for an operation. We all wish you both a speedy recovery. Stan Whitford is in the wars. He recently had three operations in three weeks, all cancer related, including prostate. The good news is that Stan is a tough customer and is making good progress.

Jack Fox has returned from his winter holiday in Queensland and is looking good. He saw a few of the boys while up there.

Margaret Monk is going to New Zealand for a holiday with a gardening group. It should be a wonderful trip and we hope she enjoys it.

I called on Don Freyer who is looking quite good. He can't speak too well but understands what is said. I gave him all the news and his eyes just shone.

Olive and I are going up to the Gold Coast for three weeks to see our daughter Glenda and family. We're looking forward to it, especially the sunshine.

We are looking forward to seeing a lot of our members when we have our Christmas luncheon on December 7th, 1998.

Harry Botterill

GERALDTON NEWS

I am sure many Courier readers will be interested to know that Geraldton Rotary Club has embarked on a community service project

to honour the memory of the 645 sailors and officers of HMAS Sydney who lost their lives on November 19, 1941 'so close to Geraldton. This will be done by establishing a Memorial on Mount Scott, Geraldton, on a site that will be dedicated on November 19 of the current year. Our RSL has pledged its whole hearted support and the object is to have the project completed for a ceremony during Australia's Federation Centenary year of 2001, on November 19. A grant of \$220,000 towards the project has been sought from the Federation Cultural and Heritage Commission. The Visitors' Book at Birdwood House, Geraldton contains the names of 17 personnel from HMAS Sydney, including 15 Royal Australian and two Royal Navy personnel. The true story of the loss of the Sydney 57 years ago will probably never be revealed and it is vitally important to bear in mind that the disguised German raider Kormoran had 317 survivors and the Sydney had none.

Tom Foster of Huntswell Farm, Allanooka has resumed farming operations after having some plumbing done in hospital in association with his ticker and he and Mary are delighted to report that they are experiencing a very good season. They were also delighted to have a visit from Reg. Harrington of Bolgart on his way back from a fishing trip up north. Reg. also called on Jack Fowler at Three Springs.

Alan Luby has provided Tom Foster with copies of Japanese surrender documents, one of which he will pass on to me for inclusion in our excellent memorabilia display at Birdwood House.

I mentioned in my last letter that I arranged for a special tribute to be paid to 99 year old Jim Constantino at our Anzac Day commemoration service and to extend best wishes for his 100th birthday. Jim passed away three months before that day and I compiled obituaries for both local newspapers. He was the last surviving member of a group of six highly respected Geraldton citizens who, in 1976 received special awards from the Italian Government for service as allies of the British in World War I.

Our RSL Sub-Branch gave strong support to Vietnam Veterans on their big day on August 18 when I met Kevin and Pam Davis from Victoria, who were caravanning around Australia. Kevin had been looking forward to visiting Geraldton and he was taken to the grave of an army mate, Murray Clark, who was buried in the Geraldton Cemetery with full military honours. They had trained and socialised together during national service days at Puckapunyal. They were taking part in a big five RAR search and destroy operation in Vietnam in 1967 when Murray lost his life. He was pleased to know that Murray's grave was

always included when poppies were placed on graves on Remembrance Day.

Please find attached a donation towards our wonderful Courier and God bless you all.

Peter Barden

Geraldton News

I had the privilege of doing the write up for both the 'Geraldton Guardian' and the 'Midwest Times' newspapers concerning the centenary Mass of Thanksgiving of the Geraldton Catholic Diocese which was con-celebrated at St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral on August 31, and what a wonderful occasion it was. The great ecumenical spirit between Christian Churches was clearly illustrated by the presence of leaders of other denominations and the messages of congratulations and best wishes received. Grand support from Catholic clergy saw the attendance of the Archbishops of Melbourne, Hobart and Perth (Archbishop Barry Hickey, formerly Bishop of Geraldton), 15 Bishops including our great Bishop Justin Bianchini of Geraldton who presided, and Bishop Ray Benjamin of Townsville, and about 67 Priests including my brother, Monsignor John Barden, now retired, of Como who is still very active and helps with transportation during my two monthly medical visits to Perth.

There were also more than 100 religious Brothers and Sisters among the huge attendance, including Sister Joan Wall aged 93 of Geraldton who knew all of Geraldton's eight Bishops. In his Homily, our Bishop disclosed that he was wearing for this special occasion the Pectoral Cross of Bishop William Kelly that was given to our first Bishop 99 years ago by the Presentation Sisters. Looking back over the past 100 years, he said he saw so many heroic and gifted people among the laity, religious, priests and bishops – people whose faith was strong. Bishop Bianchini said the Cathedral was a symbol of the Diocese, its first stage spanning 80 years of that centenary. It was a living memory of its architect, Monsignor John Hawes, and a reminder of all other churches and buildings with which Hawes was associated. These included the Mullewa Church of which he was also the builder, and where I had the privilege of being an altar boy for the saintly converted Anglican whom we will never forget.

I'm sure Jack Carey will be interested to read that Father Pat Cunningham and Sister Elizabeth Airke were highly praised for their work for the Centenary booklet which includes 52 pictures and a wealth of information associated with the diocese of 1,318,000 square kilometres.

During his visit to Birdwood House at Geraldton, new RSL State President Ken Bladen, was very impressed by the comprehensive memorabilia display, the building improvements by the Lions Club with support from RSL members and the work of Len Bibby of Heritage Tuckpoint who was doing exterior brickwork on the 1935 building. This brickwork and the replacement of flashings is covered by a \$20,000 donation by 'a friend of the RSL.' We read that Ken sang in the male chorus with the WA Opera Company and we discovered that he is an accomplished pianist as he tickled the ivories on our piano that had been retuned by a Lions Club gesture.

I was sorry to learn of the death of Plugger Watson. We often played 8-ball at the Victoria Hotel when he drove for Western Hygienic Transport many years after we were footie opponents when Collie Association played Harvey-Brunswick Association. He was always good company and I'll never forget the day someone tried to take our turn at the pool table!

Cheerio for now and God bless you all.

Peter Barden

NSW NEWS

November 1998

It seems no time at all since we were writing the local news for the September Courier and now we're preparing for the last edition for the year. Frightening isn't it, especially when we realise its only 6 1/2 weeks to Christmas.

On the home front Edith was lined up for her operation in August but when the surgeon became aware of a small open lesion on her right leg he decided it was too risky so it was deferred to 7th October. Thankfully that is now behind her and she is improving day by day. She has also had a cataract removed and a lens implant to her left eye which is going along nicely. We would like to say thank you to all our good friends who have phoned or sent cards to wish her well. Not to be outdone, in the meantime my right hip has packed up and I have to see an orthopaedic specialist. I can but hope he has a 'quick fix.' As there were no places available for Edith in a rehab. unit, she came home and we are both managing to go to the Memorial Pool at the Veterans Retirement Village at Collaroy which is quite handy.

Others on the sick list from previous report appear to be the same. Jack Hartley continues to at least maintain status quo. Ron and Dorothy Trengove are both having a tough time but retain their sense of humour. Ron is back home at the Minkara Village.

Our thoughts will be with you next Sunday for the Kings Park Commemoration Service and we know it will be successful. Every now and again we hear from someone, mostly strangers, who have seen our Kings Park area and are impressed with the whole concept and are proud to tell us so.

In anticipation, and fervent hope that I may be hospitalised between now and Christmas, there may be some problems with cards and acknowledgement, so, if I miss out on anyone with whom I am usually in contact, please understand the reason why.

From NSW members we send our warm regards, Christmas greetings and good wishes to members of the 2/2 family everywhere and our sincere hopes for a healthy 1999.

Bill Tomasetti has recently written a story on his somewhat unique experiences during the Timor Campaign when, as an Orderly Room Sergeant, without an Orderly Room, he was called upon to do some really extraordinary duties. He sent me a copy for comment and critique, which I found extremely interesting. I hope to see it some time in the Courier and at least in our archives.

Have now seen the ortho specialist and he had no hesitation on the necessity or urgency of a hip replacement and luckily he had a cancellation. As a result I'm booked in at the Mater Hospital, North Sydney for an operation on November 18.

To finish with a recent scientific discovery! Hearing aids do not work well after being run over by a motor vehicle! Don't ask!!

Best wishes,

Alan Luby

Commemoration Day

On a balmy Spring Sunday members, families and friends came from near and far to be together on the most important day on our calendar. While aware of the solemnity of the occasion it was a pleasure to see everyone enjoying meeting up with old and treasured friends. As well as people from the metropolitan area we welcomed many members and families from the country.

Les and Verna Cranfield, who have only just returned from another busy sojourn in Timor, received a warm welcome. They are very much a part of our special family now.

The Special Air Services Regiment provided the Catafalque Party of dedicated young men whose presence added to the dignity of the occasion. After the service we were invited to

the SAS Sergeants Mess for refreshments where we enjoyed the hospitality of these fine young men who obviously enjoy talking to 'the old diggers.'

PRESIDENT'S COMMEMORATION ADDRESS

My dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys, valued friends from the S.A.S., fellow members, it is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you once again to this living memorial in Kings Park.

Today is a particularly significant occasion as it is the 50th Commemoration Service. This is a period of dedication and a time in which we devote ourselves to the perpetuation of the memory of those who have gone before. This is a remembrance of those who were good and true, to those mates who have not died in vain, and to those who have sadly passed away in the fifty odd years since the War. The love that binds us remains strong and the memories live vividly in the minds of all of us left here today. Each year our numbers dwindle, but our pride and strength of heart burn as deeply and powerfully as it ever has before. With the passing of over 300 of our members since 1945 we require your continued support in this the most important service of the year. The 3rd Sunday every November is a firm date. There will come a time when you, the friends of the Association, and the S.A.S. will hopefully conduct this service, but I pray this is not for many years yet.

I believe at this time the world is entering rocky times again; some may even suggest uncharted waters. Those with economic expertise are pointing us in the direction of a depression not seen since the 1930's. With times such as these pending the world will need to draw upon a strength of spirit largely foreign to the younger generations of today. Over the last twenty to thirty years we have become materially and technologically very powerful, but the charitable and unselfish qualities of mankind have become increasingly diminished. The gods we have set up are of those of the wallet and not the heart. I hope that in these tough times ahead we can reach out and still assist a friend and return to the qualities of honesty and fair play I knew when I was much younger. With economic difficulties often come major wars and I pray that we are spared the tragedy and pain that this will inevitably bring.

Since the 1940's, when we returned from the War, so many things have become a part of

our life that were non-existent before. Words like the internet, television, computers, video cassettes, optic fibres, automatic teller machines and microwave ovens are common, everyday terms that we are all familiar with. It was and still is impossible to conceive of messages being sent instantly to all quarters of the globe via the internet. These were things of science fiction when we were younger and it has become increasingly difficult for us to understand this new technology. To say we have been blinded by the light is often an understatement and in many cases ignorance is bliss.

It is wonderful that our widows, a major part of the Association, are here with us today along with their children and grandchildren. It was for these and all Australians that we fought the Japanese in Timor, New Guinea and New Britain. For all of us it was a calculated risk, but for many of our mates, sadly, it was the supreme sacrifice. Our general awareness at this time of what lay ahead was limited and as fit and strong young men we were ready to take on all comers. Whilst this occasion is of solemnity it is also one of quiet pride. I feel honoured to have served alongside these fellows. If our fallen mates could speak again they would say, "Don't shed a tear for us, but live for today and treasure each moment whilst you still have it." Fifty odd years ago I would never have pre-guessed the strength of brotherhood and family that has been evident over this period of time. The safaris, newsletters, commemoration services etc are reflections of the mighty bond that exists between us.

In my Commemoration speech last year I made strong reference to the unlawful annexation of East Timor by the Indonesians and the Governments of both persuasions reticence to act constructively. The Association has continued to be active in support programmes and a committee consisting of Bob Smyth, Keith Hayes, John Burrige and Ross Shenn have done a marvellous job. They've arranged donations of 34 cartons of office equipment including 49 typewriters, sewing machines and sound equipment.

The Trust's activities have been frustrated for over six months by the suspension of the monopoly shipping service from Singapore to Dili because of the collapse of the Indonesian rupiah. An alternative route was pioneered. This involved road transport from Perth to Darwin, small ship to Kupang in West Timor and finally by barge or truck to Dili. Our volunteer consultants Les and Verna Cranfield arrived simultaneously and were able to verify that the shipment arrived in tact. A vital part of the shipment was a consignment of \$4,700 of vegetable seeds purchased with our own

members' funds. Given favourable rains and access to suitable growing areas, the seeds will hopefully greatly enhance the food programme, which earlier this year, became critical in certain areas of East Timor. There is no Government welfare and in addition many sections of the indigenous population are traumatised by the oppressive surveillance of an undisciplined and sometimes brutal army of occupation.

Under Les Cranfield's direction the seed programme at and around Don Bosco Fuiloro Agricultural School will meet the needs of a very small part of East Timor's population. However, it is envisaged that the improved methods of cultivation being taught by volunteer and the provision of more seed will cushion the food problems of increasing numbers of indigenous people. In addition Verna Cranfield continues to give invaluable instruction in clothing manufacture and morale building activities.

Following our representation to A.E.S.O.P. they located and funded John Trevina, a welding teacher of Victoria on an 8 week assignment to Don Bosco Dili. This assignment was successfully completed.

Our acknowledgement for the support given us by A.E.S.O.P., the Canberra based Government sponsored organisation that funds the fares and associated expenses of the volunteers Les and Verna Cranfield. Les and Verna have completed their fourth visit to East Timor and we are deeply indebted to them for their continued interest and dedication as we are to the wonderful team handling the Trust.

Everyone was extremely upset at the horrendous tragedy that occurred in New Guinea earlier this year. With a quick ring around, Jack Carey and Ted Monk raised \$2000 from our boys in order to assist those angels who were so helpful during the dark years of war. Once again our mates have displayed their true worth and I would like to sincerely thank all who so kindly made donations. It makes me proud to be part of you all.

Finally I want to thank you all for coming here today to Kings Park. It is marvellous to see the shiny eyed grandchildren, the wonderful children, close friends and dear wives of the members of the Association. I also would like to thank the S.A.S. for their assistance and presence and I look forward to your continued support in future years. Gold bless.

Ralph Finkelstein

CORRESPONDENCE

K. Carthew
18 Brixton Rd
Elizabeth North 5113

Dear Jack,

Pleased to receive your letter. As you say, Alan Hollow is a marvel – to see him walk into the hotel for lunch, sometimes with his walking stick, other times he doesn't need it. Hazel and Alan both like the outings as Hazel's brother and sister-in-law also attend and they have a good old talk.

I see Bob Williamson every now and then, he has been suffering with pain in the shoulder but has done very well. Bert Bache is suffering with eye problems but other than that he is fairly well. Howard Marks attends our luncheons and is a happy soul, for all his problems.

There are not many 2/2 members still around here. Bay Webber is down at Mt. Gambier and we don't see him very often.

I received an excellent enlarged photo of members at the Canberra Safari from Ron Morris. I knew a few faces but its hard after so long.

Ron spent some time in Adelaide recently and we invited him for a lunch with Alan, Howard and myself and spouses – it was quite an enjoyable afternoon. He volunteered his service for the Association here to be represented at the Commando AGM in Canberra.

Best wishes to everyone.

Ruby sends her love to Delys.

Kel

T. Richards
12 Bradshaw St
Latrobe 7307

Dear Jack,

Have been going to do this for a long time. Sorry about that, we are both still in the land of living, some days not so good but others OK. We don't get about all that much.

The year 2000 sounds good. I am situated on the north west coast, a fair way from Hobart in our idea of distance but to WA people just a little way. Our travel means is the bus service. I will get in touch with Bert and see how we can give a hand.

We have had a very cold winter. I don't think the rain fall has been all that much and that is what the farmers say also. My eldest boy goes to the lake country and gets his supply of mountain lake spring water every six weeks. It's very pure and good for you. That is, if you like to drink water!

Bridget has a grandson, a lieutenant sig. in the army and a grandson of mine has been chosen for the Duntroon Military Academy and is doing fine.

I had a knee replacement in June last year and it was a great success. Had the job done in a hospital I worked in for 24 years – got looked after, private ward, toilet and bathroom, five minutes walk from home. I swim twice a week in the hydro therapy pool. They had just about built it when I retired in 1985. It cost \$250,000. Bridget goes once a week.

Both the families, and their families are going OK.

Enclosed is a cheque toward the Courier.

Wishing you all the Joys of life, God bless you all.

Tex and Bridget

A. Friend
Kingsway Park
Landsdale 6065

Well, here I am again in circulation after open heart surgery (aortic valve replacement and several artery by pass jobs).

Just a line to apologise for missing functions and other activities that happened while I was missing when I had my op. and after. Am well on the road to recovery and some sort of a normal life and am very thankful for the wonders of modern medicine and the skills of surgeons and everybody else involved, especially as my risk factor was sky high. The doctor said I'm good now for another 10,000 ks. Am very grateful to receive the Courier to keep in touch with everything.

Enclosed is a cheque, please split it between the Courier and the Timor Fund.

Regards to everyone.

Albie

S. McKinley
32 Limbert Ave
Seacombe Gardens 5047

Dear Jack,

Many thanks for your phone call, even though it was to impart sad news. Like many other blokes I held Keith in high esteem.

My mobility has not been good over the past 18 months, due mainly to arthritis, and it certainly put a stop to my forays after gold, using a detector. Have had an op. for a shoulder spur which to date is about 85% effective, and treatment for arthritis has brought much relief so I'm hoping to get

amongst the gold in the west, come winter. I put in 10 years working 3 to 6 months and covering most gold areas in W.A. after my retirement – wonderful hobby.

Enclosed donation is for Courier or whatever.

My best wishes to everyone connected with the Association.

Syd

Mrs G. Stanley
30 Franciscea St
Everton Hills 4053

Dear Len,

Please find enclosed donation toward the Courier. There's not much news from our household at the moment. Our middle daughter Anne is fighting the 'Big C' and has been having experimental treatment at The Peter McCallum Cancer Hospital. Between you and me, the treatment is sometimes worse than the condition but with three school age children, it is her only option. The rest of us are marking time and it's a hideous period for the entire family.

Gordon "Blue" is as fit as a "Malley Bull" and walks 7-8 kilometres every day. He sends his best wishes to those who remember him.

Regards,

Joan

N. Blight
5 Jacobs Crescent
Burnie 7320

I am writing a few lines to let you know I appreciate receiving the Courier. I do not know a lot of the Company men as I was a 2/40 man. I was with Lieut. Rodd.

There are not many left in Tasmania now. Bert Price told me about the Tassie Safari and I will be there if God spares me.

It is very hard for me to write this as I have just lost my wife of 50 years and it hurts like hell. I am keeping well. Am sending you a donation for the Courier and other things.

Thanking you.

Neil

Mrs I. Elmore
19 Cadorna St.
Mowbray 7248

Please find enclosed money order towards the Courier.

Hope all members are enjoying reasonable health. Regards to Archie Campbell.

Regards,

Isabel

V. and V. Paust
3 Vestey Court
Duncraig 6023

Dear Jack

Please accept our contribution towards the Courier which we look forward to each time.

We will see you at the Commemoration Service in November, but are unable to attend the Christmas Social.

Sincerely,

Viv and Verna

J. Peattie
11 Denne St
West Tamworth 2340

Thanks for keeping the great work of the Courier going. I look forward to it with anticipation of news from old mates but it is always tinged with sadness these days as so many pass on but so many lives lived with honour and respect as would have expected.

Marj. and I have had a good run for a while now and hope we can keep that way, however the news from others is not so good. We were up to see Betty Westerweller recently and after years of looking after Ray 'Bluey', she has kept in reasonably good health and settled into life without her partner but the enjoyment of family and friends. Luck has not been with her as she now has lost the sight in one eye and the sight is failing in the other. Continued specialist treatment is needed so she is selling her home in Tamworth and moving to a 'Granny flat' with a close relative in Sydney, to be close to doctors. Betty as always is very positive and cheerful about her misfortune. Our men certainly married some wonderful women.

It was good to see recognition of Charlie Anderson at Kings Park Commemoration Service. He was a great character and friend who came to see us here several times. Our kids loved him.

Best wishes to all in the West and elsewhere.

Jack

E. Weller
136 Kempton St
Bluff Point 6530

Please find enclosed donation for the Courier and the same for the New Guinea disaster.

Have been doing a fair bit of travelling up through the middle to see the wild flowers which were very beautiful, then to Monkey Mia and all they had to offer which was quite a lot. Then down to Walpole and the swinging bridge which was quite amazing, and back home, 3500km all told.

Hoping all are as well as can be expected.

Regards,

Eric

P. D. Mantle
19 Arnold St
Allora 4362

So that Allora will not fade away as some country towns are doing, a group of enthusiasts strive to make it an interesting place to visit, to live in, to trade in. This year it has been scarecrows. Boy Scouts make them life size full body, and sell them to shops and households. The new owner dresses and adorns them. Outside the Anglican Rectory the mannikin wears a surplice. Tied to the police station fence is a dummy copper holding a felon in broad arrow rags, and more, too humorous to mention. One or two are in shop windows. Some on the roof, tied to the letterbox, in the branches of a street tree outside a pub. On a vacant block in the main street is a 'farm' with cut-out cows, hens, pigs, a sort of slab hut and a farmer.

Eventually, of course, they will rot away and look scruffy, so a fun day has been suggested, a sort of Saturnalia, when they are thrown on to a great fire down on the river bank where a ducking stool awaits nagging wives or suspected witches. Boiling their hellish brew in cauldrons, witches a-cursing. Bring your own materials and see who can make the best with broom in 20 minutes. Then apprentice witches 'riding' their brooms x 100 metres. As witches were thought to have a pact with the Devil in return for their magic powers, perhaps an Old Nick making hell around the place.

My day to day health is fine, but the machine is wearing out and there's a slow leak in my think-tank.

Enclosed is a donation for the Courier

Peter

Mrs B. Snowdon
13/2 McKibbin Crt
Wodonga 3690

Dear Mr Carey

As my mother isn't very well and doesn't know any of the people in the 2/2 Commando Unit, she would prefer not to receive the Courier in the future.

Thank you for your letters of support after my father's death last year.

Yours sincerely

Joy Snowdon for Mrs Bernice Snowdon

H. W. Price
Huon Highway
Dover 7117

Have had a busy week - had 100 Hobart Legacy widows to a BBQ at Dover RSL Club on the 1st and, as local Legatee, arranged all the catering locally. Had our monthly meeting of Esperance R and SLA Sub Branch on the 2nd and our annual luncheon is coming up on Sunday the 8th and as Secretary I've been arranging all and have Remembrance Day on the 11th and then a spell for a time. Of course, we will have a family Christmas.

Joan Marsh, Swampy's widow, came down with her son Victor last month and spent the day with Billie and self. We went south and had lunch at the southern most hotel in Australia - Southport Tavern. Joan was very pleased with words about Swampy in the Courier and sent a special note of thanks to Billie and self.

Had a phone call from Neil Blight recently and it was good to hear from him - he is not going so well but was his usual happy self.

There is a 2/6th Commando Squadron member living close to me at Port Huon. Will go and see him as he might like to join us in 2000.

Regards to all.

Bert

K. Carthew
18 Brixton Rd
Elizabeth 5113
November 4th, 1998

Dear Jack,

South Australian news mainly medical and surgical. Bob Williamson spent time in Repat Hospital for major surgery. He is now home and progressing well.

Howard Marks has had a prostate operation at the Repat Hospital. Has returned home and has an appointment to see the top doctor in this field.

Our monthly luncheon was held at Finsbury Hotel and Alan Hollow was presented with his Life Membership Badge. He was very pleased to wear it – it seemed to brighten his day. Bob, Howard and Bert will be presented at our remembrance service at Keswick Barracks Ceremony. The Combined Commando Association join with the Vietnam Veterans on this day and we have a nice service conducted by the Vietnam Veterans Padre.

The 2/2nd members here wish all members of the Association a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

To the Executive of this Association our special thanks for all the assistance you have given us over the years.

I received a phone call from Betty Craig who is spending time in Adelaide with her daughter and son-in-law. Unfortunately she could not attend our luncheon as she had to see a doctor for tests.

Kel Carthew

R. Morris

53 Hilder St.

Weston ACT

9th November, 1998

Another year is nearly at an end and we are living with memories of the Canberra Safari and looking forward to the next one in the year 2000 in Tasmania.

It has been a sad year for us all, having lost many of our dear comrades.

Hazel and I journeyed to Queensland in October expecting to pay a visit to Theo Adams. We had spoken to him only a week or so before we left Canberra, and had promised to take him the full album of photos of the Safari. It was not to be. On the day we arrived we were told that our friend's funeral was to be held that day. It was a shock to us as we were looking forward to a good chat with Theo to bring him up to date with the happenings at the reunion. As Neil Hooper was in hospital I sent the remnants of the Safari photos to Margaret.

During our trip to Adelaide to see our son I was able to meet up with some of the lads. We had a very pleasant lunch with some of them and their partners and Kel and Ruby Carthew wished to be remembered to you all. They are a grand crowd.

Joan Fenwick, Fred and Erika Bagley meet with us regularly and we talk over past events and look forward to the trip to Tasmania in the future, God willing. They are all keeping fairly well.

With reference to the Tasmanian Safari, I have a friend, Stuart Bryce, who has a vineyard at

236 Lalla Road, Lalla. He said he would be willing to assist in any way he was able. His phone number is (03) 6395 1290.

I expect you have all seen the Oakford Apartments on TV recently, after the Diplomat's gruesome murder. Graham and Marie, our hosts, were not impressed. It is publicity they could well have done without.

I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 1999. God bless you all.

Ron and Hazel

Ryder-Cheshire Homes outreach of Ryder-Cheshire Foundation (WA) Inc.

In March 1991, 21 years after the establishment of the West Australian Foundation, Lady Ryder officially opened the first Ryder-Cheshire Foundation Home in this State. This is named Barbara Seabrook House in recognition of the long serving Foundation Secretary and is situated in the grounds of the Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital in Shenton Park. It provides low cost (\$20 per night) accommodation for people from the country visiting Perth for health related treatment and comprises comfortable rooms and kitchen and laundry facilities.

For further enquiries and details please phone the House Mother on (08) 9388 3467 or write to: The House Mother, Ryder-Cheshire Barbara Seabrook House, 6 Selby Street, Shenton Park WA 6008.

**G. F. Greenhalgh
7 Cypress Street
Maclean 2463**

Dear Len,

I'm saddened to have to inform you of the passing of Norm Demmery. I rang on my usual quarterly search for information, to find that Norm had passed away at Grafton while I was in W.A. His son, Jack gave me the news and some information which I have encompassed in the enclosed Vale. Jack would be most appreciative if he could continue to receive the Courier.

Jack Steen rang me to say they expect Ralph over shortly and they would like to give him a dinner. I would like to go up but if the date they have in mind is correct I can't make it.

My survey of the troops disclosed most of them still in reasonable health and appreciative of the fact of being here. I mean still on deck and on the north coast of NSW.

Russ Blanch has been to Sydney recently for

eye treatment but as do most of us, has to wait for an appointment for further treatment. Otherwise quite well but smarting from not winning all the garden competitions. Had to put up with about three first and a couple of seconds. One bloke who beat him for one first was 101 years old and does his own gardening. Russ said he got a standing ovation when he went up to get his trophy. I reckon he should have got that for being able to walk up at all at that age.

Ted Cholerton of Evans Head is going along quite well. Has to have the usual six months check up for prostate but reports all's well. Confesses to slowing down a bit but I said 'Join the club.'

Ken and Edith Jones are both well and it looks like a good season. 'Blue' and I reckon we must have been in the wrong game. We had both just seen the TV report on the bloke who rorted the travel allowance and had only to pay \$14,000 out of his million super. No wonder he was smiling as he left the court room. About time the politicians started to live in the real world. I guess it will never alter though. What's Paddy say?

Jim Cullen is continuing to battle on with the strong help of Beryl. Jim was always an iron man and it still shows. He has a wonderful spirit.

I had a yarn with Bill Walsh from Kempsey. He and Beryl have not had the best of health for a few years now but continue to go along quietly. Bill has to take it easy driving and can't travel far now. He and Beryl used to come up my way some years back as Beryl came from my area.

Eric Herd from Iluka is fit and well and still able to see the little white ball up the fairway. I'm looking forward to having lunch with him and wife Lorraine at our local RSL Club. Might even have a couple of light beers.

As you are no doubt are aware, I had my trip to WA in October but did not get about much. Harry Sproston was in Hollywood and you would have been advised of his condition. I saw him most days and stayed at his place. I have a great niece at Manning and had three visits there and a lunch with Don Turton at Jack and Delys Carey's one day. Was on the phone a fair bit. Saw Keith Hayes who never looks a day older.

Sprocky's cousin was visiting and kissed him and gave him a nice dose of the flu. I didn't kiss him but got the flu as did his brother so it was share and share alike. Luckily my great niece ministered to my needs with some chicken broth and flu tablets and I got over it fairly quickly ... So much for clean living. I wasn't much impressed with Hollywood. Once when I was visiting and on another occasion Harry was given wrong tablets. Luckily he has been under medication for so long he can

recognise the pills he takes. Anybody else would just whop one down and heaven knows the results. Private enterprise hospital – I ask you!

Harry continues his fight. Twelve or thirteen years now and he told me he had put on four pounds since leaving hospital. The first increase in all that time. Maybe his treatment this time will be successful. I know he has a lot of mates wishing him well.

All the best Len to everyone for a 'Happy' Christmas, and did I mention that I am well.

'Happy'

Mrs N. Grachan
15 Banksia Court
Mulgrave 3170

Mr President, Committee, and Friends.

Enclosed my cheque for sub. and whatever the heart dictates.

I read with sadness the passing of so many members in recent Couriers. To all those who lost loved ones, my thoughts, sympathy and prayers. To all members of the 2/2 the loss of so many comrades is heart rending – you had a special affinity. Sadly the ranks are closing.

Sincerely trust Arch Campbell is settling into his unit and making progress each passing day.

Sincerely,

Nina

Mrs K. Sargeant
25 Thomas Street
Gympie

Dear Jack,

It's getting close to Christmas and I guess you will all be busy with parties etc.

It was good to hear you enjoyed your Safari in Canberra.

It is inevitable the numbers are getting smaller as the years go by.

My grandson visited the War Memorial with his school and was thrilled to receive some photostats of 'Winnie The War Winner.'

It has not been a good year for me but if my health permits I'm still hoping to visit the War Memorial when the refurbishing of the Gallery housing 'Winnie' is reopened.

Enclosed donation for the Courier.

Best wishes to all for Christmas and Good Health in 1999.

Sincerely,

Kathleen.

A REMINDER

GOLD CARD and 1945-75 AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL

Members who have not got a gold card and have not applied for one should do so immediately. From the 1st January, 1999 World War II veterans aged 70 and over who have served overseas will be eligible to receive a gold card. Many of our members have applied and will receive their gold card as from 1/1/99. So don't miss out – write to the nearest office of the Department of Foreign Affairs in your State. NOW.

The 1945-75 Australian Service Medal with clasp denoting the area of service was first introduced in 1995. If you saw service in the islands in the SWPA for 30 days between 3rd September, 1945 and 16th September, 1975 you can claim this medal. A number of our members who were in New Britain waiting to come home under the points system have already applied and been granted the medal with clasp. It may take a little time but you will eventually receive one. If you have not applied write to Supervisor Medals, SCMA, GPO Box 5108BB Melbourne Vic. 3001

News has been received of the deaths recently of Stan Whitford of Victoria and Ross (Fuzzy) Wintour of Cairns, Queensland. Vales for Stan and Ross will appear in our next Courier.

Lest We Forget

J. Carey

2/2 Commando Association W.A. Branch

Thank you for kind condolences and words of sympathy re the passing of my father, Bill Tucker. They were much appreciated.

Jill Nicol

HOBART SAFARI MARCH 2000

Bert Price has confirmed the following arrangements:

Dates – Wednesday, 8th March to Wednesday, 15th March 2000

Safari will commence with a social evening on the 8th March and conclude with a farewell function on Wednesday evening the 15th March, 2000.

Venue – Hobart Macquarie Motor Inn which is located right the middle of Hobart Central City.

Accommodation – Rooms are twin share.

Cost is \$50 per person per day on the twin share basis which includes a fully cooked breakfast. Single supplement is \$85 per person per day so it is advisable for members travelling on their own to arrange to share a room to reduce the cost to the standard \$50 per head. Bert and his wife Billie have checked out the accommodation and report it is quite satisfactory.

Bookings can be made in writing to the Manager, Hobart Macquarie Motor Inn, 167 Macquarie Street, Hobart, 7000. Enclose \$50 deposit (cheque or money order) and advise that you are part of the 2/2nd Commando Association Safari Group. Bookings can also be made by phone/fax.

Toll free on 1800 802 090

Telephone (03) 6234 4422

Facsimile (03) 6234 4273

Credit cards are acceptable.

The Manager, Mr Scott Crawford, would like all bookings in by November 1999 but we will endeavour to have this time extended.

Please advise Management if you would like a room with a view or would prefer to be on a lower floor.

The itinerary has yet to be arranged but should appear in full in the September 1999 Courier.

The Naval Club which is close to the Motor Inn has already offered honorary membership for those attending, which will fit in well with our requirements.

We thank Bert and Billie for their efforts in arranging the accommodation. They live in Dover, 80 kilometres from Hobart so it does entail a lot of travelling. Gerry and Nancy Slade have also offered to assist but at present Gerry has a severe back problem which is making life difficult for him.

We appeal to all members to try and make this Safari which well may be our last. Hobart has a lot to offer so make up your mind here and now to be part of it.

Renewing Acquaintances

During our recent trip to the U.K. and Europe, Delys and I took the opportunity of meeting up with Ian and Margaret Ronald. Ian and Margaret visited England in the mid 60's, fell in love with the place and decided to live there permanently. Both still claim to be dinkum Aussies but Ian wouldn't say who he supported in the test matches! On arriving in London on Friday, 21st August after a delightful 8 days in Ireland, we contacted Ian and were invited down to their home in Kent for lunch on Sunday, 23rd August. We caught the train at

Victoria Station and after a 25 minute run arrived at Beckenham where we were met by Ian and Margaret. Both looked well. They have a lovely comfortable home in Kent a few minutes run from the station. A few beers later we were talking our heads off. Ian was a dentist by profession but has been retired for a number of years. He has a small allotment of land about ten minutes from where he lives which takes up most of his time. He enjoys tending his vegies and fruit trees and is a popular man around his area as people can obtain bargains in these lines. Margaret is kept busy doing charitable work in the local community. She is a good organiser and is always on the go. She spoilt us with a roast turkey dinner with home grown vegies followed by a delicious berry pie. It was easily the best meal we had on our six week trip. Ian produced some top wines and was a great host. I had the pleasure of presenting him with a life membership medallion for which he was both pleasantly surprised and honoured to receive. He was keen to know how his old section was faring and said he and Margaret looked forward to receiving the courier. They try and arrange a trip overseas every year and will endeavour to attend the Safari in Hobart in the year 2000. Ian's son and daughter-in-law and their captivating 3-yr-old daughter were on leave from Japan where his son is a professor teaching English at the Hiroshima University. It was a happy get-together and we are grateful to Ian and Margaret for their hospitality. A 5 star rating in our book. Thank you both for a wonderful day.

Jack and Del Carey

**Royal Australian Air Force Association
Bullcreek Drive,
Bull Creek 6149**

Mr R. Finkelstein,
President,
Australian Commando Association.

Dear Mr Finkelstein

Veterans Memorial Estate, Merriwa

On 8 July, 1998 the RAAF Association conducted a briefing to Veterans Organisations on a proposed new concept in retirement living for veterans, the 'Veterans' Memorial Estate, Merriwa.' Unfortunately, advice of the meeting was short and many organisations were unable to arrange representatives to attend.

The Veterans' Memorial Estate, Merriwa is meant to offer more than just retirement village living, it will provide a 'lifestyle' by encompassing within its site sporting and social facilities which enhance and enrich the retirement of the residents by encouraging

social interaction with other people who have similar backgrounds and experiences. Such villages require a minimum size of about 240 units to be viable and rather than open the estate to the public, the RAAF Association believes it would be preferable to offer residency on the estate to veteran members of kindred organisations such as your own.

I have enclosed a plan of the proposed estate and, should the estate proceed, the draft of a letter which I would propose sending to members of your Association, providing information about both the estate and financial details relating to living on the estate.

Should you be interested in more detailed information on the Estate or wish to inspect the nearby RAAFA Merriwa Estate to experience what retirement estate living is like, please contact Mr Alan White on 9400 3400 between 9 am and 4 pm Monday to Friday.

**Bob Bunney
Chief Executive Officer**

Series 2 Timor Memories. Ship Ahoy!

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1942

5 Section were stationed at Fatu Maquerec for several weeks as was a signal station. I believe it may have been Don Murray who was operating a receiver and transmitting set at the time when 9 Boston Douglas 111's had finished their bombing run over Dili and were on the way home. They were almost above us when 4 zero fighters attacked and we could hear the leader of the group calling on Hitchcock to catch up. Later we were informed that Hitchcock had crashed landed on Bathurst Island and the crew were OK. The US C.O. of the squadron thanked our boys for their concern when inquiring after the welfare of Hitchcock and his crew.

Now back to 5 Section. They had received a signal from headquarters to find out why the Japanese had an aircraft flying over the capital day and night. Dudley Tapper and Ray Parry were ordered to Dili to find out the reason why.

It took us 2 1/2 days to reach the high ground behind Dili. It was extremely hot and we were now without water. We picked up a well worn track some 300 yards from the ridge. Up ahead sitting on the ridge were 4 Timorese. We kept moving towards them. At about 200 yards they stood up. As we moved closer they slowly walked away and disappeared from view. I said to Dudley, "you know what they are going to do now?" He said, "Yes. They'll tell their Jap friends that they have visitors." We would have been at a point some 2kms from the Dili - Aileu

Road. We were now on top of the ridge. I looked and thought, oh my God, Dili was shrouded in a dense blanket of fog. The aircraft was still buzzing around somewhere above us. We were very thirsty and had hoped to find water, but no such luck. I felt uneasy, not unlike the feeling one had when visiting Daralau. We were there about 10-12 minutes when it happened. It was nothing short of miraculous. The fog rolled aside to form a narrow but clear path from where we were standing to the harbour of Dili, and there we saw at anchor a Japanese battleship. It was a vessel of awesome power. We had time to check the number of gun turrets, guns forward and aft, the superstructure, funnels and its superb lines before the fog closed in again. Dudley glanced skyward and said "Thankyou, thankyou very much." I think I said amen to that. We were now on our way.

Once we had put 5-600 yards between ourselves and that ridge we scouted around for a suitable pebble to suck. Once found each was cleaned up on a grubby shirt, popped into the mouth and so began the sucking process. The pebbles were worth their weight in gold. There was about three hours before sunset. Some two hours later we realised we had company. To the south there was a mixture of Japanese troops and Timorese and just before sunset we spotted a group of Japanese to the north of us. Even before the sighting we had every intention of pushing on throughout the night. It would be cooler and now we must keep ahead of those columns. It was important that we get the information we had back to the company as soon as was humanly possible. We were not moving that well. I cursed those 4 Timorese. The Japs would have been made aware of our presence in the area soon after they left the ridge. It was dawn, still no water, and another day of searing heat. We had a long searching look all around us but could find no sign of movement.

Our bellies were empty but that did not present a problem. It was water we wanted. Around mid afternoon we decided to start moving in a north easterly direction. The aircraft could still be heard circling Dili. We had reached a stage where our rest periods were becoming more frequent. Dehydration was becoming a telling factor. We were still sucking on those priceless pebbles. We kept moving for several hours after sunset, then wisely rested a while. We have entered our 5th day of searing heat and would be approximately 7 hours or so from our base.

Around 1100hrs I thought I heard for a fleeting moment the sound of running water. Ahead the area appeared to be much greener. As we moved around a small knoll on the feature, we both heard the sound of running water. Now I

knew my hearing had not been playing tricks. we hurried forward and there it was, a pool of crystal clear water being fed by a small stream tumbling over a waterfall a few metres in height. Just seconds before we both fell into it, we kept saying to each other, don't drink too much, don't drink too much. I lost count of the number of times we uttered those words. As I lay there I could feel my body absorbing the water that surrounded it, not unlike a sponge. It was a fantastic feeling. On the move again with full water bottles and a greater urge to make it to our base as quickly as possible.

Throughout our journey, with the exception of the four men we saw on the high ground behind Dili, we never saw a single man, woman or child. Villages were empty and gardens unattended, a far cry from the bustling activities that were a part of village life a short time before. We arrived at Fatu Maquerec mid afternoon and told our story. The sigs. on duty transmitted our message to Naval Headquarters in Darwin. The naval commander there would have had our signal in hand soon after we left the sig hut for a little food and a well earned sleep. All U.S. and Australian air and naval stations north of the Tropic of Capricorn were placed on red alert. I believe it was three days later the battleship sailed by Point Cuto, the northern most point of Timor and was heading in a south easterly direction. At the same time one of our corvette's was on its way to Timor and it was about half way between Darwin and the Island when the skipper received a signal informing him that a Japanese battleship was heading his way and to return to Darwin immediately. Able Seaman Bernard Lawler said that the skipper executed a very sharp 180 degree turn and headed flat out for their home port.

Bernie told me the story over a drink somewhere in Perth in February 1943. It was the first time we had met since parting company at St. Joseph's School in South Perth. I gave him a brief run down on what Dudley and I had seen. I mentioned the turrets, two up forward, the first with four guns and the one above and behind three guns, both turrets aft each had three guns, all 16.1 in. plus a host of lesser calibre armament. He was astonished at the coincidence and intended telling his ship mates all about it, that was the last time I ever saw Bernie. I was the last member of the unit to reach WA. In Adelaide Doc Dunkley decided I was to be a candidate for the 101st A.G.H. at Northfield. My problem was Hepatitis A. My pleading with the Doc fell on deaf ears. In my ward there was one Australian and 90 US marines from Guardacanal.

Ray Parry

The Oan Kiak Trust

Readers of our 2/2nd Courier maybe interested in another project in East Timor in which Col Doig was actively involved, firstly as a mentor and adviser to myself and Lou Byrne as we struggled to get the Oan Kiak project up and running. Secondly, as a benefactor, leaving a substantial part of his estate to the Oan Kiak Trust.

In 1992 on my second visit to East Timor I became quite concerned at the lack of secondary school educational opportunities for orphans in East Timor, (not realising at that time how many orphans were not even receiving primary school education). On my return from the 1992 trip I attempted to interest NGO's in Australia, including the Independent Trust Fund in this issue (which is how Col became aware) without success.

Rock musician Paul Stewart (brother of one of the 5 journalists killed at Balibo in 1975) of Rock band Painters and Dockers fame visited East Timor in 1993 and returned radicalised by his visit and determined to 'help the Timorese.' He met up with Lou Byrne who had also become radicalised by events in East Timor and was also determined to do something 'useful for the East Timorese.' They were cognisant of Bishop Belo's September 1993 call for international help for the young generation in Timor. Realising funds would be needed Lou and Paul, with the help of the Australian Rock-music industry, produced a Rock-music compilation C.D. as a way of raising funds. Several projects were submitted to the Rock industry for consideration and they chose to support the proposal for scholarships for orphans in East Timor.

On Col Doig's advice an Oan Kiak Trust was established, supported by the Timorese Association of Victoria. The Trust members are Bishop Hilton Deakin, Lou Byrne, myself, Emelia Pires and whoever is the current President of the Timorese Association of Victoria.

The purpose of the Trust is to allow as many Timorese orphan children as possible to obtain primary schooling and after this has been achieved, the Trust to then concern itself with enabling opportunities for as many as possible to obtain secondary school education. The scholarship scheme is administered from Dili by an Oan Kiak Committee under the auspices of KARITAS the Catholic Church Social Welfare Agency.

It was also Col's advice that we should invest the money in Australia, rather than in Indonesia, and fund the scholarships from the interest. Our annual income from investing the funds is in the vicinity of \$8,000 and the only expenses it incurs is the fee for service to

KARITAS and the transfer fee for transferring the money to Dili. We have the volunteer services of lawyers, auditors, investment consultants. The Trust members share the miscellaneous costs.

We have now completed three years of operations and are half way through the fourth year. There have been some teething problems, but the bottom line is that as of the 30th of June, 1998 we have 58 children receiving full scholarships (meaning they receive board and lodgings as well as all educational expenses, clothing etc) and a further 120 students receiving partial help with educational expenses which includes uniform (mandatory at Indonesian schools) items, books, fees etc.

The Trust has continued to raise funds. Another two music CD's have been produced from which there have been substantial earnings and we have also received direct donations. Now that the initial problems of administration have been sorted and armed with the knowledge that \$20,000 a year would pay the primary school educational expenses of all the orphans in East Timor, we propose shortly to make an Australia wide appeal.

The Timorese define an orphan as one who has lost one or both parents and this is the definition adopted by the Trust. Most of the orphans are cared for either by Catholic dioceses or extended families. There are also, for a variety of reasons mostly related directly to the occupation of the island, numerous abandoned children. We are helping some of these as well.

The usual levels of care for orphans within East Timor are [i] established orphanages provided for and run by Christian Religious Orders; [ii] boarding Houses i.e roof and supervisory care is provided by the Diocese, but relatives are responsible for the food and clothing situation; [iii] those living with extended family (this category are in the most precarious position of all); [iv] those run by the government (along Islamic lines); The Trust funds orphans from the first three categories.

In June 1996 Col offered to put \$10,000 into the Oan Kiak Fund with the proviso that the interest from this money provide a special scholarship to the Don Bosco Comoro Training school. Col had an agreement with them that they would keep the 2/2nd Memorial tidy and in good condition. The Trust accepted the money and called it the Col Doig Scholarship, with Bishop Deakin writing to Col to both thank him and inform him. Many of you will no doubt guess how that missal was received by Col! (I well remember the earful I received one Saturday morning at 6am Melbourne Time). The arrangement whereby the Comoro Training centre took some responsibility for the

2/2nd memorial fell through after Col's death. Since then the Trust has continued to try to find a way for the memorial to be cared for and a way in which the Col Doig Scholarship can be awarded so that it is in accord with what Col would have wanted and within the mandate of the Oan Kiak Trust.

One thing is for sure there are many Timorese who have reason to be grateful to Col. Christmas and New Year wishes to all.

Patsy Thatcher

INDEPENDENT TRUST

Les and Verna Cranfield returned from their last three month East Timor visit on Thursday 12th November. Verna obviously cannot find enough hours in each day to accomplish all that she drives herself to achieve. She asserts that finally it has been most rewarding. Les reflects the appearance of a man who has worked beyond daylight hours to plant 140 ha of corn which should produce 600/700 tonnes. Also to plant a large variety of vegetable seeds. Same of these were planted over three days at Venilale-Orphanage where in an earlier Fax Les commented "It breaks your heart to see one hundred and twenty little girls living mainly on boiled corn and rice.

One could also conjecture why there are so many orphanages in Eastern East Timor.

The continuous oppressive surveillance by a large undisciplined, frequently brutal army of occupation traumatised all ages of the indigenous population. Teenage boys with no income and frequently hungry, cannot visualise any future. Therefore, the suffering of their families, including too often rape of loved ones, encourages them to help or join the guerilla movement.

If 90% or preferably more of the Indonesian Army were withdrawn from East Timor there would be considerably less problems. Also less 'campaign' ribbons on the chests of the heroes for murdering unarmed men, women and children.

No. 6 SHIPMENT via KUPANG

Les reports that not only did the last shipment arrive intact but there were not any additional charges either for freight costs from Kupang to Dili or for Customs charges.

The officer in charge said to his co workers – "let it through we must look after the mission!"

FOOD PROJECT

An appeal for funding and particularly for a food project at Fuiloro East Timor, was made to a prominent Australian Oil Company retailer.

It was declined because the Company, "does

not fund grants or sponsorship outside Australia."

The reply failed to add that substantial profits are about to be gained from its lucrative oil and gas permits "outside Australia" in the Timor sea. Permits which are not shared with Portugal on behalf of the East Timorese, but with its associate in Jakarta.

An ever increasing volume of world opinion would support the plight of the indigenous East Timorese for a share, even if sufficient to fund a meal each day.

John Burridge and Keith Hayes join me in thanking contributors to the Trust Fund as listed elsewhere in the Courier.

Our best wishes to all for the Festive Season and the hope that better conditions will prevail in East Timor early in 1999.

Bob Smyth

Report by Les Cranfield re visit to Timor

We arrived back in Timor on 21/8/98. While boarding the plane at Denpasar we were recognised by the Mayor of Baucau and another official. They had been to Jakarta to give evidence against Suharto.

This time in Timor a lot of things seemed to happen and a lot of situations are worse off. For one, the Australian Government have taken Aus-Aid out of Timor. Steve Dunn and his group are back in Australia. Every day out our way there would be one or two people die, either by sickness or other means. There was an incident down at Porous, the Army put on a dance at night for the young ones. One girl who lives with her old grandmother was tricked into leaving the dance and going home to see her grandmother who was supposed to have taken ill. When she went inside the house a soldier was waiting for her. Some of the young boys at the dance realised she had gone so they went and surrounded the house and started calling out for her. The soldier didn't come out until 4.30am. Fr. Jose reported it to Bishop Belo who in turn reported it to the Army in Dili. They sent officers up to see what happened, spoke to the soldier, spoke to any of the village people. They won't tell Fr Jose what happened because she is frightened what might happen to her. There is a good chance she was raped.

We were happy to see Paddy Kenneally turn up at Fuiloro. I was able to take him around and show him what the 2/2 Association was achieving in East Timor. I was also able to take him around and introduce him to our workers who were disappointed when he left. Our

Paddy is certainly some character. Fr. Jose thought he was terrific. We had a letter from him before we left and he sounded very tired and worn out. We also had a visit from Bishop Deakon from Melbourne who told me he has control of the Col. Doig legacy. At times I thought he must be related to Paddy, with some of his saying.

Never a dull moment in East Timor. One day, around 6.00pm we got a message from Baucau that our truck was hanging over the edge of the mountain with about a seven tonne load. Fr. Jose came to me and said 'I think we have a problem - we had better go and have a look. If the truck had gone another 20 to 30cm it would have been upside down and would have been on top of a house underneath it. We managed to get it back on the road after six hours and with much help from the friendly Timorese. I am hoping Fr. Jose will be able to come to Australia to buy some machinery for harvesting up there and also buy some silos for grain storage. It all depends on whether the U.S. Aid will agree to let him come here to spend their money. If it does happen he wants me to accompany him to Queensland to purchase some things.

Our work away this time was very satisfying and made us feel as if everything is starting to fall into place. With Verna's work she feels as if something has been achieved, two separate groups of girls have started up business in Lospalos with sewing machines from the 2/2 Association, also the girls with machines sent to them by Keith and Val.

On that note I will finish and on behalf of the people in East Timor Obrigadu (Thank you).

Les and Verna

Assessment at end of project

To AESOP Australia

Through this letter I would like to express our appreciation and gratitude for sending Les and Annie for the follow up programme. Their presence has improved the knowledge and confidence of our employees. Les helped in organising the corn planting and his presence was quite critical as we had to cope with an early rainy season. Most people were caught unawares by the rain, but the school managed to finish the planting on time because of the planning and hard work of Les. He also helped in organising a two hectare vegetable plot which will in future help the school to put up an exhibition plot for the villagers.

Annie has been working very hard to teach the more enterprising girls to be self supporting. She has organised a group of three girls to work together and form a self support unit.

They will need one more follow up from her to make this new experiment a success.

After the harvesting machines are purchased we would appreciate if Les can come once more to demonstrate the harvesting. This year, due to careful planning by Les, we were able to plant about 140 hectares of corn, so, once more expressing our gratitude to AESOP, Les and Annie.

Fr. Jose Vattaparambil Don Bosco Fuiloro

SICK PARADE

Henry Sprøxton has been in and out of Hollywood Hospital with a chronic lung complaint over many months. He is at home at present receiving therapy which is helping his problem. Henry is bearing up well and still retains his strong sense of humour.

Bill Rowan-Robinson, who has a severe kidney complaint, recently spent some time at the Bunbury Regional Hospital. Bill is far from well but has a strong constitution and doesn't allow things to get him down. Iris is always close at hand to help Bill.

Arch Campbell has recovered from a heart attack and is slowly settling in to his new surroundings. Arch is troubled by arthritis, as are many other of our members, and although he has lost a lot of weight Arch is mentally bright enough to receive visitors and talk of old times.

Neil Hooper is another who, after a major operation, is now making steady progress. A tough old bird, Hoop reckons he'll be around for a long time yet.

Our popular Vice President, Dick Darrington, has been hobbling around with the aid of a stick. Obviously in pain, it did not stop Dick from attending our service on the 15th November, though he could not march. It could be a hip replacement job. A quiet man, Dick never complains.

Pars on People. Jess Epps, who had a slight set back at our Commemoration Service, is OK and is off shortly to Norfolk Island to look the place over. Jess loves to be on the move and we trust she has a beautiful holiday.

Happy Greenhalgh spent a month in the west recently. He stays with his old mate Sproxo but things did not work out as Henry was in hospital most of the time. Never stuck for words, Happy hammers the old phone - give him a ring and find out for yourself!

Jack Carey

The Editor and his Courier Team, Gavin and Betty, thank members for your newsy contributions during the year and wish you all a Jolly Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

Please keep those letters coming in – without them there can be no Courier.

To our Typesetter Geoff Gibson and our Printers Barry and Rhonda Sales, thank you for your co-operation and friendly service. We wish you the Compliments of the Season and look forward to working with you all in 1999.

Deadline for March Courier

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19th

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Courier Donations:

Max Miller, Peter Barden, Viv and Verna Paust, Eric Weller, Peter Mantle, Tex Richards, Jack Fowler, Jack Peattie, Betty Westerweller, Gordon and Joan Stanley, Albie Friend, Syd McKinley, Isobel Elmore, Neil Blight 2/40, Percy McPhee, Ralph Finkelstein, Clarrie Turner, Bernie Langridge, Nina Grachan, Kathleen Sargeant.

Trust Fund Donations:

Vince Walsh \$54.
Albie Friend \$50.
