

2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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President R. D. Darrington. Secretary J. Carey. Treasurer T. Monk.

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ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS and FRIENDS!

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Book now. This may well be our last Safari. An early booking will give our organisers, Bert and Billie Price and Gerry and Nancy Slade, some indication of the number attending.

An itinerary will appear in the September Courier.

VALE:**Ross 'Fuzzy' Wintour**

News of the passing of Ross on 25th October, 1998 was not received until some time after his death so the Association was not represented at his funeral. Ross, or 'Fuzzy' as he was better known, served with the old Unit in 7 Section in New Guinea and New Britain. He was a good soldier and as a young 'Pom' received plenty of good humoured banter from his Section mates, but to his credit he gave as much as he got.

Little is known of his early life but we have found out since his death that he came out from England as a boy of ten years and spent some years' in the thirties at the Fairbridge Farm School near Pinjarra. The school has always had a good record for caring for young people and his time spent there would have prepared him well for the hard times ahead. That he was able to make his mark in a tough old world speaks volumes for his character.

A nice tribute was paid to 'Fuzzy' in the Cairns Post of 28th October, three days after he died. Under the heading 'Battler for Cairns Dies' it begins 'Cairns business identity and long time tourism industry supporter Ross Wintour died in the Calvary Hospital on Sunday (25/10) aged 77 after a long illness. Mr Wintour was known as a tenacious Aussie battler who fought campaigns most of his adult life. He was passionate about the city he called home for more than 40 years and fought to preserve its special way of life.' The article goes on to say how 'Fuzzy' led the charge for bike riders to wear safety helmets, how he fought for better roads, better road safety and bicycle lanes to separate vehicular traffic from cyclists. It was also his idea that a tourist road be identified linking the tourist attractions of the Cairns region from Cardwell in the south to Port Douglas in the north and west to the Tableland. When he introduced his great ring road concept in the early 1980's nobody wanted to hear about it except his colleagues in the Cairns Chamber of Commerce with which he had a long association, serving in many positions. Today the ring road exists as Tourist Route 14.

Ross is survived by his wife Barbara, his son Raymond and three daughters Annette, Janice and Carolyn, as well as 10 grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at St. Margaret's Anglican Church in Cairns on 30th October. A large gathering of family, friends, business associates and the Cairns RSL was testimony of his contribution to his city and the people of Cairns over many years.

I'm sure the Fairbridge Farm people would take

pride in Ross 'Fuzzy' Wintour's achievements, as would his' old mates in 7 Section. May he rest in peace.

Deepest sympathy to the Wintour family.

Lest We Forget

Tony Adams

VALE: Max Lawrence Miller

It is with much regret we advise of the passing of Max 'Bluey' Miller on 5th January in the Burnie Hospital, Tasmania at the age of 83.

Max was born in Burnie on 15th September, 1915 and lived most of his 83 years there.

Max enlisted in the AIF in June 1940 and went to serve as a staff sergeant in the 2/40 Battalion on Timor. When the Japanese invaded Timor in February 1942 Bluey was among those more fortunate ones who were able to cross the border and join up with the 2/2nd who were running their own little war in East Timor. He was evacuated with the 2/2nd in December 1942 and went home to Burnie on leave and married his sweetheart Noreen on 6th February. This was the start of a very happy marriage which lasted close on 56 years. Max went on to serve with the 2/12th Battalion in New Guinea and later in Balikpapan in the 1943/45 period. He was discharged on 3rd November, 1945.

In civvy life Max ran a menswear shop in Burnie for a number of years and had other jobs in that line of industry until his retirement. He had his share of health problems, mainly caused by his war service, but his placid manner helped to overcome these trials. He was a quiet, unassuming, but likeable man who had a keen sense of humour. He potted around in the garden and was a keen football follower. He and Noreen took an active roll in the Burnie Scouts Association activities for over 30 years.

There were two sons and one daughter from their marriage.

Max looked forward to receiving the Courier. He and Noreen attended many of our Safaris and made a lot of nice friendships with members and their wives from other states as a result. They were a lovely couple and it is sad to see the chain broken, but such is life.

Max's funeral was held at the Burnie Lawn Cemetery on the 7th January before a gathering of his family and friends, including his old mates from the 2/40 and 2/12 Battalions. The Burnie RSL did the Last Post and Reveille, The Ode was said and the Boy Scouts Association provided a guard of honour. A fitting end for another good Australian. May he rest in peace.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Noreen and family.

Lest We Forget

Jack Carey

VALE: Michael Calvert

They have gone now, those two remarkable men who left their marks upon us in many ways and set the fighting philosophy of our Unit. Churchill found it remarkable that we did not surrender. Had he been cognisant of the type of thinking which Calvert and Chapman dispensed he would have understood.

Frederick Spencer Chapman (Freddy Chapman to his British contemporaries) Everest climber, Greenland explorer and field craft instructor par excellence, left us first. Now Michael Calvert has gone. Who was he? He was a leader of men. He was a soldier, an engineer, a master of weaponry, a demon in the field of offensive demolitions. It was this latter skill and the way he used it that earned him the title of Mad Mikø. In training he admitted to us that his idea of a sublime situation was to have mined a rack way bridge and be able to touch off the agents of destruction as a heavily loaded troop train was making the crossing.

Promotion they say is slow in an army, particularly the British Army, but Calvert managed to rise from Sapper Subaltern to a Major General in one war. Probably his first active service of real note before we met him was taking part in the destruction of the whale oil refinery in the Lofoten Islands thus denying essential machine oil to Germany. However, his greatest contribution to the war effort was his active soldiering in both training and command of those loose knit multi-racial independent companies known as the chindits which, by their incessant harassment of the enemy played such a part in denying the Japanese free passage from Burma to India.

The loss of Wingate in an air disaster and the promotion of Fergusson left the field clear for Calvert to take charge of this force. He not only assumed directive command but took an active part in pressing far beyond the enemy front lines and with great use of explosives destroyed rail links, depots, food and ammunition dumps to the consternation of enemy command. He tells something of this in his book 'Chindit.' I commend it to you.

Calvert's life subsequent to the war was an unhappy one. Although a capable engineer, his alcoholism made it impossible to keep a job for long. On his trip to Australia many of us tried to help him, with little success. I must say he seldom felt sorry for himself and fortunately as he got older he developed some control.

Calvert used to love to tell a story of an incident that occurred when he was in charge of mining a British beach. The job was completed and Calvert had dismissed his Sappers and retained only his Sergeant Major who was an expert in drawing up accurate plans of the position of the mines and the safety lines. The Sgt. Major rushed to Calvert's tent and said 'Sir, there's a whale boat rowing ashore.' Calvert ordered him to rush down and hold them below the tide line. Dressing hastily, Calvert made his way on a jagged course to the beach. The whale boat slipped its oars and ran into the cobbles of the beach. A very large blonde man stepped out and said 'I am Erik. We have come.' 'Where from?' asked Calvert. 'Norway' said Erik. 'Why have you come?' 'To vight of course.'

To Calvert that was one of the planks of his existence for, as he said, he then knew there was no way that anyone could suppress the free peoples of the earth and that no matter how long it took the war would be won.

I retell this story to give some indication of the character of Michael Calvert and the nature of his thoughts. He was a soldier and I for one feel eternally grateful to him.

Lest We Forget

Ray Aitken

News has been received of the passing of three of our widows namely:

Bonnie Snowdon of Narrabundah, NSW in December 1998.

Madge Field of Coffs Harbour, NSW also in December 1998.

Mary Martin of Peshurst, NSW. Date of death not known.

By a strange coincidence, all their late husbands were named Tom.

The Association extends deepest sympathy to the families of the deceased.

I am writing to inform that my aunt, Mary Martin of 670 King Georges Road PESHURST NSW 2222 passed away on 10 October, 1998.

I would be pleased if you could arrange to have her name deleted from your membership list.

Until his death, Mary's husband Tom Martin was an interested and concerned member of the Association. I know that Mary valued receiving the Courier and in conversation made frequent reference to the news it contained.

On behalf of the members of our family I would like to thank the Association, especially the

hard-working executive, for the way it has continued, for more than fifty years, to acknowledge the contributions of individual members of the Association and to tirelessly support them and their families.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Walton

NSW NEWS

Dear Editor,

As the end of January 1999 is rapidly approaching I guess I should get the finger out, and the pen of course! and put together some NSW news for our March Courier.

Firstly, our Christmas luncheon at Dee Why RSL Club on 5th December was the usual very pleasant event with 23 members, wives, widows, family, friends and carers present. Our luncheon was made all the more pleasant by the presence of our National President, Ralph Finkelstein from Perth, accompanied by his son Peter who lives in Sydney. Luckily the Club is within walking distance from our unit, as I had only been home from hospital for three days, so Edith and I were able to race up in good time on our walking sticks. That first cold beer tasted real **GOOD!**

Christmas and New Year were quiet family affairs which I imagine is the way of most of us these days.

Our thanks to all of our friends who sent cards, phoned and/or visited both of us at Christmas time or during our terms in hospitals. We endeavoured to reply to everyone – if by chance we missed anyone we apologise. Apropos to that, after two adjournments, Edith finally had her hip repair job done at North Shore Hospital on 7th October and remained there for two weeks, after which she came home. We had a couple of visits from the Home Nursing Sisters who then reckoned we could manage alright. Fortunately we could, with some help from both our daughters. Prior to that, probably from July, my right hip was becoming more worrisome with the cartilage finally disintegrating. Luckily for me, when it finally packed up I got an appointment with a top specialist within a few days. and had the operation on 18th November at the Mater Hospital. I'm pleased to say that as far as our hip joints are concerned we have both made a good recovery, taking everything into consideration. Fortunately Edith has been able to get back into the pool at Harbord Diggers Club for her aquarobics. I've been on hold for that because of a pressure blister (burst of course) on my right heel which has been very stubborn at healing – those white T.E.D.

stockings ain't all they're cracked up to be! As a result I've been giving the Gold Card a real bash, we are good enough to look forward to a champagne and sausage breakfast in the beach park with our family and friends for Australia Day.

Enough about the Lubys, others have had more than a fair share of ill health. Ron and Dorothy Trengove have endured a pretty rough couple of years and continue to fight the odds. Kath Press and Betty Craig are pretty much in the same category, as are Frank O'Neill, Vince Walsh, Sid Dubber and Alan Addison and Alan Dixon are all either wheel chair or house bound.

Because of his state of health, which includes four major operations last year, Gordon Hart, 2/4th Squadron, who has been an associate member for years, has found it necessary to resign from his positions as Editor of NSW Commando News and chief 'raffle runner'. He has done a great job for many years and will be hard to replace. Bill and Coral Coker have both had some ups and downs, but battle on and luckily Jack Hartley is more than holding his own.

During last December we were saddened by the loss of two of our widows. Madge Field passed away at a nursing home at Turramurra, NSW on 7th December. Our Association was represented by Kay and Dianne Cole at her funeral service. Her son would like to continue to receive the Courier. He read a most eloquent Eulogy at the service. On Christmas Eve Warren Snowdon advised that his mother Bonnie had passed away early that morning. Dan Daniels arranged for representation at her funeral service on December 30th. Warren would like to receive the Courier. We were also advised that Brig. (Ret.) Mike Calvert passed away at the end of last year.

Joan Darge phoned recently to inform me that she and John Meldrum married in the middle of last year. They have both had many health problems and we can but hope their future together is brighter.

That's all I have for this time except to add our greetings to everyone and keep as well as you can during 1999.

Sincerely,

Alan Luby

VICTORIAN NEWS:

On December 7th we held our Christmas luncheon at Paterson River Country Club. It was a glorious day and the following 29 attended – Rolf Baldwin, Beryl Boast, Harry and Olive Botterill Ed. and Dot Bourke, Fred

and Mavis Broadhurst, Leith and Marj. Cooper, Jack Fox, Nina Grachan, Alf Harper, Wal and Bett Kerr, Margaret Monk and son Colin, Pat Petersen and sister Miriam Dyke, John and Cath Roberts and son Craig, John and Shirley Southwell, Patsy Thatcher, Joan Freyer, Joyce Veitch and daughter Janette, Win Humphreys. Apologies were received from Tom Nisbet, Dawn and Arch Claney, Bruce and Lorraine McLaren, Blue and Mary Bone, Paul Costelloe, Dulcie Gay, Eileen Sharp. It was a wonderful dinner, well catered and in pleasant surroundings.

Leith Cooper welcomed all present and was sorry Tom Nisbet, our President, was not well enough to attend. Jack Fox proposed the toast to the Queen. Leith presented Life Membership badges to John Roberts, Jack Fox, Rolf Baldwin and John Southwell, thanking them for the great service they have given our Association in past years. All responded, thanking the Association for the honour that was bestowed on them.

Our thanks again to Wal Kerr who gave us a donation of \$25. He does this each year and we are grateful to receive it.

I take this opportunity to wish all members a merry Christmas and safe, happy New Year.

Harry Botterill

GERALDTON NEWS:

At the outset let me heartily congratulate President Finky on his Christmas message and extend to Ralph and Eve our best wishes for a healthy 1999. Also, many thanks Mr President for your wonderful Commemoration Day address which contained much food for thought for a better world. Hearty congratulations also to Bob Smyth for his great story in the 'Listening Post' under the heading '2nd Independent Company - The Australian-East Timor Connection.'

I had a newsy letter from Margo Shiels of Bowen, Queensland, saying that she and George are very well and have had a good year with plenty of travelling including a wonderful meeting of treasured friends at the Canberra Safari. They were planning to spend a month in the U.S. in February and would be attending the 54th anniversary reunion of the Manila Liberation at San Diego and then their friends were arranging a trip to Arizona, Utah and Colorado. George is still involved in the RSL and the Bowen Memorial Club and Margo hopes to have her book in print by the middle of 1999.

We had a very moving and emotional ceremony on Mt. Scott, Geraldton, to dedicate

the site for a comprehensive Memorial to HMAS Sydney and her crew of 645 who were lost off the midwest coast on November 19, 1941 after a battle with the German raider 'Kormoran'. RSL Secretary, Brian Cooper and Rotary President Richard Larriera have been heartily congratulated on the excellent manner in which they handled unjust criticism from Gascoyne RSL President at Carnarvon. Brian told Gascoyne RSL that the 30,000 residents of our region would not see a memorial in Perth Carnarvon as being particularly useful to our commemorations, and that services have been held in Geraldton for a number of years without the benefit of a memorial. In addition, HMAS Sydney made three recorded visits to Geraldton and enjoyed its hospitality in 1937, in November 1939 for three days R and R and again on October 18-20 1941, the month before its loss. Shows were put on by the crew which also took part in sport with local teams. Our Visitors' Book at Birdwood House includes the names of 17 personnel from the 'Sydney' including 15 RAN and two RN personnel. Furthermore, a blackboard message at the RAAF Sergeants' Mess at Geraldton had the chalk heading "Good luck to the air boys from HMAS Sydney." Members of the ship's company wrote the message during the cruiser's last visit - and 13 names of CPOs, POs and one RAAF Sgt attached to the ship appeared at the bottom. We strongly supported the Rotary Club's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the loss of the 'Sydney' an inquiry for which we were partially responsible through our resolution by State and National Congresses for action along the lines suggested by the late Senator John Panizza. One of the Terms of Reference related to the possible establishment of a National Memorial and Geraldton made a submission on this subject. For the uninitiated, Carnarvon has a Cairn at Quobba Station and a Remembrance Wall at the town Cenotaph.

Many of you would have met Nip Cunningham's brother, Bill during your Geraldton visits over the years. I was privileged to outline Bill's history of truly outstanding community service at his 90th birthday party at Birdwood House that resulted in a BEM award, RSL Life Membership, City Freemanship and numerous Life Membership awards. Bill, ex 2/11 Bn. was a POW of the Germans.

I have been kept busy with my RSL work as PRO and have continued to compile news items including obituaries for the local news media. In the obituary for my close friend, newsagent John Rock, I recalled the occasion when John and I encouraged one of our great mates, the late Dick Guscott, to issue a challenge to district women tennis players in 1974 following the defeat of 30 year old player Margaret Court by 55 year old Bobby Riggs

USA. Trainee school teacher Christine Williams of Northampton accepted the challenge but the 18 year old said she didn't feel confident because men kept telling her that Dick would win. However, she won 6/1, 6/4 and helped to raise about \$800 for the Northampton Kindergarten. Our mate said he couldn't get going properly and had been hampered by a pulled elbow muscle received at a training session – with a **woman!**

God bless You all.

Peter Barden

Queensland News

We have been inundated over the past few weeks with the heaviest rainfalls for many years. It seems we are returning to what was referred to years ago as the Wet Season. Severe flooding at Gympie north of Brisbane and Cyclonic weather in the far north has brought hardship to many. The positive is that our dams are full and water assured in Brisbane for example for the next five years.

On the home front my award of the OBE (Over bloody eighty) came through on 26th. January and I could not help thinking back to the 19th February 1942 when the chances of survival seemed limited indeed.

On Monday 14th. December we held our Xmas get together at Valentine's Restaurant, Chapel Hill, Brisbane. The good roll-up included Ron Archer and Lyn Love, Col and Jeanette Andrew, Butch and Pat Barnier, George and Bettye Coulson, Neil and Margaret Hooper, Mervyn Murphy, Gordon and Joan Stanley and Ralph and Sheila Conley. Apologies were received from Fred Otway, Paddy Wilby, Alex Veodevin and Tony Adams. It was a Happy day and everyone enjoyed themselves. It was great to see Hoop on his feet and of course he has improved immensely since then.

Our regular barbeque was held Monday, 15th February at North Pine Dam and included Butch and Pat Barnier, Col and Jeanette Andrew, Gordon and Joan Stanley, Neil and Margaret Hooper George and Bettye Coulson, Ralph and Sheila Conley, Jak and Beryl Steen and their friends John and Margaret Evans, unfortunately Tony Adams was not with us as Iris is not well at this time. As usual we spoke of those members on the sick list including Don Turton and Archie Campbell and informed members of recent advice from Bob Smythe regarding a visit by Fr. Jose Vattaparambil and Les Cranfield to Kingaroy (QLD) to obtain a corn harvesting machine etc. Our next meeting is to be held at Golden Beach Caloundra on 29th march. Should Members be visiting at that time please join us.

Best wishes to all and a speedy recovery to those ill at this time.

Ralph Conley.
PO Box 55
Bribie Island 4507

Maclean, 12. 2. 99

Dear Len,

Most Australians talk about the weather. Well, we've had a fortnight or more of it here and although we needed rain I'm ready to call quits after about 10 inches. Mind you, it could be lots worse when you look at what the Sunshine Coast etc. have copped. Gympie had the biggest flood in 100 years. I got my washing dry last Saturday and yesterday the ladies were able to play bowls. Back to rain today.

Most of the troops are in good health for oldies. On Thursday the 28th January – the day the rain started, Jack Steen, Beryl, Russ Blanch and I met at the Evans Head RSL Club for lunch. The Sigs communicating again. Jack came down to recce the Evans river as he has a mate from Bunbury coming over and wanted to check out the fishing situation. Evans Head is midway between Russ's place and mine so it was good to get together. We also took the opportunity to call on Ted and Dianne Cholerton. They are both well.

Ken Jones phoned me from Barraba and added some to his Telstra account. Both he and Edith are well again and Ken is having a game of golf when its not too hot.

I forgot to mention that before the rain we'd had some very sticky weather, almost like that Darwin stuff.

On Sunday Neil Hooper and Margaret phoned. Neil says he's still on the improve although not feeling quite as well that day. Overall he reckons he's getting better. We all hope so.

Jim Cullen is still being well looked after by Beryl. They must both be finding it hard, Jim being restricted after being such an active bloke all his life. We're all thinking of you mate.

Tom Yates also from Kyogle has had a bit of trouble with his legs according to Jean but is on the right medication now. Luckily I reckon because sometimes it's a bit of a hit and miss business. I know as I tried a lot of stuff until I got on to the right thing for my arthritis.

Ray Parry's little notes of Timor brought back memories but one of mine was not of Timor but after we got back and were on the cattle trucks down from Darwin to Larrimah. I was leaning out over a rail and Kirky yelled out 'pull your head in Happy, or they'll think its a cattle truck.' I suppose we were so happy at getting back to Australia we'd have laughed at anything. We thought it was hilarious.

I'm looking forward to coming over again in April and seeing the blokes on Anzac Day. I hope there'll be a good roll up.

Regards to all.

'Happy'

CORRESPONDENCE CORNER:

J. P. Kenneally
28 Wilkins St,
Yagoona 2199

Dear Editor,

This may or may not meet your deadline. As the media moguls say 'The Editor's decision is final' so, into your hands dear Editor I commend my contributions.

I have finally come to a halt. Since last May it has mostly been a period of wander. Ireland booming and expensive to live in, though I do believe, compared to other European countries it is reasonably cheap, resulting in many Europeans buying up much real estate in Ireland, predominantly from West Cork around the coastal mountains, up into Connemara on the west coast. Nora and I had a good holiday.

We spent nine days in New York with Michael. I was pleasantly surprised, I didn't expect to like the place and I did. Its easier to get around there than in Sydney. Transport very cheap. For \$17 one can travel all over the underground system and all the buses within the five boroughs as often as one wishes for one week.

The Rockefeller Foundation donates dollars by the bucket full to worthy causes around the world. It can well afford to. The Rockefellers own 22 acres of Manhattan on which is situated 19 sky scrapers, bringing in plenty of dollars. I reckon the Rockefellers will be around and donating for many a year yet. One of them disappeared some years ago on the south coast of Papua New Guinea. No trace of him was ever found.

We arrived back in Sydney on the 4th August. I left for Timor on the 19th and set out from Rupang on the 20th for Balibo via Atambua. Trouble free until I entered East Timor, I didn't get far in. A check point between Atupope and Batugade was as far as I got. Soldiers manning the check point, not police, told me I could proceed no further. Although an Australian business man going to Dili from Atumbua was allowed through. He offered to take me and the soldiers said 'no' I had to go to Army H.Q. in Atambua and that's where I went whether I liked it or not as I was taken there, and told I was not going to Balibo or Dili or anywhere else by road, so I finished up back in Kupang. No direct flights to Dili but once a week there

was a flight to the island of Alor and thence to Dili. I took it. An old twin engined prop, only 7 passengers aboard. Six got off at the strip on Alor and I had it to myself to Dili. I took a taxi to Pustek Don Bosco Comoro, met Brother Ephrim for the first time and renewed acquaintance with Father Rolando Fernandes whom I had met in Baucau in 1992. He took me to H.Q. Comoro where I met another old acquaintance. He spent five hours asking me questions in 1992. This time no strife thanks to Father Fernandes. My police friend told me I could go wherever I wanted to as long as I reported to the police. Six am next morning I was on my way to Los Palos via Manututo, La Leia, Baucau and Lautem. I ended up in Fuiloro where Fr. Jose Nattaparambil made me welcome and comfortable.

I met Les and Verna Cranfield at Fuiloro. It was a fortunate day when the 2/2nd met up with this couple and more so for the Timorese when they volunteered to go to Timor. The work they are doing there is both prodigious and beneficial. If the Timorese don't learn and benefit from their efforts it will be their own fault. Two more dedicated and personable people would be hard to find. It was a pleasure to meet them. I spent two days at Fuiloro and Les showed me around. He is well known in all the villages we passed through. These are all resettlement villages, many of the traditional villages have disappeared. The Indonesian Army can control the populace far more effectively in settlements where they completely control all their movements, and worse still, their lives.

Father Jose squared the local johns for me in Los palos. Had I gone to report the questions would have been never ending, particularly in that end of the Island. I headed for Viqueque via Baucau and Fatumaca where I met Brother Gomez who is the electronics teacher. He has a special room for computers and also has a great regard for Peter Krause who keeps him supplied with an electronics technical publication which Brother greatly appreciates. He was upset that for some unknown reason the publication had not been arriving. Peter was checking at the Melbourne end. He was assured magazine had been despatched. Waste of time making enquiries at the Indonesian end. I reckon correspondence into or out of there is lucky to finish up at its destination.

I covered Timor from west to east along the north coast, down to Viqueque via Venilale, Assuy, back tracked to Eribas, the Lacto Valley, Laluba down to the south coast again to Natarbora. The roads in the mountains very rough, along the south coast plain good. Alas, Belano, Same, Hatuudo, Ainaro, Zumbai, Bobonaro, Atsabi, Letetoha, Gleno, Railaco

back to Dili via Tibar. The country bone dry. Wherever there was water there was rice. East of Natabora some fine corn and other crops I reckon it was five hectare country farmed by Indonesians, probably Balinese, they are good farmers. Coffee growing everywhere from Atsabi all the way to Railaco where coffee was never grown before. Coffee export is an Indonesian army monopoly. The Timorese get rock bottom prices, the plantation owners, in the main Indonesians, top prices. Nothing much has changed. The Timorese are still the wood and water joeys for the invader. Chinese, Sulewese, Javanese, are the business elite. Indonesians staff all the banks, post office, telecommunications. The army is still there in force. I wasn't seeing boy scouts in the truck convoys that passed. I got around by truck and bemo – the latter carry about nine fairly comfortably and driver and two in the front seat. I've been in them with 20 aboard, on the roof, plus a couple of pigs and a Bibi. Fighting cocks travel deluxe on the owners lap, chooks are packed under the seat, there's rice and corn in sacks and people sitting atop, legs, arms cramped and scrambled, that's travel Timor style in Bemos. The buses similarly loaded but slightly more comfortable and bigger. Give me the trucks any day, but I don't climb into and out of them as easily as a few years ago. I spent hours sitting on a mountain between Lacluba and Cubas waiting for a lift to the south coast. I had plenty of time to view the mountains. Similarly between Babonara and Atsabi. The latter area dry, rocky and bare. Lacluba and the east end far more growth. Atsabi area well farmed, corn, rice where there was water, and coffee. Good stands of timber and the valley well farmed. I reckon Gleno the Maroama plain and Lois Valley, Railaco river area would be the food producing areas west of Dili. Manatute, the Lacla Valley, Baucau, south to Viqueque and around the south coast area. The upland plain going east to Tutuali – the trouble, water. Timor desperately needs a constant supply. Once the wet is over and the rivers reduced to a narrow stream the country dries up, particularly in the high bare mountain areas and there is no shortage of that country.

I spent three days in Dili. The political monument east of Dili overlooking the ocean will, I am sure, one day be of far more significance for the Timorese than for the Indonesians. It is a gigantic statue of Christ, 27 metres high, right on the end of a spur that runs from the main mountain range to the coast, between Dili and Hera. The approach to the statue is laid out representing Christ's journey to the mountain Golgotha where he was crucified. Each of the 14 stations represent a scene from that journey. The figures cast in copper. The final station the death on the cross, then up another flight of

steps to a grotto depicting the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday, then higher again a huge statue of Christ dominating everything. I don't care if it is an Indonesian political ploy pretending there is peace in East Timor, such as the statue of Christ in the Andes on the border of Chili and the Argentine proclaiming peace forever between the two countries following their disastrous war two years ago. The East Timor statue is not dominating a peaceful Timor – not yet.

The big change I noticed was in the attitude of the people, now they speak openly and freely with stranger visitors and proclaim quite openly they do not want autonomy. They want a referendum to decide for themselves what their future will be and that future does not envisage integration with Indonesia. I think they are being over optimistic. The army still runs Timor, somewhat subdued when I was there, but still in control. Events there recently bore out what I was thinking privately when I was there.

I found Nicolau Goncalves's widow Florentino and what's left of the Nicolaus family. The boy who was mentally disturbed has died. The youngest who was a perpetual student is now working in, of all places, Dili Gaol. The family better off materially than when I was there in 1994. I also met up with Rupino and I don't think he is faring as well as when I last saw him. We went up to the memorial at Fatunaba, or Dare as I know it. Good water flow, clean and tidy and some Timorese kids using it as a swimming pool. It is still a focal point for the Timorese and I think will always be as long as it is in good condition. There were young Yanks visiting and in the fashion of the day, male and female. Few travel alone these days and strangely, if so its likely to be a female loner.

There are changes in Timor but no great changes in the material well being of its people, particularly those in settlements. Their village way of life is gone, their living gone with it. Their health has not improved either. T.B. is a scourge and little done about it. Timor has a long road to travel.

There were two Japanese nurses doing a stint at the Fuiloro Hospital run by the Salesians. One of them was back for her third tour of duty.

That's about all, however, as you must know, what the 2/2nd is doing for the Timorese is greatly appreciated by all. The hard work you people in the West are doing, is bringing results which are beneficial. Australia as a whole, both people and governments, have nothing to be proud of when it comes to East Timor. The 2/2nd can be proud of what it has done and attempted to do for the people of that unfortunate land. Particularly you people in the West. Really, you have carried the load and led the way. We in the other States, apart from

finance, have been more or less spectators. You are to be commended and congratulated on your achievements.

Our family faring well, all healthy and all dispersed. Sean is working at a gold mine in the Tanimi Desert. He works 12 or more hours a day straight for one month then has two weeks at home in Canberra. His family adjusted well to changed circumstances. Helen and family well, she and a friend have a pre-school child care establishment in Canberra. They have a staff of 15 so its an extensive school, catering for infants to five year olds. Government regulations very strict as they should be.

Michael was hale, hearty and fit when we saw him in August. Gerald surviving in a business where the devil takes the hindmost. He and his family have little to complain about. Nora is always busy and likes it that way. She was glad to get back to Yagoona and the way of life she lives here. I'm fine. We had a holiday down round the Snowy Mountains when I got back from Timor. Nora likes that kind of holiday, not the kind I like. I don't dislike them, I just don't like being on organised tours. Too much of my life wandering foot loose I suppose. It was still a very good, interesting holiday and enjoyable.

Saw Curly O'Neill and Jack Hartley recently. Curly improved out of sight and recuperating well after his operation. Ron Trengove had a tough trot, spent nearly two months in hospital. I was unaware he had been in hospital. He's better now but still far from well. Jack Hartley is quite good, as long as he keeps within limits of his physical capacity and its hard for Jack to do that. In my estimation Jack is a man who has always worked well above his physical capacities. I've known him a long time and I also have a good knowledge of time and effort Jack put into his daily life. The NSW Association owes much to Jack. 'Snow' Went called in to see us. I reckon he would be one of the fittest of our mob. He is a walking advertisement of health. There must be much logic in 'no smoke no drink.' He exudes an aura of good health, well being and contentment.

I'm off. Best wishes and may 1999 treat all kindly.

Paddy

Dear Friends,

Christmas greetings come to you in a different form this year but never the less just as sincere.

1998 brought much joy to Lionel and myself We had two trips to Singapore to see David, Annette and Christopher who is now two years

old.

July came in with a BANG in the form of TRIPLETS!! Born on 3rd. July to Leyanne and Keith - 2 girls and a boy - all very healthy. In September Lionel and I went to Singapore for 10 days then to Hong Kong for the Christening of Sienna, Sarah and Jared, a most joyous occasion! Ben and Josh made the day and Brooklyn acted the big sister to perfection. The twins 3rd birthday was celebrated at their kindergarten and added joy for Lionel and myself.

On 17th. October, after a nasty fall (down the steps at the back) I badly damaged my right arm and as a consequence have broken my wrist - now in plaster - and impacted my shoulder, so have that in a sling also. Hopefully the plaster will soon be removed and I can begin physiotherapy. Roll on 1999!

Lionel and Elsie Newton

H. Y. Sproxton
18A Keane St
Wembley 6014

Dear Ted,

I'm sorry I have been unable to attend any of the Unit functions this past year so thought it about time I forwarded a donation to the Timor Trust Fund. The Committee do a wonderful job and it's the least we can do to support your efforts in some small way.

I hope you and Peg are well and take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Christmas and health in the coming year.

Warm regards

Harry

Mrs N. Wilson
Glen Lee
Collie Rd
Gilgandra 2827

The Editor,

I wish to thank so many of the 2/2 for your messages and kind condolences re the passing of my dear husband. I appreciated it so much and Keith would have been very touched with the wonderful regards and holding him in such high esteem and he loved the 2/2 so very much.

Keith was a very loving, honest, sincere and dependable husband and father and will remain in our hearts forever.

Thank you again for your kindness and thoughtfulness. I send best wishes to all and hope that Sproxo, Archie and all on the sick list

will find strength, comfort and better health in 1999. May God bless you all and I thank you all for your wonderful friendship and support.

Kindest regards,

Nola

P. Costelloe
25 Sunburst Ave
North Balwyn 3104

Dear Jack

I think it is time for me to make another contribution. Would you kindly split the attached cheque equally between the Courier and the Trust Fund.

I take this opportunity to wish you and all those hard working Courier people in the West the compliments of the Season

Kind regards, Yours sincerely

Paul

Mrs M. McKenzie
5 Wendlebury Way
Eden Hill 6054

Dear Mr Monk

Please accept enclosed cheque for Courier. I am still very interested in hearing and reading of old friends. Thank you.

Mary

Mrs A. Moore
10 Poplar St
Dwellingup 6213

Please find a donation for the Courier to help with the good work that goes on and Christmas wishes to all.

Alma

C. G. Holley
20 Fairfax House
Braughton Ave
Castle Hill

Just a few lines of news such as it is. My better half is happy and healthy but I've, contracted diabetes and have had a rough time for a while but it is now under control.

As many of us who are able attend a luncheon at Dee Why RSL around this time and I was very disappointed not being able to go, but now the diabetes is under control I should be right from now on.

Am looking forward to the Tassie Safari but have to grin as I think about it. About 4 years ago I flew down to Hobart with my nephew Gary, in a cargo plane to pick up 800 odd cases of those wonderful crayfish they have. It was about the 7th December and stinking hot in Sydney and Gary and I wore only T-shirts and shorts. What a shock when we landed and stepped out of the plane!! We froze. But what a lovely sight it was as we circled the city. It was a great sunny day and the city and surroundings were a picture.

I will be travelling up north after Christmas and will be looking forward to seeing some of the boys up that way and maybe have a look at Russ Blanch's prize garden.

One of my younger relatives is in the trucking business and I went out for a day in one of the big semis. Even if I was 50 years younger I couldn't take on driving one of those monsters.

Well, as we grow older there's one thing we blokes of the 2/2nd have in common - great memories of the good and the bad times we all shared together and the wonderful bond of comradeship that existed.

Enclosed is a cheque for the Courier.

Merry Christmas and happy new year to everyone.

Col.

L. and V. Cranfield
6 Third Ave
Shoalwater 6169

Dear Len,

Enclosing a donation for the Courier with best wishes for 1999. Thoroughly enjoy all the reading with the resemblance to short family letters. Delightful! Thank you.

Sincerely,

Vern and Les

R. Griffiths
2/36 Wandoo Street
Leeton 2705

Dear Jack,

Please find enclosed cheque for the Courier. Have made it a bit extra this time because it is some time since I paid up.

Am sad to tell you my wife Hilda passed away on the 21st October, 1998 aged 84 years. She had been in our local nursing home for six years. We had 64 years of marriage and I have reached the age of 91 years so we have to count our blessings. I still look after myself so I have to be tough. Don Turton saw to that as I

was with him for the nine months on Timor in 'D' Platoon.

I wish you, one and all, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year and I do look forward to receiving the Courier so keep up the good work.

Regards to all

Reg

Gerald Kenneally
312 Edgar Street
Condell Park 2200

Dear Jack,

Please find enclosed donation for East Timor on behalf of the children of John Kenneally. As all my brothers and sister are living out of Sydney I am the one handling any donations sent to you.

All the best for the new year.

Thanks.

Gerald

Mr R. Finkelstein,
President.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed is my donation for \$50.

My Dad was Patricio Da Luz who passed away on 12. 4. 98 and was mentioned in the Courier. He always looked forward to each edition, even

towards the end.

I also like to read them as there are many people that I know mentioned in the Courier. Please continue to send them.

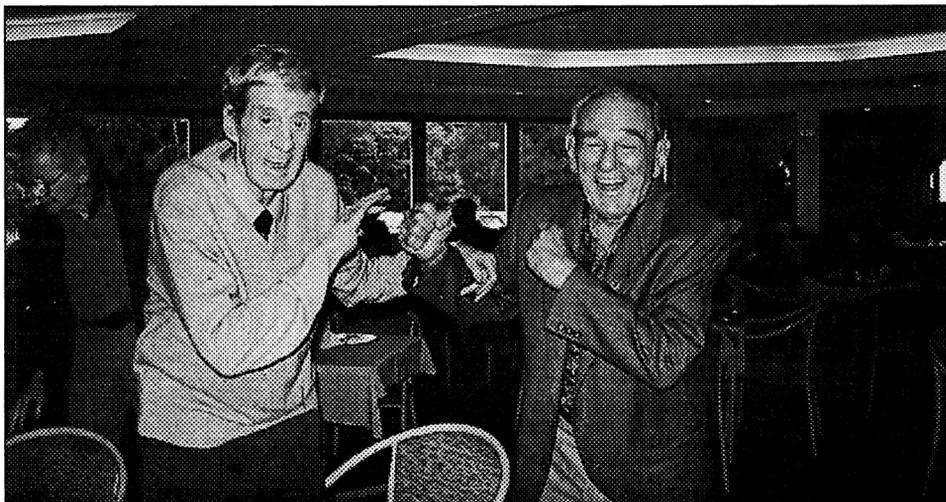
Many thanks.

Patrick

To the Editor

On the 21st of November, Eve and I flew out of Perth for a Sun Gold Package on the Queensland Gold Coast. We were met at Southport Airport and transported to Broadwater Beach. For six days we were taken on full day tours returning home at approximately 4p.m. After a few hours recuperation we were picked up and taken to a series of quality, 5 star restaurants within a 10 kilometre radius of our hotel. Eve was greatly excited about a \$150 win on the pokies; the first time she's won anything in her life. I usually console her ill fortune with the line that at least she's lucky in love, but I didn't have to worry this time.

On the 28th we were picked up by my cousins and conveyed to Brisbane to spend 4 days in Ascot with them. More luxury ensued as we were treated with kid gloves. It was marvellous meeting up with all the family again. I took the opportunity to slip up to visit the big Hoop in a private luxury room at the Mater Private Hospital. He hasn't changed, always gets the best. Despite the seriousness of the operation he is still reasonably well. A long discussion



Curley O'Neill attacking Ralph Finkelstein.

ensued and like Eve, Margaret has been a marvellous support in nursing him back to health.

I tried to ring Basher Adams, George Coulson, Jack Steen and a couple of others. The only success I had was in contacting Ralph Conley.

On the 2nd of December we departed Queensland and flew to Sydney. My son Peter and his twin 18 year old boys met us at the airport. It was such a delight meeting up with them all again after such a long period of separation. It is usual for us to connect every 12 months but because of my condition this had been extended to 2 years. The twins are so healthy and brimming with vitality it was a joy to behold. My 21 year old grand daughter made us both feel like a King and Queen. She is a doll, but one must beware as she is the proud possessor of a black belt in karate.

Alan Luby kindly invited Peter and myself to the Christmas luncheon at Dee Why where we met up with he and his wife who I was pleased to note were quite well. We also caught up with Jack and Maria Hartley; it was great to see how Jack has improved. Maria was disappointed that Eve couldn't make it. Paddy and Nora Kenneally were terrific, but I don't know how she puts up with him. Great to see Bill and Coral Coker and it's obvious how well Coral looks after Bill. Curley O'Neil, full of life as always, and his lovely carers worrying like hell about him. Snowy Went is such a great guy; he hasn't changed and I'm sure he'll live to 100. Fred Janvrin looks good. Betty Hoy; I apologise as I didn't realise who YOU were and I certainly would have enjoyed having a talk with you as I had a lot of time for Bill. Great to see June Bennett, Marilyn and Kevin Birmingham, Ken and Pat Glover, Ray and Bonnie Whitely from the 2/4.

Alan officially welcomed Peter and I, and I responded on behalf of Western Australia. We then sat down to a sumptuous lunch accompanied by considerable pow wow and stories. Curley attacked me and Peter was fortunate enough to take a great snap of Curley's right cross passing over my shoulder. It was a delightful couple of hours spent in the wonderful company of my true blue mates. When we departed Peter made comment on what a tremendous group of guys. We enjoyed our stay with the children enormously. We arrived back in Perth on the 10th December and believe me I was very tired and pleased to return to my own bed. It was the first time I felt my age. The date of return was inevitable as I had to see my specialist on the 14th.

Regards to all – God Bless.

Ralph Finkelstein

Dear Ralph

Thank you for letting me see your message and commemoration address to your Association published in the 2/2 Commando Courier of December 1998. I congratulate you on the themes you stress and the lessons they contain for the younger generation.

The address also highlights the pain and suffering of those who paid the supreme sacrifice, and it must revive deep anguish in the widows and children present at the Service as they recall the difficulties encountered when families are left young and unprotected by war.

You are doing a mighty job bringing home these important principles and I wish you and your members good luck as you keep alive the memories for they are the eternal flame to kindle courage and inspiration in the young and the generations of the future who live in the freedom and self-sacrifice paid by their valiant forebears.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr. Shalom Coleman

**18(b) Tuart Road
Greenwood WA 6024**

Dear Editor

I am writing to you on behalf of a former American B26 Marauder crewman called Cy Klimson. Cy is an active member of the 22nd Bombardment Group (Red Raiders) veterans' organisation. He is very interested in receiving eye-witness accounts from any and all members of the 2/2 Independent who observed an air battle between a flight of B26 Marauders and a number of Japanese Zeros on 3 November, 1942. This is the conflict in which an aircraft under the command of Lieutenant C. I. Hitchcock (2nd Bomb Squadron, 22nd Bombardment Group) was hit by flak and then set upon by at least two Zero fighters. Some men of the 2/2nd tuned into the American frequency to listen and watch as the Americans fought their way out of trouble. The incident is recorded in a number of texts, and according to Colonel Callinan Hitchcock became something of a legend. Cy tells me that Hitchcock's copilot was a Sgt J. A. Simms, RAAF. I doubt if many of the commandos were aware there was an Australian involved. Possibly Simms was on secondment from No 13 Squadron (Hudsons) who provided the 2/2nd with air support. Cy wants to publish some information about it in the 22nd Bombardment and 2nd Bomb Group newsletters. He is keen to hear specific details (number of planes, allied and enemy) and any general impressions or reflections from anyone who saw that heroic fight. I first made contact with Cy on the

internet while attempting to trace the whereabouts of Lieutenant Hitchcock (whom I believe was referred to in the Courier as recently as this December). We believe and hope Hitchcock is still alive and Cy is trying to contact him. Meanwhile, he is telling his Red Raider buddies all about the famous Double Reds.

Yours sincerely
David Hanna

W.A. Christmas Luncheon

On Friday, December 4th, 50 members, wives and visitors Jim Lines 2/5th and Graham Dalton 2/9th and wife Shirley gathered at the Mandurah RSL Sub-Branch for our annual Christmas Luncheon. This was, as usual, a great get-together of old friends and there was much chatter, laughter and reminiscing before and after a superb 3-course traditional luncheon. Paddy King, Chairman of the Mandurah 2/2nd Branch welcomed everyone and proposed a toast to absent friends.

Apologies were received from members unable to attend for various reasons, including President Ralph Finkelstein and Eve holidaying in the eastern states and Jess Epps enjoying a holiday on Norfolk Island.

Christmas greetings were received from Alan and Edith Luby, Neil and Margaret Hooper, Margo and George Shiels, Verna Bingham, Verna and Les Cranfield, Harry Handicott, Blanche Sadler, Viv and Verna Paust, Naomi Callinan, Dulcie Gay.

Jim Smailes Poems:

We still have a supply of Jim Smailes poems 'The Independents'.

These are available at \$2.00 each plus postage, which is a good buy, so phone or write to the W.A. Secretary, Jack Carey and get some for the grandchildren. Jim passed away on the 9th July 1991.

Gold Card:

All members should now have a gold card. If you haven't it's because you haven't bothered to apply to Veteran Affairs for one. It sure is a handy little card, even though about 30 years late.

Jack Carey

23 Kilcairn Place,
Greenwood W.A. 6024.
Ph (08) 9448 6566

Dear Mr Carey,

Independent Trust Fund

Referring to your letter of 25 March, 1998, attached is a further cheque for \$30, from my wife and myself, as a donation to your "Independent Trust Fund" to assist the excellent field work of Les and Verna Cranfield, in helping the people of East Timor, as sponsored by your 2/2 Commando Association.

As previously mentioned this action is an honour to my old work mate, Colin Doig, who was also a neighbour for thirty odd years. These thoughts come to mind around this time of the year, especially as these East Timorese people did so much to assist your comrades during the war.

Wishing all the best to your Association's future efforts. Yours sincerely,

Bill O'Neil.

INDEPENDENT TRUST

Fr. Jose Vattaparambil the director of Fuloro Agricultural School, advised Les Cranfield that he would visit Australia in February for the purpose of procuring a used corn harvester and possibly some associated equipment. He will first visit Perth where we are gladly anticipating his arrival to meet this truly remarkable man. Every minute of his life is 100% dedicated to the health and well being of the indigenous people. According to the Cranfields, Fr. Jose unfortunately too often drives himself to critical health limits.

Les Cranfield will accompany Fr. Jose to Queensland. They will visit Kingaroy where we already have contacts sympathetic to the East Timorese and their requirements.

Preparing a used corn harvester for shipment via Gladstone to Dili and Fuloro, will be a challenging operation. We acknowledge via Ralph Conley, offers from our Queensland members to assist in transporting the two visitors from Brisbane to Kingaroy.

Les is keen to return to Fuloro which he said today is his second home. Those sentiments are echoed by Verna, but she is unable to accompany Les at this time.

SEEDS

A further shipment is planned. Details of requirements have to be assessed by Fr. Jose and Les.

Meanwhile Keith Hayes is beavering away with his usual contribution of equipment. Despite

the success of the last shipment which was delivered intact – cost was significant.

INTERPLAST – East Timor visit

We have made a further approach requesting that when the Board is next planning the following 12 month programme, they again try to obtain consent from the Indonesian Health Department.

Fellow Trustees John Burridge and Keith Hayes join me to acknowledge with thanks contributions from donors listed by our treasurer Ted Monk.

Best Wishes

Bob Smyth

SERIES 3 – TIMOR MEMORIES

“TRYING TIMES” – AUGUST 1942

5 Section had withdrawn from the OP at Daralau and rejoined “B” Platoon at Remexio where we were having a well earned break from our duties at Daralau and the OP’s across the Dili Manatuto road (where we had magnificent views of Dili, but more about that later).

On the night of the 9th of August we had bedded down for the evening with the usual number of men stationed around the town to keep an eye on things. It was close to midnight when we received our first warning. The Japanese were advancing on Remexio from three directions. Our O.C. “B” Platoon was Capt. Geoff Laidlaw (affectionately known to his men as “The Bull”) who decided to await further developments. It was not long in coming. At 0130 hrs the second warning reached us. The Japanese were still advancing on Remexio. Our creados had been alerted and we were waiting for orders. At 0300hrs the third warning came and we evacuated Remexio.

The three pronged Japanese advance on Remexio was through Krecassy, Daralau and the direction of Manatuto. That would be from the southwest, north and northeast. At the time we estimated that there were 500 men in each column. Capt. Laidlaw moved “B” Platoon to a point south of the town along the Remexio-Liltai-Turiscas track. We had been marching over some undulating country when “The Bull” decided that we had gone far enough and would wait for dawn. We were about 2 kilometres from Remexio when the first rays of the sun lit up the countryside and revealed a beautiful morning. One could see most of the town with its white posto. The scene looked so serene that it prompted Gordon Barnes to say,

“personally I do not think that there is a bloody Jap outside bloody Dili.” With that Romexio erupted into a cloud of dust with fire from their mountain guns. The Bull who was about 2 metres away turned to Gordon and said, “what was that you were saying Barney?” Captain Laidlaw then addressed “B” Platoon – 4, 5, and 6 sections were allocated their tasks and the ground they were to defend. He then went on to say, “you will fight for every stick and every stone, every ridge and valley on the way back to Liltai. It is imperative that we slow the enemy down.” With that we moved to our respective positions.

I cannot recall 4 Sections activities.

6 Section moved to a ridge not far from where we waited for dawn to break. 5 Section carried on to the next ridge. There was a knoll on the ridge and the track wound its way around the base of the knoll for some 180 degrees then straightened out for a short distance before falling away to a small valley below. It was on that straight section of track that the creados placed our sacks and haversacks. They then rejoined 5 Section. We were about 80 yards from the knoll. It was a perfect spot for an ambush. If only the enemy would cooperate, which of course they did not. Around 1100hrs we heard 6 Section open fire and the Japanese respond. The small arms fire was quite intense. Then 6 must have fallen back and all we could hear was some sporadic firing on part of the Japs, then silence. Several hours later I looked around and saw George Merritt cleaning his Thompson sub-machine gun. It was in pieces. I said to George, “you pick a fine time to clean that thing,” then to our left we saw a Timorese running up the track (Lord knows where he came from) and on his heels was a large Alsatian (German Shepherd).

He was almost to the top of the ridge when he must have decided that he was not running fast enough so he turned left and ran down into a small re-entrant followed by the dog. I never saw him again. The Japanese began firing on us and George was frantically trying to reassemble his Tommy gun. His return spring took off with a very pronounced ‘PING.’ The gun was useless. Maybe the spring is still lying somewhere on that ridge.

When the enemy first opened fire, the immediate reaction of the creados was to charge en masse towards the Japanese to retrieve our packs and haversacks which they had arranged on one side of the track. I caught a glimpse of ‘Berracaul’ (my creado who was 9 years of age) as he raced to retrieve my haversack. It would be some time before I saw him again. On so many occasions one had witnessed their trust, loyalty and bravery, this was no exception. It was quite extraordinary when one considers that we had always been

the underdogs, always outnumbered and had so little to give apart from our friendship and our loyalty to them. I cannot speak highly enough of those wonderful Timorese boys who volunteered to help us, and after all the years that have passed by I am still saddened by the thought of them being left on the beach when we evacuated Portuguese Timor on the night of the 16-17th December, 1942.

The fire that was being brought to bear on us was increasing in intensity. I could see the Section leaving the ridge but had not heard the order to retreat. I had moved a few metres off the ridge and was soon joined by three others. There were now four of us, Cpl Ted Loud, Joe (Kiwi) Harrison, Jack Keenahan and myself. Ted asked us what we thought about going back up.

We all agreed that we should, so back we went. The small arms activity had ceased and we moved ourselves into position among the small clumps of gum, and were now some 50 yards from the knoll. The Japs appeared a few minutes later. The first four were very tall, wearing long sleeved shirts or tunics. One of them was sporting a black shirt. I had never seen that before or since, however they were followed by many others, and Ted then gave the order to take aim, which was followed by the fire order. It went something like this, "Ready, Set, Go." As Ted uttered the last word we all fired in unison. The Japanese hit the ground. There was very little cover available to them, so we must have created many casualties amongst their ranks. We then decided it was time to get out of there. I believe we had fond memories of General Gordon Bennett's findings on Japanese tactics. When they make contact with you immediately look to your flanks. That was also a Zulu tactic. Our object now was to try and rejoin our Section. It was not to be as we moved off the ridge we could see 60 or more Japs below us and more on the way. They had very effectively barred our way down that steep gradient. We turned left and were now moving almost parallel with the ridge, climbing just a little with each step. I saw Ted and Kiwi disappear from sight into a small ravine, followed by Jack then myself. The small arms fire was coming at us thick and fast. Maybe that is why I dived head first into the ravine. As I did my boot caught Ted on the side of the head. I apologized and the apology was accepted, then we were back into that dreadful volume of small arms fire. Ted and Kiwi went out together followed by myself and Jack. We were close to exhaustion. All we could do was walk, one foot after the other and we were still climbing. Our situation was becoming more critical. There were more Japanese troops pouring over that knoll and along the ridge itself. We were caught up on a giant U shaped enemy formation with the four of us just a little

ahead of the top of that U – ahead of us was a deserted village surrounded by the usual native fence. It was close to 6 foot in height. We are now exhausted and my lungs felt as though they were on fire. I was about 15 yards behind Ted and Kiwi with Jack about 10 yards behind me. I saw Ted poised on the top of that fence for what seemed like an eternity. I thought for gods sake Ted get off that fence. At this stage there was a dramatic increase in their fire power. Kiwi was now over the fence with bits and pieces of it flying in all directions. When I made it to the fence I took hold of an upright piece which helped to hold the lateral lengths of bush timber together, and as I heaved myself up it broke. I fell with the piece I had grabbed hold of still in my hand. With all the strength I could muster I hurled myself at that fence and just managed to tumble over. I was on all fours. My tin hat had fallen to the ground. As I reached for it a long burst of fire collected it. I think the same burst hit the rosary beads I had hanging from my neck with an ornate crucifix attached. The Padre from the mission gave them to me. I never saw those items again and that was the last occasion I wore a steel helmet.

The sounds that were buzzing by sounded like many bees in flight and made a 'whack' like sound as they hit the leaves. Many times one would hear a report not unlike the crack of a bull whip. They may have been the close ones. Now Jack was over the fence and close to me. I was looking rather fondly at the large gum tree just ahead of me and was thinking about having a break there, however something exploded against the trunk and for the second time in the past 10 minutes or so I had been hit over the eye. I wiped what I thought was beads of perspiration. When I looked at my fingers they were covered in blood. I may add that I still kept walking. We were now close to the crest of the ridge, also the end of it. From there the ground fell away to the valley below. Jack and I then saw that Ted and Kiwi had decided on a rest. We joined them. The Japanese fire had eased dramatically. They no doubt were as exhausted as we were. Once we had moved through the village I believe many of them would have lost sight of us. We rested a minute or so and were then on our way. Just before moving off Ted looked at Jack and I and uttered two words, "well done." Kiwi nodded his head in agreement. We could only thank heaven that Ted and Kiwi were with us. The Jap units moving along the top of the ridge were getting close. They unleashed their dogs. There were two of them, the black and grey I first saw and now his creamed coloured companion. We were moving at a smarter pace and soon entered a boulder strewn water course. The dogs kept coming and we turned to meet them. We could not see the Japanese

even though they were close. The dogs were about 40 feet away and above us. I heard Ted quietly say, "I will hand him on the end of my bayonet." Then we heard a shrill whistle. The dogs stopped, looked at us, turned and ran back up to the ridge top. We never saw them again. Now we had reached the base of the feature, and just beyond where one stream joined another Ted decided that we march in the water. That way there would be less chance of the dogs tracking us. It was dusk when we decided that we head for Turiscai. I was the only one of our group who was familiar with that area. In the early hours of the morning we were on the Liltai - Turiscai Track. We arrived there around dawn and met Dick McKenzie who organised some coffee and food, for which we were most grateful. We had been close to three days without food or sleep. I awoke early in the afternoon and looked around for the boys. There was no sign of them. I spotted Dick and asked him where they were. He replied that they had gone and were heading for Liltai to rejoin 5 Section. Apparently Ted had taken a look at the wound above my eye (it was not as bad as it may have appeared), but the boots or the lack of them was the deciding factor in leaving me behind. The sole had parted company with the upper on one and the other was almost as bad, so I was literally bootless. I was sure disenchanted with the people responsible for me having to roam far and wide over Portuguese Timor without boots for the best part of two months. Bruised feet can be a rather painful experience. Two days later I was relieved to learn that they were OK. Ted and the boys had caught up with 5 Section at Liltai. It was a long tough journey catching up with them. The sun had set and Japanese columns were now closing in. They attacked 5 Sections position simultaneously from two directions. Their small arms fire was again intense and supported by accurate mortar fire. The Section's situation was becoming critical. The fire fight continued almost up to the moment they would have been overwhelmed. Cpl Ted Loud did a masterful job of extricating the Section down a precipitous slope on the northern side of the village. The descent to the river below was a long arduous one. Just as the ascent was to the top of the ridge on the other side. The experience of hearing the Japanese firing on each other for some 25 minutes after the Section has left Liltai was a satisfying one.

5 section were now in a position on the ridge where the Remexio - Turiscai, Alas Track crossed over the one from Aileu to Coolabahaha - Fatu - Maquerec.

There was no food, little water and ammunition was none too plentiful, plus a group of men near exhaustion. It was a long night. As dawn broke there was an ominous quiet over the

entire front. Patrols were sent out to check each flank, but saw nothing. Across the valley to Liltai there was no movement. Not a damn thing. Another hour or so passed by when it was decided that 5 Section go forward with the object of finding the Japanese. Once the immediate area around Liltai was cleared, the section moved into the village. What a sight. There were bloodied bandage and dressings all over the place, but no Japs. It did not take long to realise that the unbelievable had happened. The Japanese had fallen back to Dili, but why? They had command of the skies, the seas, were numerically superior and had the advantage of fire power and were slowly but surely forcing us back across the mountains to the coastal lands in the south. And these from the anchorage of Betano to the town of Viqueque in the northeast were some 40 miles of mosquito infested swamp lands with its countless waterways. Beyond this fever ridden area was the sea. It would sure be a daunting prospect to have forbidding country like that at our backs. It may have been decided that Japan would be better served if they were to reinforce their forces at Guadacanal. Whatever the reason it was a blessing and a relief for exhausted men to have that break from operational duties - if only for a short spell.

Ray Parry

Thanks Ray for 3 very interesting episodes on your experiences in Timor - Well Done.

N.B. Ray went on to serve with distinction in the Korean Campaign with the Royal Australian Regiment 3rd Battalion. An extract from "With the Australians in Korea" BY Norman Bartlett reads quote - "At about 4am Corporal R.N. Parry in charge of a light machine gun outpost on a knoll behind "B" Company's perimeter, saw large numbers of the enemy forming up for an attack. Fifty or more Chinese tried to clear the knoll, which would have given them a dominating position overlooking the main company positions, but Corporal Parry and his men smashed three determined attacks within twenty minutes. Ten enemy dead were counted after the first attack and as day broke a further thirteen dead were found on the lower slopes. "This action took place on 24th April 1951."

Jack Carey

W.A. Sick Parade

George Timms' old mates of 8 and 9 Sections will be sorry to hear that he is gravely ill. George has had a couple of bad years healthwise and it has only been his great courage and loving support from Nancy and his family that has kept him going for so long.

Jim McLaughlin suffered a severe stroke last November but is slowly coming good. He was in Royal Perth Hospital for a month and then moved out to the Mercy Hospital in East Perth. He has now been transferred to the Midland Nursing Home in John Street, Midland. Jim can now be understood when he speaks and is starting to take an interest in life again. He would prefer to be closer to Perth and would welcome visits from his old mates. You can phone him on 9274 3157 and leave a message if you can't make it to Midland.

Don Turton also had a stroke on the 11th February. Fortunately he was at home and so was able to reach Murdoch Hospital in quick time, which is an important factor with stroke victims. Don is quite bright in himself but with his left side out of action it will be a few months before he will be having any more of his 4am morning walks.

Don is in Hollywood Hospital.

Hip replacements seem to be in vogue here in the west. **Babs Langridge** had one early in February, while **Don Young** and **Dick Darrington** were due to have their hips done later in February. Dick has to have both hips done but reckons one at a time is good enough for him.

Don and Barbara Young were both in Hollywood together. They said it was home from home and the meals were beaut.

Wilf March, who was 82 in February, is receiving chemotherapy treatment for cancer. Wilf, who has been on our Committee for a number of years, is facing up to his ordeal quite calmly. He is a durable character and, being an old sapper, is determined to be around for some time. Wilf is being well cared for by his devoted wife Lorraine. Keep your chin up Wilf.

Our President, **Ralph, Henry Sproxtton** and **Bill Rowan-Robinson** all have serious health problems. Family support is an important part in any illness and in that respect Ralph, Henry and Bill are not wanting. It helps them handle their all too frequent flat spots. We hope they all show improvement in the coming months.

Muriel Aitken had a long stint in the Osborne Park Hospital but is making some progress. Ray is not a well man but his brain is as sharp as ever and he still takes a keen interest in what's happening in the world. His write up on Mike Calvert was excellent.

John Burr ridge had a nasty fall while holidaying in Beagle Bay earlier this year. The tendon in his right knee was torn away and required an operation. Joe has been hobbling around for three months and is looking forward to resuming his bowling

Late news and bad news is that Reg.

Harrington has been diagnosed as having stomach cancer. Reg. is expected to have a major operation soon. Our thoughts are with Reg. and the family at this critical time.

Jack Carey

Change of Address:

Mr D. Brown
David and Thais
32 Marong Terrace
Forest Hill 3131.

Delete: Mrs Joan Darge
Add: Mr and Mrs J. Meldrum
John and Joan
15 Rowley Street
Brighton-Le-Sands 2216
(02) 9567 3885

Delete: Pat and Linda De Luz
Add: Mr P. De Luz
Patrick
56 Lamonerie Street
Toongabbie 2146
(02) 9631 0452

Delete: Mrs M. Field
Add: Mr D. Field
David
19 Turramurra Ave.
Turramurra 2074
(02) 9144 5870

Delete: Mrs B. Snowdon
Add: Mr W. Snowdon
Warren
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Trust Fund Donations: Henry Sproxtton \$100, Tom Foster \$30, Bill O'Neill \$30, Paddy and Nora Kenneally \$50, Mavis Sadler \$40, David Hanna \$1000, Paul Costelloe \$50, Patsy Thatcher \$50, Helen, Michael, Sean and Gerald Kenneally \$450, Ray Aitken \$220.

Deadline for June Courier – Friday, May 21st

ATTENTION W.A. MEMBERS!

COMING EVENTS

ANZAC DAY – SUNDAY, 25th APRIL

Meeting point at the same spot in St. George's Terrace. Assemble between 9.30am and 10.00am when march is due to start.

A get-together will be held at The Terrace Hotel,
195 Adelaide, Terrace, Perth,
following the service on the Esplanade.

Transport will be available for those members who are unable to march but would like to take part in the parade.

Contact your Secretary on 9332 7050 if you want to be in it.

NORMA HASSON SOCIAL

This popular social will be held at The Terrace Hotel on Friday, 2nd July commencing at 11.00am.

Don't forget to Mark these dates on Your calendar to ensure you will be a starter.