



# 2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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

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## EDITORIAL

Last year the W.A. Committee made a recommendation to our Editor, Len Bagley, that, commencing as from 1998 the Courier be limited to four copies a year, preferably in March, June, September, December. The reason for doing this was mainly due to rising costs, decline in numbers receiving the Courier and difficulty in obtaining sufficient copy to fill an 18 to 20 page Courier.

Colin Doig's 'A Great Fraternity' contained a comprehensive write up on the history of our little paper, beginning as a Newsletter in April 1947 and progressing to the Courier in its present form in the early 1950s. The quote for the first issue from 'Swan Express' was 10 pounds for 500 copies.

The great man himself was our first Editor back in 1947. Between the years 1947 and 1974 Colin was Editor for 23 years. Wilf March was Editor for four years 1953-54-56-57, with John Burrige filling in for 1955. 'Scotty' Wares was Editor in the years 1975/80 inclusive and Arch Campbell took over from 1981 to 1996.

Len Bagley became Editor in 1997. Len and Betty have been involved in the Courier production for many many years and it is mainly due to their untiring efforts along with Arch Campbell and Gavin Bagley that the high standard set by previous editors has been maintained until the present time.

We should also be mindful of the great work the late Bill Epps put in on the Courier when he was a linotype operator with the 'Swan Express.' Bill dedicated many years to the publishing of our paper. His was a wonderful contribution.

The support of people like Alan Luby, Paddy Kenneally, Harry Botterill, Peter Barden, Neil Hooper, Keith Hayes and others has been invaluable. You too can help in the make up of the Courier by writing in and letting your Editor know of any items of interest in which you or other members are involved. This applies in particular to those members we have heard little of down through the years but are still on the Courier list.

God willing, the Courier will continue to be 'the lifeblood of the Association' for many years yet. What a wonderful little paper it is.

**Jack Carey**

**VALE: George VEITCH**

7.3.19 - 24.11.97

George was born in Creswick, the tenth of 11 children.

George joined our Unit in Timor along with other reinforcements in January 1942 and was with 1 Section 'A' Troop. He was a good soldier, very quiet but had a great sense of humour. He was discharged from the army in April 1946 and joined a building firm in Ballarat which built the dental and nursing hospital in Melbourne and the hospital in Sunbury.

It was at Sunbury that he met Dot in 1950, they married in 1952 and had seven children, Ronald, Susan, Dianne, Barry, Brian and twins John and Jeanette. He worked for the dental hospital as a driver until he retired. George was a life member of Sunbury RSL and well respected by the community. They were a well knit family and George and Dot were great members of our Association and came to most of our functions.

George was a good soldier and father and will be sadly missed by all members and our deepest sympathies go to Dot and the family.

The funeral was held at the O'Connor Funeral Home at Sunbury and attended by a large gathering and the 2/2nd Association was represented by Rolf (Baldy) Baldwin, Alf Harper, Ed Bourke, Fred and Mavis Broadhurst, Harry Botterill, Beryl Boast.

**Harry Botterill**

**Kenneth James Monk**

4.8.1921 - 18.9.1997

*A rich life lived to the full  
A wealth of love and happiness  
The joy of being part of it all...  
The sorrow of parting.*

Thank you most sincerely for your expressions of love and sympathy on the loss of my husband, our dad, our pop and grandpa.

Margaret, Barbara, Owen, Angela, Megan and Lucilla, Elva, Rod, Finlay and Catherine, Colin, Joan, Tennifer and Corrina, Robert, Cathy, Ben and Amy.

**Norman Tillet**

Passed away 4th October, 1997

'Lest We Forget'

Frances Tillet and family deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness and thank you most sincerely.

**VALE: Ron Neuzerling**

26.12.97

It is with much regret that we advise of the passing of Ron Neuzerling who died suddenly at his brother's home at Pingelly on Boxing Day. Ron's death came as a great shock to his family and members of the Association as he had attended our Christmas Social at Mandurah on the 5th December when he appeared to be in good health.

Ron came out from England with his family as a boy of 8 years. He grew up in the Denmark district and experienced the privations of the great depression as a youth. He enlisted in the AIF in May 1941 and, as WX11271 served with the old Unit in 9 Section in East Timor in 1941/42. Ron was a very fine soldier. A quietly spoken man, he always gave of his best and could be relied upon at all times. He took ill on his return to Australia and as a result missed out on rejoining the 2/2nd before it left for New Guinea in June, 1943. He tried hard to get back to the Unit, to no avail. He finished up in the 2/12th Commando Squadron and saw service in the Islands with the 2/12th. He always regretted missing out carrying on with the 2/2nd.

Ron met Faye, a South Australian lass while on leave there in 1944 and they eventually married. They were blessed with a family of one boy and five girls, Graham, Diane, Shirley, Sue, Jenni and Pam. Ron settled back in Perth and soon got work. In the early 1950s, at Faye's request, the family moved to South Australia where Ron had a number of jobs including a tram driver and working for a paint company. In 1973 Ron had the misfortune to lose Faye who passed away, which left him with the responsibility of caring for three of his youngest daughters. Shortly after Faye's death he decided to move back to Perth where his family were. He obtained a position with the Water Supply until he retired in 1978.

Ron then moved to Pingelly to assist on his brother's property where he became an active member of the local Bowling and Football Club. In 1994 he moved to Pinjarra near his daughter Sue, until he died. Ron enjoyed the few years at Pinjarra as it enabled him to join the Mandurah Branch socials and enjoy the company of old mates. By that time his family had increased to 14 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren – not a bad effort for one of life's battlers and a good man.

Ron was laid to rest in the peaceful surrounds of the Parklands Mandurah Cemetery on the 2nd January 1998, where he now rests with Arthur Smith and Gordon Barnes.

Present at the funeral were Len and Betty Bagley, Jack Carey, Keith Hayes, Mick and Jean Holland, Jim Lines, Bernie Langridge,

Gerry Maley, Bob McDonald, Don Murray, Joe Poynton, John Roberts from Victoria, Clarrie Turner, Roy Watson, Doc Wheatley. Len recited the Ode.

Deepest sympathy is extended to his family.

**Lest We Forget**

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**Mrs K. Sargeant**  
25 Thomas Street  
Gympie 4570

2nd January, 1998.

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your Christmas Card and also for your kind words about my late husband. I am enclosing photostat copies of a letter and news from the Australian War Memorial I received just before Christmas. It has made my Christmas an exciting and I must admit, an emotional one. I had, just a few days before, received a copy of the Gallery Redevelopment News from Mrs Marjory Brown, our State President of Queensland War Widows Guild. She, too, was excited about the news as she had published a story of 'Winnie the War Winner' and Jack's involvement in it, in our last Bulletin.

I have written to Dr. Peter Stanley and confirmed the write up and also the photo of Jack sent to me to identify. The only thing I asked was that our surname be corrected.

I have always known it was Jack who was at the transmitter on the night of April 19, 1942. Many stories of Timor have been written and most have given fictitious names of the sender and many have given Jack's wife's name as 'Joan.'

My family and I are hoping to visit the new Gallery which will not be opened until December 1998. It is a pity it will not be finished for your Safari in March, but I am sure you will have a wonderful time.

I wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

**Kathleen**

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**COMMENT:** Kath could well be right when she asserts that it could have been her name used when contact was made with Australia on April 19th, 1942. Both C. H. Wray's 'Timor 1942' and Colin Doig's 'A History of the 2/2nd Independent Company' state that George Parker and his wife 'Joan' were the people involved. George, who is on our mailing list, advises that he wasn't married at the time and did not know of a Joan. Can anyone shed any more light on this happening?

The following is an from an Australian War Memorial publication:- The World War 2 team has confirmed that 'Winnie the War Winner,' the heartbeat and symbol of Australia's effective commando campaign in Timor, is to be displayed in the new World War 2 gallery.

On 19 April, 1942, army signals in Darwin received a message claiming to come from the 2/2nd Independent Company, high in the rugged mountains of Timor. The duty officer, suspicious of how the men could have come by a radio transmitter, tapped out "What is the Christian name of Jack Sargent's wife?" When a gleeful Sargeant responded "Kathleen," Winnie the War Winner began its career as the link between guerrillas and HQ in Darwin. Radio co-ordination was the key to Australia's large-scale harassment of the Japanese in Timor during the rest of 1942.

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## CORRESPONDENCE CORNER.

**A. Mitchell**  
10 Covey St.,  
West Chermiside 4032

A few lines to let you know how things are.

September 1996 and have not been cleared from the doctor, I've lost my knee cap and having trouble getting to walking properly again. Will not be able to get to the Safari.

Have enclosed a cheque to be put to use whatever way you like.

Kind regards to all from Joan and myself.

**Allan**

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**S. Marsh,**  
17 McGough Street  
Glenorchy 7010

Enclosing a donation for the Courier – much appreciated. I look forward to receiving it and keeping in touch with old acquaintances.

Am still an active member of the local RSL Club at Claremont, and 2/40th Club which had a Christmas Dinner with wives and families. Not many of us left now.

Best wishes to everyone.

**Joan and Swampy**

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**J. and J. Keenahan**  
30 Duncan Street  
Huskisson 2540

A few lines from the south coast region. Jean and I have not been the best in health but with

a daily issue of VB and Tooheys we are coming good and look forward to seeing you all at the Safari. We are booked in at the Canberra Motor Village.

Enclosed is a cheque towards Courier expenses.

Jack and Jean

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**Mrs J. Chatfield**  
10/22 Third Avenue  
Mandurah 6210.

Please accept a donation towards the Courier. I always enjoy reading our worthy news, catching up with the great people I have met through the years.

Best wishes for health and happiness to all members and families.

Yours truly

Joy

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**Joy Snowdon**  
13/2 McKibbin Court  
Wodonga 3690

It is my sad duty to inform you that my father, Bob Snowdon, died peacefully in his sleep on 3 November, 1997. He didn't have any pain, suffering or illness – his heart just stopped beating.

Dad's full name, Robert George Snowdon Regimental No. VX125602 Served in New Guinea and New Britain. Joined the 2/2 Commando Squadron in January 1944 at Fiata, Ramu Valley as a reinforcement of the Sigs. He remained with the Unit until it was disbanded at the end of December 1945. He then transferred to Brigade Headquarters at Rabaul until June 1946 before coming back to Australia. Then followed a further stint with the Army central pay office in Melbourne until he was discharged in October 1946.

Yours sincerely,

Joy

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**Mrs K. Sargeant**  
25 Thomas Street  
Gympie 4570

I hope you good folk all enjoyed the festivities.

The ranks of the 2/2nd are thinning out, but its good to see you all getting together when you can. Age is certainly catching up with us all.

Enclosed donation for the Courier. I enjoy reading of your activities and will always be proud of the part my late husband played in the making of 'Winnie the War Winner.'

Sincerely,

Kathleen

**R. Archer**  
36 Soudan Street  
Toowong 4066

There was a full roll up for our Christmas get together at Hoop's house. It was really great having Happy and Russ with us too, but am sure Ralph will give you a full report.

Hope the numbers will build up for our Canberra Safari in March. The Committee has gone to so much trouble to make it a real GOER.

Best wishes and seasonal greetings to all our members and their families.

Ron and Lyn

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**J. P. Kenneally**  
28 Wilkins Street  
Yagoona 2199

Dear Len,

It's the lean time of the year so if you are short of material here's a bit to fill in the empty space. Three weeks into the new year and the ruin and gloom is spread across the front pages. Indonesia is getting more than its share of woe, drought, fires and now the collapse of the rupiah, and their economy, much of their woe self inflicted by the greed of some of their own people, but we shouldn't forget the greed of the western investors who will make sure they get their pound of flesh. Rescue package – for whom? Most certainly not for the people living in the Kampongs. They are going to be in hock for years. Low wages, high prices and millions out of work in a country bereft of a decent social system. A huge proportion of South East Asia's teeming millions are in for a pretty hard time. It may well behave the industrial west and Japan not to lean too heavily on them.

Nora and I spent the week after Christmas on the south coast. Helen, Peter and their family, Sean and his two were there at Batemans Bay, while Gerald Donna and their three were only 50ks away at Merry Beach. None of them were in Sydney for Christmas apart from Gerald and his family, so it was a family reunion. Not Michael, he has been working in New York since last July. He was in Sydney for five days in November, only because he had to go to New Zealand. He's back in the land of freeze, its been a pretty severe winter there. He's going to Ireland next week. He won't find it as cold but it could be just as miserable in weather context, according to letters we have had its been gales and rain in abundance. Here its the opposite, bush fires, searing heat, humidity and damn all rain. Since 1982 this side of our continent has had more bad



seasons than good ones. The cycle must change eventually. Thinking back to the 1940s we had much the same. I remember when we came home from New Guinea in 1944 the sun was a red disc in the sky for week after week as the top soil of New South Wales was being blown out over the Tasman sea, even as far as New Zealand. Our four seasons could be divided or renamed, Good, Flood, Drought and Fire and perhaps its never been any different.

I've spent little time watching cricket since the 1940s when I reckon the best team I've known was the 1948 touring team, fast bowlers, slow bowlers, medium pace and the first nine batsmen capable of scoring 100 runs. I was working on the wharf in Fremantle when they returned home. Don Bradman was walking on the wharf yarning away to some personality. I remember him playing in his first Test in Brisbane 1928 – we were walloped. I know in one of the innings first or second, I forget, Australia was all out for 66 runs. I think we possibly did worse than that when Freddy Titmus the English slow bowler tore us apart for about 37. I could have dreamed it.

For the first time I watched Australia versus South Africa in the one day match which we practically won, and lost, even with the South Africans helping us, dropping Steve Waugh twice. We got away with Warne interfering with the ball. Once Waugh and Bevan went the rest were pitiable. It was, however, exciting and that's a change in cricket. these days.

Not long to go now, John Howard will be forgotten when we descend on Canberra in March. Little Johnny may give us a vote of thanks for that. Temporary overshadowing, I am sure, would be more acceptable to him than oblivion.

Jack Hartley is having his share of misfortune with his health, Nothing the doctors can do now. It should all have been done ten years ago when some bright medico informed Jack there were more urgent cases than his. He has to take things extremely quiet now. Snow Went calls in and he is as good as a tonic. Snow always leaves a person with a far better outlook.

My thanks to Bob Smyth for the photos about the scouts in East Timor and the Cranfield report. We were lucky when they came our way and we were doubly lucky when Bob Smyth and his assistants tackled the job of turning our East Timor fund to work on worth while projects. As for Keith Hayes, his work on behalf of the Timorese is an example to all our members. Keith, unlike our governments post war, did not forget.

Anniversary Day 1998. The wind blown in from the west, Sydney skies clear blue and smog free. The harbour waters equally clear and blue

and sparkling. On shore every headland from Bald Rock on the north side and Flagstaff Hill on the south and eastwards to North Head and South Head thronged with people eager to see the annual ferry boat race but, more particularly, the line up of the tall ships as they head down the harbour for the race to Hobart. A really spectacular sight. The harbour crowded with boats both sail and power driven. If there is a more beautiful harbour anywhere I have not seen it and I've been in and out of a few in my time. God willing I hope to see a few more. Unfortunately Sydney Town cannot compare or add to the natural beauty with which it was endowed. It is our own fault, we allow it to happen.

I must end on a sad note in a final farewell to a friend whom Nora and I cherished down through the years. I refer to Betty Dignum (nee Hoffman). Betty had a double connection with the 2/2nd Independent Company and 2/2nd Commando Association through her brother, Ernie Hoffman, an original member of No. 7 Section and may I add a man who owed his life to the fact had he not been so ill, he would have died on February 20, 1942. Knowing the fun loving Ernie, he would have most certainly been on that truck to Dili on that fatal day. Come to think of it, Betty was lucky 'Dig' survived to marry the 16 year old he met before he marched off to war in 1939. He was wounded in the dying days of the Greek campaign at a time when walking wounded and fit men were the only ones being lifted off the beach. Thanks to the solidarity and mateship he made it and he married Betty at the end of 1945. To Andrew and Merlyn and their families we extend our deepest sympathy. We have lost a true and loyal friend. May you rest in peace Betty.

**Paddy Kenneally**

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## VICTORIAN NEWS

We were saddened to receive news that Bob Snowdon had passed away on 3rd November, 1997. Bob came to our Unit in New Guinea mid 1944 and was a Sig with 'A' Troop at Fiata and stayed with the Unit until the end of the war. He was a very quiet man and a good soldier.

After the war Bob was a dairy farmer near Wodonga until he retired and moved in to Wodonga with his wife and sister. He came to few of our functions and was very interested in the Unit Association. We convey our condolences to his wife and family.

On November 26 the Combined Commando Association held their annual commemoration service at Wilsons Promontory. Unfortunately the attendances are thinning out with the

passing on of a lot of members, sickness and the inability of some members to get about. Fred Broadhurst, Harry Botterill, Pat Petersen and Margaret Monk attended the service.

On December 1st we had our Christmas luncheon at Paterson River Country Club. We were blessed with a nice day and an enjoyable lunch. Present were Fred and Mavis Broadhurst, Harry and Olive Botterill, Wal and Bet Kerr, John and Shirley Southwell, Bruce and Lorraine McLaren, Margaret Monk and son Robert, Pat Petersen and sister Miriam Van Dyke, Leith, Marg. Cooper, Dave Brown, Ed. and Dot Bourke, Dot Veitch and daughter Susan, Bluey and Mary Bone, John and Cath Roberts and son Craig, Beryl Boast, Jack Fox, Win Humphreys, Joan Fryer, Shirley Shackleton, Nina Grachan. Apologies were received from Tom Nisbet, Patsy Thatcher, Harry and Aynsley Sargent, Joy Hodgson, Jock and Faye Campbell, Nancy Briggs, George and Dot Robinson, Sep and Monica Wilson, Joe Bramich, Paul Costelloe, Eileen Sharp and Thais Brown.

Our thanks to Wal Kerr for his donation to our Association. Wal was in the 2/1st Commandos and comes to a lot of our functions and is a great worker for the Combined Commandos Association of Victoria.

Tom Nisbet is not enjoying the best of health at present and we all hope he will overcome this set back and come back as good as ever.

I take this opportunity to wish all members a very happy and healthy 1998.

**Harry Botterill**

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## New South Wales News

Due to diminishing numbers, illness and incapacity, numbers were down for our Christmas luncheon at Dee Why RSL Club on Saturday, 6 December, 1997. In attendance were Bill and Coral Coker, Ray Cole, Frank O'Neill and friend Verna and their two friends, June Bennett with daughter Marilyn and husband Kevin, Colin and Val Holley, John 'Snow' Went, Andy and Melva Pirie (NSW Association Secretary) Ken and Pat Glover, Ray and Bonnie Whitely. Unfortunately there were almost as many apologies. We hope '98 is a better year for their health.

On Christmas Eve Paddy Kenneally and I attended a Requiem Mass and Cremation service for Linda, wife of our old Timorese friend Pat da Luz, who passed away on the 20th at the age of 80. A very sad occasion but I believe a happy release for one whose quality of life has been very poor for many years. Dick Withers represented 'Z' Special Unit. There

were many apologies from 2/2 and 'Z' Special members. The Mass was conducted by one of our very longtime friends, Timorese Priest Father Anthony Alyos whom we also met up with in Dili in 1995.

A congratulatory luncheon was held at Parliament House, Sydney in December to honour Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Jose Ramos Horta. I wasn't able to make it but I believe it was highly successful. Paddy or Gordon Hart might make a report on the event.

As members of 2/2nd and 2/5th Squadrons hope to be in Canberra for our reunions from 10th March, the AGM of NSW Commando Association has been brought forward to the 5th March at 11.00am at Paddington/Woolahra RSL Club. All ex Commandos welcome. One item in the pipeline is for a national reunion to be held each year from next year onwards. Any thoughts? The idea comes from Tom Lewis, ex politician, short time Premier of NSW, who reckons he can put it together if accepted.

**Special Request:** Does anyone have a copy of Sir Bernard Callinan's 'Independent Company' with a good dust cover. I would dearly like a colour copy and am prepared to pay for it if anyone can oblige.

### Anzac Day, Sydney:

Fall in at 8.15am in the vicinity of the Commando Memorial, Martin Place, for our own wreath laying service of remembrance. Afterwards, proceed to our march assembly position, corner of Elizabeth and Hunter Streets from which we usually move off about 9.45am. The reunion will take place aboard a UTA ferry from 12 noon. Cost remains at \$20 per head. Please try to be there, we need numbers to keep it going.

The Canberra Safari is only 32 days away (as I write) and we hope to keep that appointment. The programme looks good and we can but pray that we will see it through and return safely home.

The sick list is much the same, Jack Hartley, Alan Addison, Ron and Dorothy Trengove, Vince Walsh, Sid Dubber and my Edith, no dramatic changes. Fred Janvrin had one of his knees in for a grease and oil change.

Our sincere congratulations to Les and Verna Cranfield for their wonderful efforts with and for the Timorese. Best wishes,

**Alan Luby**

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## GERALDTON NEWS:

It was my privilege to visit Jack Fowler of Timor fame at our Regional Hospital before he was taken by Flying Doctor plane on October 28 for

additional surgery at Fremantle Hospital. I also had the pleasure of meeting Jack's daughter, Lynn Hunt, husband Hedley and daughter Lorinda of Three Springs, Jack's son Dexter and wife Pauline and daughter of Denham. Tom and Mary Foster and Jack Carey also visited him in Fremantle.

I showed Jack and Tom the coloured photo of Bishop Carlos Belo of East Timor displaying with deep gratitude some of the 80 soccer and volley balls donated by the Association and told them I compiled a news item for the two local newspapers in which I mentioned the Bishop's appreciation of the provision of numerous items and sponsored services. The Bishop's picture has appeared in one of the papers with a story headed 'On the Ball' but I hope my story headed 'Mutual Gratitude Exemplified' will appear in the other paper which still has the photo made available by Jack Carey.

Eric Weller is back at Geraldton after spending time with his son and daughter in Perth and is looking forward to the Canberra Safari. In a newspaper interview on Remembrance Day he recalled how his Unit staved off the enemy, disease and hunger for more than 12 months in Timor to become the only fighting force in the south west Pacific which refused to surrender.

The Remembrance Day period was full of activity including the pilgrimage to the War Cemetery, a Diggers' Dinner and Poppy Day when we registered our fourth consecutive record income of \$4,466 after distributing about 5,500 poppies.

God bless you all.

**Peter Barden**

## SERVICE MEDALS

### 1945-75 AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL.

This medal with clasp denoting the area of service, introduced in 1995 has been extended as at May 1997 to cover the SWPA for 30 days service in the Netherlands Indies, Portuguese Timor, Sarawak, Brunei, British Borneo, Phillipine Islands, Solomon Islands, Nauru and Ocean Islands, Burma Malaya and Singapore, and including all islands and waters forming part of those territories between 3 September, 1945 and 24 November 1946.

Application may be made by letter setting out full name and regimental number to –

**Supervisor Medals  
SCMA  
GPO Box 5108BB  
MELBOURNE VIC. 3001**

**P. Barden  
1/101 Francis Street  
Geraldton 6530**

Our hearty congratulations must go to Tom Foster for his sterling efforts that resulted in the provision of a huge copy of the painting by Charles Bush depicting the 'Ambush at Nunamogue' in East Timor, which he had framed for presentation to the SAS Regiment after our Commemoration Service in Lovekin Drive. All of you Timor participants should be extremely proud of the great job you did during those dark days of 1941-42. The painting had been commissioned by the Australian War Memorial for use by Australia Post as part of a series of limited edition envelopes depicting war scenes.

I had a lovely Christmas-New Year letter from Margo and George Shiels who are both well and busier than ever. George is still heavily involved with the RSL and the Memorial Club, while Margo has thoroughly enjoyed writing her own story and has also written up the history of her mother's side of the family, her grandparents and their children. Your computer efficiency continues to be tops, Margo.

As PRO for Geraldton City RSL Sub-Branch and a member for half of its history, I felt privileged to be able to provide much of the material for our publication '80 Years of History 1917-1997' which was formally presented at our 80th anniversary luncheon on December 14. Copies were presented to Miss Kerstine Jansson who initiated the project seven years ago as a 16 year old student, and to yours truly, and Mayor Phil Cooper for use in the Library.

We were originally formed as a Sub-Branch of the Returned Soldiers Association on Anzac Day 1917, and became a member of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League on December 11, 1917. A Marine Terrace building constructed in 1882 as Wainwright's Store became the Soldiers Institute and we moved to the newly constructed Birdwood House in 1935.

One of our most eloquent Mayors, Charles Eadon-Clarke, often lauded the efforts of our Sub-Branch, and one of his statements recorded in our History publication will be of interest to Association members. Speaking at the 1961 reunion, Charles said the Sub-Branch had been stressing the value of an emergency organisation and he felt that the organisation which existed to deal with the Carnarvon evacuees would not have existed had it not been for the insistence of the Sub-Branch. The 1956 and 1957 Sub-Branch President, the late Jack Denman MC, was the leader in this regard. In addition, one of our record books contains the consecutive signatures of Jack Denman, Bert Burgess, Joe Brand, Bill Drage,

additional surgery at Fremantle Hospital. I also had the pleasure of meeting Jack's daughter, Lynn Hunt, husband Hedley and daughter Lorinda of Three Springs, Jack's son Dexter and wife Pauline and daughter of Denham. Tom and Mary Foster and Jack Carey also visited him in Fremantle.

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We were originally formed as a Sub-Branch of the Returned Soldiers Association on Anzac Day 1917, and became a member of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League on December 11, 1917. A Marine Terrace building constructed in 1882 as Wainwright's Store became the Soldiers Institute and we moved to the newly constructed Birdwood House in 1935.

One of our most eloquent Mayors, Charles Eadon-Clarke, often lauded the efforts of our Sub-Branch, and one of his statements recorded in our History publication will be of interest to Association members. Speaking at the 1961 reunion, Charles said the Sub-Branch had been stressing the value of an emergency organisation and he felt that the organisation which existed to deal with the Carnarvon evacuees would not have existed had it not been for the insistence of the Sub-Branch. The 1956 and 1957 Sub-Branch President, the late Jack Denman MC, was the leader in this regard. In addition, one of our record books contains the consecutive signatures of Jack Denman, Bert Burgess, Joe Brand, Bill Drage,

and Bruss Fagg – names never to be forgotten. Also in this record book is the signature of Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood who commanded the Anzac Corps at Gallipoli with the rank of General and visited Geraldton in 1937. An inscription on a big photograph in the building that bears his name, refers to “Baron of Anzac and Totnes who commanded the Dardanelles Army 1915.”

During the 80th anniversary celebrations I extended best wishes to three Geraldton City Band members who have nominated for inclusion in the “Band of Somme” to be selected from all states and territories for a trip to France, Belgium and England in April, during the 80th anniversary of the end of WW1. Success would mean that our treasured Gallipoli bugle would accompany the Band. It was owned by 20 year old Sgt. Roy Thompson of the 11th Battalion who paid the supreme sacrifice fighting alongside his brother three days after they landed at Gallipoli on Anzac Day 1915.

It has been my privilege to compile the Obituary of a grand old gentleman of the 10th Light Horse Regiment, Gordon Percival White of Wembley Downs and formerly of the Morawa district, who at the age of 106 had been the oldest surviving member of WW1. A Life Member and benefactor of the Morawa Historical Society, he and his brother Hamill joined up from the Morawa district where they selected a virgin block for farming in 1910. This entailed catching the Midland train to Yandanooka and walking 48 kilometres to the Morawa area and then walking back to catch the train at Yandanooka. Gordon served in Palestine, Syria and Egypt but unfortunately missed out on catching up with Hamill who died in France after action in Gallipoli.

In conclusion, let me repeat the wish expressed in President Finky's Christmas message – ‘May the new year bring many blessings, much love, happiness and very good health.’

PETER

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## CANBERRA SAFARI

**A few last minute notes from the Safari Committee.**

**A reminder to members who are not staying at Oakford Apartments to please be at Oakford at 11am on Tuesday, March 10 for settlement.**

**If you are travelling by plane and have not already advised Fred Bagley of your arrival time would you please advise him on (02) 6288 0102 so that arrangements can be**

**made to meet you.**

**Gentlemen – don't forget to bring your medals.**

**Ron Morris**

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**Joan Stanley  
30 Francisca Street  
Everton Hills 4053**

Dear Len,

I came across my old travel diary from when Gordon and I went to Timor in 1971. Lacking anything of great interest to write about, I thought I would send you this.

One fine morning in July 1971 Gordon and I flew out of Brisbane for our first ever overseas trip to Timor. Personally, I was suppressing fear and ignorance about how I would cope with ‘the natives’ having been raised with the White Australia Policy.

We dropped into Mt. Isa and can now answer the question ‘Where do all the flies go in winter?’ They swarmed around us and landed on us as if we were made of sugar. On to Darwin where we sampled the local brew, swam in the pool and were amazed at the indigenous mix of people on the street. The sign outside the hotel lounge merely said ‘Clean shirt to be worn in the hotel lounge.’ They told me this was sufficient to keep ‘undesirables’ outside!

Off we flew to Bachau in a Fokker Friendship aircraft. We landed to highly disorganised chaos there with Customs and health authorities. Took myself off to the communal airport toilet which by our standards was filthy. The same towel was there two weeks later when we left Bachau. Sewerage standards for the island, in those days, were 50% unworkable. Coming out of the toilet a Portuguese Nun who had travelled from Brisbane with us, saw the stunned expression on my face and said ‘Very primitive Miss Australia!’ With my face and shape she had a fan for life.

Our plan was to fly to Dili by Dove aircraft but fate took a hand and the carburettor was broken and needed to go (wait for it) to Portugal to be repaired. On to one Land Rover piled seven of us, complete with luggage, mail, motor spare parts and any goodies from Australia. The scenery was magnificent but suffice to say that Gordon and I have never uttered a complaint about rough roads ever since.

On we went in discomfort and heat until we hit several miles of red bull dust. The Timorese driver laughed at us and took his hands off the steering wheel as we frantically tried to wind up

non-existent windows. We all looked like Red Indians as I mopped my face, hands and arms with my elegant lace handkerchief. I asked how long our trip would take and the response was that it had taken 5 hours yesterday due to 'he cabaret girl.' My imagination went into orbit until I was assured it was just another faulty carburettor.

We stopped at Manatutu for lunch – yabbies, chicken, chips, fried rice, Mozambique beer and coffee. Little did we realise that this was to be one of the most civilised meals we were to eat before our insides packed up totally with the bugs and odd meals.

After a jolly lunch, onward we went on that curly, narrow, corrugated road which wound around the mountain with a steep side down to the sea. The driver pointed out the graves of fellow drivers and passengers who had gone over the side and were buried where they died under white crosses.

The Turismo Hotel was modern and comfortable, the latest to be built in Dili. We flung off our red dust laden clothes and turned on the shower with the taps marked H and C. The water remained cold and the moment of truth was upon us – the H tap was purely for effect. Only at Same and Eremera were we to get warm water for showers. The warm water in these places was to be generated by two Timorese lads stoking a fire for about four hours which made us feel guilty that so much effort was needed to make warm water for 'the Australians.'

So ended our first day in Timor.

Gordon and I send all our good wishes to the lads and their wives for a good Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Regards,

**Joan**

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Seasons Greetings to all members and families were received from Kathleen Sargeant, Alma Moore, Blue and Edith Pendergrast, Blanche Sadler, Dulcie Gay, Warwick Tobin.

The W.A. Christmas get together was held in the Mandurah RSL Club and was a huge success. Fifty five members and families sat down to a superb 3-course traditional Christmas dinner complete with all the trimmings. The tables were beautifully decorated by Joy Chatfield who also made a nice gift for each lady. The gentlemen all received a little chocolate Father Christmas!

Alan Luby sent best wishes on behalf of NSW members.

Everyone was in festive mode and so pleased to be together on this happy occasion. Indeed,

a day to remember.

Apologies were received from Eva Rowley who was in Canberra for her grandson's graduation from Duntroon, Archie Campbell, Stan and Barbara Payne, Bob Smyth, John Burrledge, Terry and Ivy Paull, Henry Sproxton, Les Halse, Albie Friend, Peter Alexander, Ron Dook, Betty Hopkins, Dulcie Ryan.

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## INDEPENDENT TRUST

4.2.1998

Last night Les and Verna Cranfield returned from East Timor and were greeted by their family and also Jack and Delys Carey, Keith and Val Hayes and Bob Smyth.

They were pleased to return from an arduous but most satisfying visit. Seasonal conditions were oppressive and although Les (on his 3rd trip) battled successfully Verna had a reoccurrence of a leg ulcer which she waived aside, being confident of an early healing.

To my query Verna expressed appreciation of the two Xmas cards they received from Keith and Val and from Jack and Delys.

From a previous corn yield of 400 KG the present crop yield will exceed 5 tonnes. More details are contained in separate letters from Les and Verna.

They have again voluntarily made an enormous contribution to the mental and physical health of all those people who are dependent on the Don Bosco brotherhood. Les and Verna have demonstrated methods of vastly improving the restrictive life style of an oppressed people.

Following a few "de briefing sessions," more will be reported in the next Courier.

If any would care to write a card FAX/phone Les and Verna details are:

**Les and Verna Cranfield**  
**6/3rd Avenue**  
**Shoalwater Bay 6169**  
**FAX/Phone (08) 9528 3832**

Regards all members

**Bob Smyth**  
 Independent Trust

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**Fuiloro**  
**East Timor**  
**29.11.97**

**Dear Bob and Margaret and friends of the 2/2,**

Well back in Timor and nothing much has



changed in the way of life up here, the weather has been very dry and hot, but this week we received some good rains, one burst we got 4 1/2" in about 3 hours.

I took a gamble on sowing the crops before the rain and lucky for me we had this rain so everything should work out well. This time we have around 4 times as much corn in the ground just at Fuiloro. The last six months we were here their crop yield was more than doubled so I hope if this crop yields as well they will be able to handle all the grain.

It is sad to see so many people coming here and asking for food for their families. last week Fr. Jose took us down to Soibada Orphanage, the Quaker service in Tasmania have been writing to me asking to go and have a look and advise them on growing vegetables and setting up a water supply for them, the water is Fr Jose's little pet and he is very good at it, the drive there takes between 5 and 6 hours and the temperature was 39° up in the mountains. We had to stay overnight, the building was a 100 years old and getting run down, if anybody wants to see what poverty is they should go there, one Sister told us quite often there's just no food to eat at all, remind me to tell you one day about the toilet facilities.

This week at Fuiloro Fr Edmond started up a youth activity programme, he went to Dili at the beginning of the week and we have been putting pressure on him to get some of the tents from Comoro and use them, he came back with twelve.

We can only have anything like this if it is held on our own premises, there was also someone looking over the fence to see what was going on. In Dili they can have these youth groups but run by the Catholic Church and not registered as scouts. One would want to be very careful about pushing this as they might lose what they have.

It was terrific to see the enjoyment on their faces and all the activities Fr. Edmond had for them, even the girls had to put up their own tents, incidentally there were twelve bodies per tent.

We are also involved in setting up a programme at Methra which is twenty kms from here. They want to put in 20ha of rice before someone takes the land off them, we sent our boys down there 1st week to plough it up, this week I shall have to set up a machine to sow it for them, we intend to sow it dry, not the conventional way of plodding through water.

Fr Jose is very interested in Interplast but at the moment when he is not down with Malaria, he has to catch up on everything else, lately he has been leaving a lot of things for me to arrange, but we will get to it before long.

I guess by the time you receive this letter, it will be Christmas so I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Xmas and hope everybody is well.

Yours sincerely,  
Les and Verna

**Don Bosco Agr. Coll,  
Fuiloro  
14.12.97**

Dear Bob and Margaret

Very best wishes to you and all the 2/2nd for 1998.

Enclosing photos taken last weekend or November. Tenting equipment you have sent is shared and borrowed around and except for two tents then returned to Comoro, Dili. This was the first camping weekend for "male and female scouting youth group." Highly successful from start to finish to see scores of boys and girls coming over the hill, past the sewing workroom, with (the girls) their sleeping mat under arm and bundle of possessions was an absolute joy. All I could hear was "Mrs Annie, Camp! Camp!"

Security reasons for tents erected in Don Bosco grounds. Also makes the children feel secure (Fr. Edmund and a couple of the Salesian Brothers actually sleep in the dormitory with the boys at night. You have no idea of the fear). Bob, think it far better to leave the "scout group" as it is. It is not an international group as we know it. Suspicion is rife even with a group of a dozen people together. What the group really is at each of the Salesian Colleges is, local youth, brought together to try to trust each other to work and socialise together in respect and harmony. What you people have donated to this group is wonderful. Thank you all. So proud to be associated with 2/2nd.

Rains have come and everyone extremely busy. Have had to take a few days off sewing this week (which I can ill afford!). The vegetable garden (2 hectares) ploughed up etc. and the vegetable nursery, "the boss" and I have planted ready for sowing. Guess who was the person allocated to sowing the vegetables. Always fancied a market garden. Hard work but looking so good. Not a chore as the little nuns work just as hard and swing that bush knife like a veteran. Tractor can not get back onto that piece of land now and there is still quite a whack of their maize (that they use for theirs and the boarders consumption) to go in. Anyway, yesterday Les trundled up the hill with a sack of maize on his back to leave for hand sewing, then he was off again to paddocks. Within 1/2 hour there were the nuns and teenage female boarders planting maize by



hand and the only suitable way for the way the plot is now. Already ploughed and ridged. One girl goes down the ridge with a round stick making 5cm hole – one behind drops in one maize seed and covers hole. Then I come behind with bucket pulling out weeds that grow overnight and limestone rocks. Never ending job and I seem to be way behind but it is looking so good! Today is Sunday and it is all hands on deck. Never felt so fit or so happy.

Thank you one and all, fond regards,

Verna and Les.

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**Anthony W. Burton**  
14 Pitt Court,  
Earlville, Cairns 4870

**DICK BURTON**

Dear Editor,

In regard to the issue you had in the 2/2 Commando Courier, February 1991.

I am Dick Burton's younger son Anthony William, born in Liverpool, NSW, 15.9.59. Dad was in Holsworthy Army Camp when I was 3 or 4 and then moved to Duntroon Military College until around the age of 8 when he left army life and headed towards Cairns for reasons I knew not at the time. We made a slight detour and ended up at a place called Mundubbera where dad got a job with the local council and soon after mother and father went separate ways which left dad with five daughters, my two brothers and myself. After a short time it proved impossible for him to work and look after the family. He was pressured by the locals to put us in an orphanage at which we stayed for about 12 months, at which time dad collected us. We left on a Sunday and got back to Mundubbera late that evening. It was a long trip in a VW Beetle (5 sisters, dad and myself). My brothers were old enough and had gone off working by themselves. Dad was killed on the job at work the next day. My three sisters and I were in such shock we were placed in hospital after which we were placed in temporary homes by a few locals. The people who looked after me for the first two days lived around the corner from our old house which I visited. On opening dad's wardrobe I saw his uniform with all his medals on it. Many years later when I was old enough to drive I went back to visit dad's grave and was horrified I couldn't find it. Several years later my younger sister made the pilgrimage to try and find some information on where dad was buried. She found that the only thing on the grave was a number. She had a wooden cross made and placed it on the grave.

Since those days I have learned more about what my father did in the army only because of an article I read in the 2/2 Commando Courier,

which makes it even harder to accept that someone who had been through so much for his country and mates could lay rotting in the ground without so much as a word to say who he was or what he had been through. I have tried my utmost to get a headstone or something for his grave or even a bit of documentation on his army history. I couldn't even find out what happened to his personal effects and medals. In my travels I have found that ex-soldiers don't like to discuss their tremors and horrors. Being a son of an ex-soldier I can tell you it's the not knowing that hurts. I have found a monument in Cairns dedicated to the Z Force which I was told is actually 2/2 Commandos. Can anyone confirm this being true or false. I was saddened to see such a pitiful monument to the men who had done so much for so little. I have never served in the army but I was under the illusion that the army could at least have buried my father with a bit of dignity. I am totally disillusioned with the army, as what it has done to my family can never be mended and my own personal wounds are too numerous to mention. Any photos or literature would be gratefully received.

Yours sincerely,

**Anthony Burton**

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**Extremely Disabled War Veterans  
Association of Australia Inc  
PO Box 145 Kalamunda WA 6076  
Phone 9293 3962  
Registered Nationally**

**ATTENTION** all War Veterans in receipt of the Extreme Disablement Adjustment pension from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The above association wishes to let you know that there is a group of veterans just like you (all EDA recipients) that would welcome you as a member.

A group of West Australian EDA recipients first registered their association in W.A. on April 17, 1997, known as the Extremely Disabled War Veterans Association of WA Inc. Now, with the help of the States Deputy Commissioners of the Veterans Affairs Department the membership has extended across the country. It is now known as the EDA Association of Australia.

The mission of the Association is to serve the interests of the EDA recipients and their partners. To ensure that they are aware of their entitlements. Have a social support network. Have a political voice and be represented by a State and National Body.

We are financed by a membership fee and donations. The current annual membership fee is \$20.00 commencing July 1.

Membership eligibility is extended to a veteran in receipt of the EDA pension, their spouse or carer.

Members will receive a National membership card, a National EDA badge and a quarterly National EDA Newsletter containing EDA news from State Branches across Australia.

You are encouraged to use the EDA Newsletter to give support and information to our more frail members

**Everett Ambrose** (National Secretary)

Jess Epps, who often visits members who find it hard to get about, called on Lew and Una Thompson prior to Christmas. Lew, who is our oldest member, in his early nineties, is battling along OK and sends his regards to his old sapper mates. Una also sends her love. Lew, who was made a life member in 1994, has been a loyal and generous supporter of the Association since its inception in 1946. God bless you both.

Joan Burns, widow of Bob who passed away some years ago, died on 13th January after a long and painful illness. Joan, who showed amazing spirit for her size, attended our Christmas Social with her son, Bob. It was a courageous effort on her part but it was something she was determined to do. Joan was all heart and a wonderful little lady. Deepest sympathy is extended to sons Bob, Bruce, Brian and families. Jess Epps, Joe Poynton, Don Turton, Wilf March and Jack Carey represented the Association at the funeral.

John and Cath Roberts spent a month in W.A. recently with their daughter Jane and son-in-law Mac. John and Cath have not enjoyed the best of health but they take a positive outlook on life and enjoy meeting up with old friends. It was good to see them again.

## JUNE COURIER COPY DEADLINE

**TUESDAY, MAY 26th, 1998**

## SICK PARADE

**Gwenda Kirkwood** goes into Hollywood Hospital in early February to have a right knee reconstruction. We wish you well Gwenda and promise to come and see you after your op.

**Arch Campbell** also has a left knee condition which may need an operation. Arch, who has been a fitness fanatic most of his life has slowed down to a trot but is still as cheerful and bright as ever.

**Keith Hayes** drops in to see **Fred Humfrey** at the Swan Cottage Homes at Bentley every so often. Fred, a laconic type, although now up in years is keeping well and appreciates Keith calling. Fred was a cook in the Unit, and quite a good one at that.

**Jack Hartley** is struggling with a serious heart condition and will not be attending the Safari because of it. Our feelings go out to Jack, a top citizen whose contribution to the Association for over 52 years is unsurpassed. Our love goes to Maria too at this difficult time.

**Jack Carey**

## DONATIONS TO COURIER:

Henry Sproxtton, Jack Keenahan, John Jones, 2/4th Kath Sargeant, Doc Wheatley, Keith and Val Hayes, Bob McDonald, Dusty Studdy, Mark Jordan, Joan Burns, George and Bettye Coulson, Joy Chatfield, Ron Archer, Jack and Maria Hartley, Blue and Edith Pendergrast, Swampy Marsh, Alma Moore, Ron Morris, Blanche Sadler, Dulcie Gay, Allan Mitchell.

**Donations to Trust Fund:** 30.1.98. Alan Luby \$50, Archie Campbell (fifth) \$500.

**Donation to Christmas Luncheon:** Isabel and Pat MacDonald.

## ADDRESS CHANGES:

Mr. E. Smyth  
Eric and Twy  
2/20 Pettit Crescent  
Busselton 6280

Mrs B. Snowden  
Bernice  
13/2 McKibbin Court  
Wodonga 3690

Mrs D. Veitch  
Dot  
40 Barclay Street  
Sunbury 3429

Mrs F. Tillet  
Fran  
48 Wanstead Street  
Corowa 2646  
(02) 6033 1562

## ADDITIONS:

Mr. A. Burton  
Anthony  
14 Pitt Court  
Earlville 4870

Mr. L. Cranfield  
Les and Verna  
6 Third Avenue  
Shoalwater Bay 6169  
Fax/phone (08) 9528 3832

# COMING EVENTS

Attention W.A. Members!

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

at ANZAC CLUB

on Tuesday, 14th April

commencing 11am

followed by a snack and refreshments

**Members are asked to make a special effort to attend  
this important meeting.**

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## ANZAC DAY

Saturday, 25th April, 1998

Fall in 9.30 am at our usual spot in St. Georges Terrace

Members fit enough are asked to take part in the march.

**A get together after the service will be held at The Terrace Hotel,  
195 Adelaide Terrace beginning about noon.**

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## NORMA HASSON SOCIAL

at The Terrace Hotel, 195 Adelaide Terrace

Friday, 3rd July, 1998

11am Refreshments – 12.30pm Luncheon

This is always a good day – so Be There.

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**Members are to keep these events in mind and give the Committee  
their full support**

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