



# 2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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## Christmas Message.

*May all our members, their wives, children, and grandchildren have a wonderful and joyful Christmas and the happiest of New Years with family and friends. Many decades have passed by since the day we stood on a cold windswept slope in Wilson's Promontory - it was the occasion of being selected to join our respective Sections and Platoons. 61 years have passed us by and for those of us who have survived the years, it is pleasing that we can still communicate through the pages of our "2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Courier".*

*May you and your families be blessed with much good health.*

*Once again I close my seasonal greeting with Ray Aitken's translation of the Timorese words:*

*Go with God my friends  
But watch the track well.*

*Ray Parry, President.*

**Vale William (Bill) Howell WX 12126.**

We regret to report of the passing of Bill on  
4<sup>th</sup> October.

At his funeral service his 3<sup>rd</sup> son Ray, paid a  
moving tribute to his father in a poem he  
wrote and read out at the graveside. It  
covered Bill's 79 years to a tee.

**"A Tribute to Bill".**

A baby was born in Midland  
In nineteen hundred and twenty-two  
Raven and Elsie took his hand  
And knew he would be strong and true.

Through his early years  
The country was depressed  
But he was young and healthy  
And with strength he was blessed.

As a lad he was eager  
And he yearned to race  
He used to ride his pushbike  
All over the bloody place

He'd think nothing of riding  
200 k's in a day  
(I also don't think too much  
Of riding all that way.)

Along came the World War  
So Bill and some other chaps  
Went to the isle of Timor  
To try and stop the invading Japs.

His nickname he earned  
During that war of pillage  
When he went to fight more Japs  
Camped in a local village.

Up one early morn with two mates  
In the pre-dawn light they crept  
Down to the jungle hut  
Where twenty enemy had their breakfast  
Right up close he opened fire  
Though not a Jap did he hit  
But their big pot of rice  
- well he shot it to bits

Then off down the road  
He pursued his startled foe  
Those twenty Japs ran until  
He realised he was chasing them alone.

So the legend arose  
In that tropical place  
Bill was now known as "Stewpot"  
- no crockery was safe.

He and his three hundred  
Fought ten times more  
They battled for a year  
Till they left that deadly shore.

On the ship back to Oz  
They ate sandwiches of jam  
Their starved bellies they crammed  
Until they saw their long-lost homeland.

From that Commando group  
Sprang the "Two-Two's"  
Who met together to sing  
And have just a beer (or two)

Bill left his home in forty-eight  
To travel down south  
To the town of Mandurah  
At the Peel Inlet's mouth.

He loved his new home. And he loved the  
odd schooner  
And on late Saturday nights  
He'd fight those buggers from Waroona

The list of his jobs was hard to top  
Club manager, bus driver and  
gravedigger  
Made house bricks and ran a take-out  
shop  
He even went fishing up the Murray  
River.

Then Bill discovered love  
And all that is involved  
He fathered twelve kids  
Before the reason why was solved.

He sired six sons  
 And six daughters too  
 He didn't have any more  
 (well as far as he knew)

It was late in fifty-five  
 He met a lass young and healthy  
 She made him feel really alive  
 So he married his darling named Elvie.

Father to Colleen, Bill and Val  
 These kids were at the top  
 Then came Carol, Gary, and Keryl  
 He just didn't know when to stop.

Along came Lee, Kim and Bryan,  
 And also Ray, Vicki and Ross  
 When it came to reproducing  
 He really was the boss.

This brood needed food in their mouth  
 And somewhere to live  
 He worked all day, and at night built a  
 house  
 He always had so much energy to give.

Along came the grandkids  
 Of which he thought highly  
 Sharni, Alyce, Jason and Jon  
 As well as Cassie and Kylie.

This group grew large as they joined  
 Joanne, Kelly, Shane and Troy  
 So many grandchildren  
 Gave him great joy.

When he told his many stories  
 He really was a hit  
 Bill was called the Reverend  
 'Cause he always preached Bullshit.

A very outgoing man -  
 Who knew what a mate meant  
 His introduction was "Bill Howell,  
 I'm from the Taxation Department".

Last Friday a day crisp and clear  
 Bill finally left us as the sun set  
 To go to that great Pearly Gate bar  
 He went early to see what seat he'd get

So Pop, that is your tale  
 And though we've all shed a tear  
 I know you're up in heaven,  
 Telling tall stories and having a cold beer.

Bill, an original member of the Unit, served in the sapper section under Don Turton and Gerry Green in the Timor Campaign. He was a good soldier who always gave of his best and was liked by his sapper mates. Bill cheated a bit to get into the army as he had one leg shorter than the other. He later told his grandchildren it was caused by climbing up and down those bloody mountains in Timor, such was his great sense of humour. Bill, a loyal and generous supporter of the Association and Mandurah 2/2s was president of the Association in 1995/96 and was made a life member in 1955. We mourn his passing and he will be sadly missed.

The large attendance at the graveside is indicative of the respect in which Bill, Elvie, and the family are held in the Mandurah district. The service was a celebration of Bill's life; one lived to the full, and was an uplifting experience for those present.

The wake held at the Mandurah RSL was also conducted in a celebratory mood. Thus Bill was given a send off of which he surely would have approved.

The Association was represented by Len & Batty Bagley, Tony Bowers, Jack Carey, Joy Chatfield, Dick Darrington, Jess Epps, Keith & Val Hayes, Jean Holland, Mary and Paddy King, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Don Murray, Ray Parry, Joe & Helen Poynton, Eric Smyth, Colleen Strickland, Don Turton, Clarrie & Grace Turner and Bulla Tait.

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to Elvie and the family on their sad loss.

Lest We Forget.

J. Carey.

**Vale Harry Sargent VX 55488****4/8/1921 - 27/9/2002**

*Mrs Aynsley Sargent has kindly provided a vale on Harry or Blue, as he was better known in the Unit.*

Harry passed away peacefully at Bendigo Hospice on September 27<sup>th</sup> after a short illness in Mount Alvernia Hospital.

He was buried at the Eaglehawk Lawn Cemetery on October 1st.

Harry was born in St. Arnaud on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1921, one of eight brothers, his mother died when the youngest brother was only a few months old, his father then raised the boys.

Harry went to primary school at Marnoo, Halls Gap and Murtoa then onto Murtoa High. He left home at the age of 16 where he worked in Melbourne, later enlisting at a recruiting table in Swanson Street for Service with 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF on 10/5/1941.

After the war Harry worked in sawmills, later with his mate Tom Coyle, managed the mill at Glengarry. By this time Harry had married Aynsley Mills, they went on to have two children Dianne and Robert.

Harry left mill work to join the S.R.W.S.C. where he went onto become a reservoir keeper at Glenmaggie, Laanecoorie and Eppalock weirs. At Eppalock he established the garden, lawn and BBQ sites. He propagated and planted many trees and plants and always had something blooming throughout the year, making it a great tourist attraction. Harry retired from Eppalock in 1982 after 28 years service to the S.R.W.S.C. moving to Eaglehawk.

In his retirement he spent his time playing golf, fishing, gardening also doing beautiful woodwork making rocking chairs, clocks and all kinds of nic-nacs etc.

Harry and Aynsley travelled extensively with grandson Shane. Taking a glider flight over Wilpena Pound as one of the many highlights. Harry knew the trip to Derby would be his last, as he knew the melanoma he was suffering from was on the move, so armed with his medication and his medical

records, he was on his way across to the West to see his grandson Brad, who also took them on tours around Broome. With his great fighting spirit and never say die attitude they had a wonderful 6-8 weeks, touring, fishing, visiting and sightseeing.

Harry died leaving wife Aynsley (Muff) daughter Dianne, son Robert and grandsons Shane, Bradley and Adrian and granddaughter Jahola.

He is dearly loved and sadly missed by all.

**A GREAT MAN AT REST.**

*Leith Cooper paid this tribute to Harry.*

Harry Sargent took over as reservoir keeper at the Eppalock Weir during its construction in the early 1960's. He was responsible for much of the finished construction of this major water storage on the Campaspe River, which eventually feeds into the Murray River at Echuca. The excellent finishes of the levee banks, tree, and grass growth, the control erosion was largely carried out under his supervision and foresight. Few people have such a memorial to their talent and effort, which will benefit society forever.

At a distance of some 90 miles from Melbourne we did not see much of Harry but several 'get-togethers' at Lake Eppalock, assisted by Kevin Curran (then licensee at the Fleece Inn, Bendigo) he made us very welcome. He attended several safaris including the one on Phillip Island in 1988.

I bought a property of 40 acres near Lake Eppalock in 1975 and from then on saw quite a lot of Harry and Muff and the excellent work he did at the reservoir. By this time he had developed into an excellent golfer and a very canny fisherman with a dab hand as a home brewer.

I sold my property and moved to Phillip Island in 1981 just before Harry and Muff retired to Eaglehawk but we kept in touch over the years. He is greatly missed as a talented, very honest, loyal friend - one of the straightest blokes I have ever known.

**Leith Cooper.**

Blue served with the Unit in Timor and New Guinea. He was a good soldier and was liked

and respected by his army mates. Alan Luby recalls fighting a draw with Blue at Bulolo when the boxing troupe was in full swing and we were waiting to come home after 15 months in New Guinea. Blue was a loyal member of the Association and will be sadly missed. The Association mourns the passing of our old comrade and we offer our sincere condolences to Aynsley and family.

Lest We Forget.

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### **Vale Alex Thomson WX 9508.**

We regret to advise of the passing of Alec on 21<sup>st</sup> October. He was 81. His devoted wife Wyn has kindly provided the following on Alec's life.

Alec was born in Perth, WA on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 1921 to James and Margaret Thomson. He was the 3<sup>rd</sup> son of a family of 5 children. The family moved to Pemberton where Alec attended school. He enjoyed his school days as a "Pemby boy" and on leaving spent his teenage years working at the Pemberton mill. In those days the timber industry was thriving. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF early in the war and after training in Navel Base and Northam became an original member of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company. It was in Katherine shortly prior to embarking for Timor that Alec learned that his brother Archie had gone down on the HMAS Sydney on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1941. Archie was 22. Alec went on to serve in "B" Platoon in 5 Section under Colin Doig. He remained in 5 Section in Timor, New Guinea, and New Britain Campaigns, being promoted to the rank of Corporal. Alec was a topline soldier, tough and fearless and always gave of his best. He was to become a good mate of Ted Loud and Dud Tapper, two very fine men.

After his discharge in January 1946 Alec joined the forestry department in Pemberton and in 1948 married his Manjimup sweetheart Wyn Felstead. In 1953 they moved with their daughter Dian and son "Butch" to work on the d'Espeissis farm at Cape Naturaliste. It was in 1953 that Alex and Wyn suffered another sad loss when Alec's younger brother James (28), his wife

Millie and son Christopher were killed in a tragic accident when their car collided with a train at a railway crossing north of Busselton.

On a brighter note a second daughter Kay and two more sons, Jim and Peter were born while they lived at Cape Naturaliste. The family has wonderful memories of happy times spent on the beach at nearby Eagle Bay especially when the salmon were running. After 10 years in 1963 the family moved to Ludlow described as small, peaceful and friendly settlement and a great place to bring up kids. At Christmas each year Alec was booked for a special job as Father Xmas, an ideal choice no doubt.

In 1972, the loss of his only sister, Margaret, (45) was another cross for Alec to bear.

Upon retirement Wyn and Alec moved "down the road" to Peppermint Grove Beach where they spent their last 16 years. Clarrie and Grace Turner were close neighbours for some of those years. Alec and his good mate Irwin Schmitt, spent a lot of their spare time on the local tip bringing home odds and ends by the car load much to Wyn's objections.

In his latter years Alec did not enjoy the best of health. High blood pressure and diabetes presented a problem especially as Alec enjoyed a beer. Wyn's love and devotion and the strong family support was a big plus for Alec. But in the end it beat him.

A cremation service was held in the Bunbury Chapel on Saturday morning 26<sup>th</sup> October. A large attendance was indicative of the respect the Thomson family is held in the district. The strong family ties and love from Wyn down to the grandchildren made for a very moving farewell to Alec.

Eric & Twy Smyth, Keith & Val Hayes, Bernie & Babs Langridge and Jack & Delys Carey represented the Association.

The Association mourns the passing of Alec and we extend our deepest sympathy to Wyn and family. Our sympathy too goes to Tom (88) his surviving brother.

God bless. Lest We Forget.

Apropos to Alec's scrounging habit this little poem says it all: -

"Irwin and Alec - The Scroungers".

Irwin and Alec - they're a scrounging pair.  
They scrounge all around the place, here and there.

Saying to their dear ladies, "We aren't going far".

But who knows where they'll end up, when they take off in the car.

Often they visited the dump at Ruabon - their favourite spot.

You'd never believe the treasures they've found (and still got).

There's vases and jewellery, suitcases and more,

Everywhere they look, they find junk galore.

Wyn yells, "Take that rubbish away, - get rid of it"

But when they return home, she has a blue fit,

For in the car boot, there is much more

Rubbish and junk than it contained before.

Mary says to Irwin - "Don't you bring that junk in here".

Alec decides - it's time for a beer.

That pair of old buggers, though they tell pretty crook jokes,

Are true blue Aussies - they're bloody good blokes.

D.G. Gillard 1992

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We regret to advise that **Dot Boyland** passed away peacefully on September 25<sup>th</sup> last, one day after her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Dot (the widow of George) always took a keen interest in Association affairs and attended many of our Commemoration Services in King's Park.

She was also a generous supporter of the Association.

Mark & Elsie Jordan, Keith & Val Hayes, Jess Epps and Jack & Delys Carey attended her funeral at Karrakatta. May she rest in peace.

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## COMMEMORATION SERVICE 2002.

The Associations 53<sup>rd</sup> Commemoration service was held in our honour avenue in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November in glorious spring sunshine.

The Secretary welcomed those present pointing out that our numbers were down to 43 and the continued support from the relatives and friends of the Association was needed now more than ever. Our president, Ray Parry, then took over proceedings inviting the sergeant, Royce Harty, leader of the SAS Regiment's Catafalque Party, to take up their positions around our memorial. This was followed by Mrs Val Hayes placing a lovely red double diamond wreath at the base of the memorial and Mr Len Bagley reading a prayer for our fallen and Australia.

President Ray then delivered his address - another fine one, in keeping with his previous address. Ray then read out the names of our fallen, recited the Ode and Lest We Forget after which the bugler, Staff Sergeant Brian Dodds of the Australian Army Band sounded the Last Post with the Catafalque Party presenting arms. Following one minute's silence the Rouse was played. It was a moving and impressive ceremony and a fitting tribute to our fallen comrades.

President Ray then called on our Marshall John Burrige to take over. With Bob Smyth as marker, the marchers formed up in threes with veterans leading followed by sons, daughters, some grandchildren, and some mums. Approximately 36 marched and under John's watchful eye and repeated left, right, left orders the march went off reasonably well. The "Eyes Right" was given at our memorial with President Ray, Captain Alan Williams and Acting RSM WO Bill Maher of the SAS taking the salute. The Catafalque Party also presented arms a great honour for those marching.

The attendance of approximately 100 was on a par with previous years, which was encouraging. A special thanks to our country members in Tom & Mary Foster, Wyn Thomson and family, and Blanche & Mavis Sadler and family for making a long trip to attend our service. The continued support

of the Mandurah members is also appreciated. It was good to see Wilf and Lorraine March present. Well done Wilf!

After the service approximately 40 adjourned to "The House" where a pleasant time was had, having drinks and eats. It is a lovely spot and we thank the SAS Veterans Association and the SAS Regiment for the hospitality extended. How lucky we are to have such friends.

Our thanks to Bob Smyth, John Burrige, Val Hayes and Len Bagley for their help, the SAS Regiment for providing the Catafalque Party, the rostrum and speaker system, the Australian Army Band and bugler Brian Dodds, and last but not least the Botanic Gardens and Park Authority for presenting our area in such a fine state and arranging for the closure of the Avenue to traffic whilst our service was held. We are grateful to you all.

The Mandurah 2/2s also thank the Regiment for providing a small bus for the occasion. It was very much appreciated.

J. Carey.

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### **President's Address Commemoration Service Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2002.**

Once again it is my privilege to address you on the occasion of our Association's 53<sup>rd</sup> Commemoration Service.

I thank you for joining us this November day 2002. As I look around I see so many that have attended this service for many decades. It is wonderful to have among us the young people who have joined our service. The husbands, sons, brothers and uncles who paid the supreme sacrifice would be so pleased if they could look upon this gathering knowing that all the engagements against the armed enemy they took part in, the privations and fears that they endured, were all worth while. How proud they would be.

On this hallowed ground of Honour Avenue in Lovekin drive, Kings Park we gather to reflect and give thanks to all Australians, the

men and women who gave their lives so that we, our children and their children enjoy the freedom we so dearly treasure.

Today we honour the young men who served in the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> and whose names are enshrined on the plaques at the foot of each tree in our avenue. Today we also pay tribute to the 371 of our comrades who have passed on since World War II. All were fine Australians and our thoughts are with their families on this our Remembrance Day.

I believe over the past 4 or 5 years the Australian people have developed a far greater awareness of the possible dangers that may threaten the freedom and security of our country. There is also far more awareness and respect of what Australian servicemen on operational duties accomplished and the dangers they were exposed to during World War I and II, followed by the campaigns in Korea, Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam and in recent times East Timor and Afghanistan. Our troops are still on active duty in both these countries.

We now have greater numbers of Australians attending the Anzac Day Dawn Service and March, particularly pleasing is the interest shown by the young. The official attendance at the dawn service here in Perth on April 25<sup>th</sup> this year was estimated to be 20,000 of whom the majority were young men and women, plus the children.

Federal Education Minister Brendan Nelson says the students should start the school day by saluting the Australian flag and singing the National Anthem. I believe most parents would support this practice.

Dr Nelson's call is based on a legitimate question: are our schools doing enough to pass on to students the definitive values and traditions of our nation? The flag and national anthem are key symbols, the issue is that children should understand and respect these symbols for the values they represent.

A TV programme recently showed a group of four intellectuals expressing their views on the matter. One of their number said that you cannot legislate that children honour our flag and national anthem, that may be so,

however you are giving the children the chance to experience the meaning of patriotism and love of one's country. As they grow older they will make up their own minds whether or not they will continue to love their country and the flag that flies over her.

When asked if he supported the idea Prime Minister John Howard said, "Yes, very much so, it should never have stopped."

On the subject of our flag, - the banner headline on the front page of the 'West Australian' on Tuesday Nov.5 read - 'SAVE OUR FLAG.' Burning the Australian flag would be a crime punishable by heavy fines under a proposal by Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson. To view the occasion on TV and to witness a young woman frantically tearing our flag into strips of material prior to setting it alight, was in my view a most appalling act of vandalism and desecration. That also applies to those responsible for burning the flag of the United States of America.

Last year I mentioned the events of the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 in New York City, this year it is with a great measure of sorrow that I make mention of the events of the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002 in Bali.

On Saturday's October 19<sup>th</sup> issue of the West Australian the artist Alston drew a cartoon - the scene was on a beach, a young couple were embracing with an Australian flag draped over their shoulders, she is shedding tears. In the background is a line of smoke drifting out to sea, across the cartoon were these words: - "Our nation has been changed by this event. Perhaps we will not be so carefree as we have been in the past.

But we will never lose our openness and our sense of adventure. The Australian spirit has not been broken. The Australian spirit will remain strong and free and tolerant."

Prime Minister John Howard.

Then there were the thoughts of Pope John Paul II: -

Such cruel and misguided violence cannot be the path to a most just and civil society, and must be condemned by all who aspire

to a world of peace built on respect for the inviolable dignity of every human life.

It is difficult to describe the revulsion that civilised societies must feel.

On the Malayan Peninsula and the island of Singapore we lost the 8<sup>th</sup> Australian Division, last year I left it at that, today I wish to recall some of the reasons why we had such a devastating loss. It was disturbing news for our thin line of Khaki that stretched along the equator from Singapore to Kavieng in New Ireland.

The Japanese forces commanded by General Yamashita landed at Kota Bharu in early December 1941 some 12 kilometres from the border of Thailand. With skilful use of armour, the Japanese mauled the 11<sup>th</sup> Indian Division at Slim River and effectively destroyed it as a fighting force.

The British then abandoned Kuala Lumpur and on the 11<sup>th</sup> January the Japanese entered the Peninsula's capital by rail.

Malay Command had decided to make an extensive withdrawal of all its forces into Johore, thereby conceding three provinces to the enemy without a fight: Negri Sembilan, Malacca and Selangor.

General Gordon Bennett proposed that he be given command of all troops in Johore. When General Wavell, the allied Commander in Chief, Far East had visited the front on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1942 he ordered Bennett to assemble a force called "Westforce"

The Australians were eager to join battle with the enemy. Five weeks had passed and most of the Peninsula had fallen; yet not one of them had fired a shot. For several weeks Bennett had been planning a major ambush for the Japanese when they first entered his area of command. The site which Bennett chose was on the Singapore - Kuala Lumpur trunk road about eleven kilometres west of the town of Gemas, here the road crossed the River Gemencheh by means of a bridge.

The task of executing the ambush was given to B Company of the 2/30<sup>th</sup> Battalion. About 60 metres east of the bridge, a track called Quarry Road (which still exists) led south. It



was intended that B Company would withdraw down this track and join the rest of the battalion near Gemas after the ambush was sprung.

The Australians took up their positions in pouring rain on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> January 1942. At 4pm the Japanese rounded the bend in the road about 200 metres from the bridge and headed straight towards it. They had advanced south for the past 200 kilometres without opposition. Travelling six abreast on bicycles. Capt. D. J. Duffy, the O.C. B Company, let the first group of 300 cyclists pass through the ambush area: these would be dealt with by the other companies. Another large group of cyclists began to cross the bridge and when this group was tightly packed, the Australians blew the bridge. All hell broke loose.

The Australians poured their machine gun fire and grenades into the killing ground, the Japanese were caught completely unaware, many found it impossible to fire their weapons, which were still strapped to their bikes. The ambush was all over in twenty minutes; it is estimated that over 500 of the enemy were killed in what was one of the biggest ambushes of the Second World War.

B Company withdrew along Quarry Road as planned and after some savage hand to hand fighting managed to reach Gemas by noon 16<sup>th</sup> January.

The Japanese repaired the bridge. The following morning they advanced with tanks in the vanguard. Australian anti-tank gunners successfully repulsed this armoured advance just west of Gemas. Bennett then brought down artillery fire on the enemy troops in the rear, the combined effect of which forced the Japanese to withdraw. The action at Gemas was the first reversal experienced by the Japanese in the entire Malayan Campaign. The Japanese considered that the Australians fought with a distinction, which they had not previously encountered.

Masanbu Tsuji, a Japanese officer who fought in Malaya, wrote afterwards: The 8<sup>th</sup> Australian Division, which had newly arrived

on the battlefield, fought with a bravery we had not previously seen.

A consequence of this was that after the battle of Gemas, General Yamashita thrust a whole division of the Imperial Guards, the very best Japanese troops available at the Australians.

The gunners of the 2/4<sup>th</sup> Australian Anti-tank Regiment in a decisive engagement South of Ruar destroyed ten Japanese tanks,

They stood their ground without fear, and after their ammunition had run out, fought with hand grenades and Molotov cocktails before being overrun.

Brigadier H.C. Duncan and most of his staff became casualties from a direct hit on the brigade headquarters. The C.O. of the 2/29<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Lieutenant - Colonel C.G.W. Anderson assumed command of the Muar force, and realised that if he did not hold up to the Japanese at Muar, the Australians at Gemas and Segamat would be encircled and trapped.

At Muar, with coolness, self-control and great strength of character and despite his force being cut off, he kept a complete division of the Japanese army at bay for a whole week, enabling the rest of Westforce to withdraw. With the Australians and Indians under his command exhausted, Anderson led them fighting towards Yong Peng through the Japanese lines to safety. Only 800 men survived out of an original force of 4000. Perhaps the Australian supreme accolade comes from their enemy commander in the campaign, General Yamashita -

"The British and Indian troops are badly led and lack real fighting spirit. The Australians are insubordinate and contemptuous of authority, but will fight stubbornly even when outnumbered - their quality as front line troops is not surpassed in my experience."

On 31<sup>st</sup> January the last British troops filed across the causeway linking Singapore Island to the Malayan Peninsular, which was then breached. General Percival expected the Japanese would attack the island from the Northeast, when in fact they attacked the Northwestern sector where the 8<sup>th</sup> Australian

division was in position. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Australian Brigade had a frontage of nearly 16 kilometres and the 27<sup>th</sup> brigade a frontage of 4 kilometres. Two battalions of the 22<sup>nd</sup> brigade had to defend a total of 14 kilometres of shoreline.

The Japanese landed on the Northwestern side of the island at midnight on 8<sup>th</sup> February. The 2/19<sup>th</sup> Australian Battalion, which had endured some of the worst fighting on the mainland, bore the main brunt of the Japanese attack on the island.

The first wave of 4000 Japanese nearly overwhelmed the Australians. Both sides fought with savage ferocity. By dawn on the 11<sup>th</sup> February, Bukit Tinrah had fallen, and by 12<sup>th</sup> February Singapore's water supply was in Japanese hands. The 8<sup>th</sup> division had been reinforced by 1800 raw troops hurried in from Australia, who unfortunately proved to be a liability to their own side. During Singapore's last days, some of these men looted, deserted and even fought for places on ships evacuating civilians.

The Malayans and Straits Settlements Volunteers were distributed around the city itself; amazingly, Percival had not issued orders for the erection of fixed defences on the northern coast of the island, this was despite a direct order from General Wavell. Percival's stated reason for disobeying was that fixed defences would be bad for morale. At one stage General Percival said to a shocked Australian Major, "What do we do now?" Percival should never have been given command of infantry units.

At the table where the surrender took place, Percival and members of his staff sat on one side of the table and on the other sat Yamashita and his staff. Percival wanted conditional surrender. Yamashita pounded the table with his fist and shouted unconditional, it was one big bluff on his part, his lines of communication were stretched to breaking point. The guns of his artillery units had almost exhausted their supply of shells. The 8<sup>th</sup> Australian Division wanted to attack. It is believed by many that if they had

mounted an attack they would have driven the Japanese into the sea.

It was with stunned disbelief when they were ordered to lay down their arms.

This time last year we rejoiced at the East Timor people having gained their independence for the first time. At midnight on 19<sup>th</sup> May this year East Timor was officially recognised as an independent nation with dignitaries from nearly 100 countries witnessing the great occasion. In September of this year East Timor took another step forward when it became a member of the United Nations. We wish our old friends progress and prosperity in times ahead. May God be with them!

In concluding I would like to thank the men of the Catafalque party, the Australian Army Band for providing a bugler and the Botanic Gardens and Park Authority for keeping our area in such good condition. We are indebted to all these bodies and grateful for their help. My thanks go to all you good people for coming here today.

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### **New South Wales News.**

Dear Friends, Once again the time has come around to prepare something for the Courier - how that time seems to fly!

Thankfully after a long road back we are back reasonably to normal but back to "jockey weight"! Still we are vertical and breathing but would not take on anyone to a race around the block for a "tenner"!

What a year this has been!!

So many happenings around the world and we have yet a couple of months to go that could produce more disastrous effects.

I still have many contacts and receive reports from various areas in which many of our people are involved, and they most certainly carry on the very best traditions with pride. Thankfully too, I still have many contacts that keep in touch regularly. People like Harry Handicott, George Greenhalgh, Ralph Connelly, Fred Broadhurst, Kel Carthew etc with whom we have fairly regular contact, not forgetting of course our Sec. Jack Carey.

The past few months have been quite eventful apart from our climb back.

Unfortunately, as reports show we have lost many more of our valuable members. Some of these were wonderful contributors to our Courier as well as other members.

Some achieved national acclamation whilst others were quiet achievers and such was the great make-up of our Unit.

One thing I learned during my incapacity was that Telstra has a "Priority Assistance" scheme for people in our age group, and incapacities that we had cause to use. Phone Telstra on 132200.

I'm sorry I had to discontinue sending out our local NSW Courier and News, but trust the alternative will work.

This also raises a point with the rapid approach of Xmas and the end of the year. Between my eyesight and shaky hands, there is no way I can send out my usual bundle of greeting cards. So please forgive me and accept the Best Wishes of Edith and myself for a pleasant Xmas and at least a bearable New Year.

We will raise a glass and drink to your better health.

**Alan Luby.**

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### **Northern New South Wales News.**

Topsy turvey weather up here. We had a 40 and 41 degrees then the next day a 25 and on Saturday I had a winter shirt and sweater on to go out. Some rain over a few days totalling about an inch and a half. Always helpful but with hot days and wind doesn't last long. This weather report mainly for the 'Bushies' not you city slickers!

Around the members on the North Coast and most are okay but starting to slow down a bit. Russ Blanch recently had a pacemaker installed and is very satisfied with the result. The drought here curtailed his gardening a bit which is probably a mixed blessing.

Ted Cholerton says he's not quite as well as he has been but is battling on. Keep going mate.

Had a yarn with Harry Handicott, who is well, as is Amyce. Both are looking forward to 2003. Harry informed me of Bill Walsh having had a stroke so I rang Beryl at Kempsey. Bill was out in the front cleaning a path and doing alright when Beryl looked out. A few minutes later she looked out again and Bill was on his back. Apparently pretty severe down the left side and at present unable to speak but fairly bright but no food by mouth. We will all be thinking of you Bill and hoping for a speedy recovery. Bill had told me a couple of months ago how much better he had been after getting some new medication.

Eric Herd and Lorraine both well and noticed he got a mention in the local paper for a trophy on a Vet's day at Iluka. I'd love to be down there having a hit with you Eric.

Jack Steen celebrated his 79<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 16<sup>th</sup> and is going along okay. He has to have a check up on the 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. I hope everything goes well with you mate. Beryl is a tower of strength to Jack.

Ken Jones is another one doing well. He had a game of golf during the week but I forgot to ask him the score. He told that he'd been speaking to Pat Campbell and Peter had broken his arm. Better luck Pete and I hope it gets better quickly. Very hard to fish with one arm.

That Tommy Yates must be away again, as I can't get him on the phone. However the last time I did he was okay. Keeps pretty fit but Jean can't get anything to help him with the arthritis. She can't take the stuff that helps me. My hip is coming along well but of course I want it better yesterday.

God bless and a Merry Christmas to all.

**Happy Greenhalgh.**

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### **Queensland News.**

Ron Archer reports that due to lack of starters their Christmas social normally held at Geebung RSL has been called off, which is a pity.

Ron and Lyn visited George and Bettye Coulson recently and had a good old yarn. They are coping okay. Bettye's dear old

mother passed away at the grand old age of 105 earlier in the year. We extend our sympathies to Bettye and family.

Word is that Col and Jeanette Andrews, who have just moved into their new home in Parklands, Caloundra, have decided to take on a caravan Park in Laidley, which is about 50 kms west of Ipswich. When Ron asked Col "Why a caravan park at your age?" Col replied, "I'm tired of doing nothing!" Now there's a man we can all admire. Good luck to Col and Jeanette in their new venture.

So if you're caravanning near the Laidley area book into Col's park for a day or two.

Ron reports Margaret Hooper's health is improving, and that Gordon and Joan Stanley are well.

Queensland members send best wishes to all members for the festive season wherever they may be.

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### Victorian News.

Harry Botterill reports though numbers will be down their Christmas social will be held at the Paterson's River Golf Club on the Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Harry says it's a great venue.

Most of our Vic. members and their good ladies are battling along okay although many have health problems of varying degrees.

Mary Bone has recovered from a nasty virus while her co-helper at the Safari Dot Bourke is coming good after a gallstone operation. Leith and Marge Cooper, and Bluey and Mary Bone met up with Lois Davies, (widow of Eric) who was down from Queensland on a holiday. They spent a couple of pleasant hours reminiscing on bygone days.

Wilma Tobin is at present in the Elgar Court Nursing Home at Box Hill but should be home for Christmas.

On behalf of Victorian members Harry wishes all members and their loved ones a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and Peaceful New Year.

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### Trust Fund News. 3 October, 2002

**K. Sword Gusmao.**

PO Box 3,

Dili, Timor Lorosa'e

.Dear Bob, Thank you very much for your recent letter and the detailed listing of the goods which and our 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando friends have gathered for the Alola Foundation. I had a phone call from George Garton today to say that the container will be arriving in Dili later this month, so we look forward to receiving the goods all of which look to be most useful items and will be distributed to the most needy organisations and individuals in the more remote parts of East Timor. I have received requests for goods from a number of schools in the Same district, and the typewriters, stationery, and sports gear in particular, will be very gratefully received, I am sure.

Xanana and I thank you for the good wishes on the birth of our second son, Xay Olok Sword Gusmao. The little chap and his big brother will be accompanying me on a visit to Australia later this month where I have a number of speaking engagements and fund raising events to participate in.

My sincere thanks once again to you, to Keith Hayes and to all of your colleagues for your ongoing support and collaboration.

A warm embrace,

**Kirsty Sword Gusmao.**

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### Canossian Sisters College of Balide-Rai-Hun.

Dili, Timor Lorosa'e.

Dear Mr Bob Smith,

Regard from East Timor

First of all I would like to introduce myself: I'm Sister Guilhermina Marcal, FdCC, Canossian and East Timorese.

With great respect I would like to express my gratitude of thank you for your wonderful gift, which I received four boxes of seeds through kindness of Mr. MIKE GALLAGHER.

The gift was wonderful and it is very useful. I had distributed it immediately for people in different districts especially in those places where are available for growing up vegetables.

With great hope I'm waiting for your next help. Especially now I'm preparing a simple program for International Children Year conclusion which it is going to be happened in 2002-12-27. And I'll invite 1000 children for that celebration. My objective to make meaningful and visible the International Children year and also to educate them how is good and how is lovely to be gather as a family.

Once again wishing you all the best and waiting for your visit to East Timor.

With respect and prayers,

Sr Guilhermina Marcal, FdCC

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**R.N. Smyth, Independent Trust Fund,  
Nedlands, WA.**

Sister Guilhermina

Canossian Sisters

Dili.

Dear Sister,

Vegetable Seeds for Distribution East Timor.

Our 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association Independent Trust was formed some 11 years ago. It recognises the invaluable help of the indigenous people of East Timor to our members during the World War II Japanese occupation. Without that help few of our members would have survived.

Owing to certain shipments of goods not being received by addressees and combined with reports of insecurity at the waterfront etc we decided to concentrate our major expenditure on a vegetable seed programme.

4000 packets were distributed by Australian Army personnel to villages spread along the Western border.

An emergency withdrawal occurred unfortunately before we received more than meagre reports. For example: Which

varieties can be excluded to reduce the range from 14 to 8 or even 6?

Do any fail germination?

The following delivery of 2000 packets stalled due to regrettable circumstances. We acknowledge and appreciate the prompt action of Mike Gallagher in retrieving the shipment and arranging for your organisation to kindly take on the assignment of care and distribution.

It is desirable that the packets be distributed to ensure as wide a spread as possible without payment or favour and particularly that they are not hoarded by village chiefs or head men.

Following feedback information and your acceptance of arrangements, we can forward a further delivery.

Our original plan was to approach a potential large donor to supplement our funding of sufficient packets to blanket a large part of East Timor. Unfortunately the frustrating delays in responses over 18 months has not given us a very good record of performance to approach that key donor.

(Supplier YATES assures us the seeds have a shelf life of 3 years.)

Sister Guilhermina, we appreciate and thank you for your good assistance. We wish you well in your pursuit of good health and happiness for the less fortunate but courageous peoples of East Timor.

Most sincerely, Bob Smyth.

**R.N. Smyth, Nedlands, WA.**

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Sister Guilhermina,

Dili.

Dear Sister, Thank you for your letter received by fax via our good friend Mike Gallagher. We are delighted that you have effected final distribution of the seeds, which had been frustrating our activities.

We will send you the remaining 2000 seed packets as soon as reasonably safe freight arrangements can be made. We have the liberty in enclosing a map of East Timor and would be grateful if you could, in the future,

return it showing a shaded area which would approximate areas covered by seed distribution.

Also the seed varieties which could be eliminated in future to reduce to 8 rather than 14.

International Children's Year Conclusion 27 December 2002.

We are working on a consignment of cartons of clothing, which will include childrenswear and hope it can be shipped in time, and will keep you advised.

Our best wishes,

Sincerely,

Bob Smyth.

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INDEPENDENT TRUST FUND.

Mike Gallagher is the Northern Territory Government representative for East Timor. He is in frequent contact with Sister Guilhermina, leader of the charitable organisation Canossian Sisters (of the Poor). Mike kindly agreed to my request to communicate with the Canossian Sisters via his phone and FAX facilities.

We have been concerned regarding safe and prompt delivery of items sent to Dili.

George Garton of Lions International received a Dili instruction that all medical/hospital items had to be addressed to Health dept.

Some months later, after many failed attempts to retrieve empty containers which cost \$1,600 each, he was told only new hospital beds and equipment would be received. "Too busy" to advise containers were still on the wharf - demurrage US \$25 per day each! A report since advises 1 of 3 containers has been approved "contents distributed".

Our rotary hoe is yet to appear, according to Bruce Lynn of East Timor Logistics to whom it is addressed. It is finally destined for Chris Walsh who is managing the villagers silk worm farm development near Bacau.

VEGETABLE SEED PACKETS.

Following Sister Guilhermina's report of distribution of the last 2,000 we have delivered the fourth box of 2,000 to Kwinana. It is scheduled to leave on December 9<sup>th</sup> and we will be tracking it as closely as possible to ensure safe delivery on arrival at Dili. Other goods delivered later will be included.

George advises that consequent on Bali bombing, a lot of people have returned from Dili to Australia with some doubt about going back.

Many thanks and appreciation to the many donors to the fund, all of which details are acknowledged in the Courier.

Bob Smyth. 22.11.02.

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*Ray Aitken has kindly provided three stories of which I'm sure you will find interesting.*

"An Acquired Taste"

In the years 1949/50 I plied my profession of primary (elementary) school teaching in the Ashburton being domiciled in Onslow. We were not to return to the South until the end of a two-year period. During this tour of duty our only contact with fellow teachers was the occasional visit of the "itinerant teachers". Many children on outback sheep stations were educated by correspondence. The West Australian Correspondence College, established in Perth issued endless series of lesson and subject notes to enable mothers and governesses to teach these children. Worked papers were returned to Perth by mail for marking, criticism and advice. So successful did this prove that it is a matter of record that many of these "station children" later managed to negotiate the terrors of tertiary levels of learning. To assist the 'teachers', each child had a twice yearly or more visits by an "itinerant teacher", who would assist, assess and if possible solve administrative hold-ups.

Such teachers were young outgoing dedicated men. They were provided with a "utility" or "pick-up," which contained as well as sleeping room, all of the teaching aids of the day plus supplies of paper, craft material, official correspondence classes, stationery etc. One of these "I T s" was Allan Jones



oil extracted was also put to the credit of the Australian Government. At this stage a worker put his flensing axe into the general area of one of the animals teats. Here, because of the lack of buoyancy the milk within was under extreme pressure and when the gland was ruptured a great geyser flew up into the air to a height of five metres and poured down on the worker. "Is that good to drink?" asked Allan.

The manager said "Wass beautiful Allan", and he immediately ordered a stop to the work on the deck.

A few shouted instructions produced a waterproof hat and "wetsuit" for Allan and a metal Australian army pannikin. Thus equipped he made his way to the flensing deck and when the axe produced another great upsurge of milk he was agile enough to get his pannikin reasonably full. Returning to the catwalk he took a sip. It was astonishingly bitter and oily with a strong fishy flavour. He didn't like it at all but because of the great trouble that had been taken to acquire it he put up a bold front on the matter and drank.

When the pannikin was empty Allan gagged a little and said "Do you like whale milk?"

"I don't know Allan," said the manager. "I don't never try"; there was a long pause.

"In fact Allan, I don't know nobody that wass try before you!"

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### "Going Home."

The West Australian coast always had its quota of expatriate Norwegians. Apart from their own shore based whaling interest there was generally one at least in each coastal town. Their profession was that of shipwright and they tended to be elderly bachelors much given to consumption of large quantities of spirits. The Onslow representative of the Norwegian presence was John Olssen. He was Neil Clark's shipwright.

Although pearling was nearly dead by 1950 as a result of the plastic button syndrome aided and abetted by Japanese cultured

pearls, there were still six luggers plying from Onslow. Three of these belonged to Neil Clark. As auxiliaries he had a seagoing launch and a beautiful yacht with an inboard motor. John Olssen had built the yacht, which was called "Thelma" for Neil's youngest daughter. John's pronunciation made the little "ship's" name "Telma" and as such she was known far and wide. "Telma" was used by Clark to supply the lugger fleet with stores particularly vegetables and bread so that fishing could continue without the return of luggers to Onslow.

Early in 1950, John Olssen began to lose weight and his face became haggard. Neil finally managed to get him to a doctor. The diagnosis could not have been worse. John had incurable terminal cancer. A very few of John's friends were allowed to know this.

One day Neil Clark came to me to tell me that John was overdue on a provision trip in "Telma" and to ask me if I would go with him in the launch to search.

We headed for the 'South Bank' and on the way found 'Telma' going round in tight circles with the tiller tied off. Neil put me on board and fixed to the mast, wrapped in and rolled in cellophane was a note, which said simply, "Neil I hope you get 'Telma' okay. I go 'ome now."

A Viking returned to the sea perhaps.

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### "Aid From Abroad".

Michael Calvert, who proved that the tale of no promotion in the British Army was a myth by rising from the rank of Subaltern to Major General in one war, was in charge of commando training in Australia when I took part in it. Calvert was an engineer and a demolition expert. (See the book Chindet by Calvert on "behind lines work" in India and Burma.)

Calvert once told me a story of the Norwegians. He was in charge of the mining of a British beach in early 1940 and had finished his task apart from the closing off of the 'safety lanes'. He had returned his soldiers to base. His only remaining assistant



was his Sgt. Major who came to his tent in the early morning screaming. "There's a whaleboat rowing ashore Sir",

"Go down the lane and hold it." said Calvert.

He dressed quickly and arrived at the beach in time to see the rowers snip the oars and push the prow into a shell bank.

A large blonde bloke stepped ashore and said, "I am Erik, we have come".

"Where the hell have you come from?" said Calvert.

"Norway".

"Why have you come?"

"To vight of course".

As Calvert remarked there are similarities between whaleboats and longboats but only a descendant of the Vikings could contemplate taking one across the North Sea.

R. Aitken

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### **"The Infantry Combat Badge"**

The Hon. Danna Vale, M.P.  
30/9/02

Minister for Veteran's Affairs

Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence  
Parliament House  
Canberra. A.C.T.

Dear Minister,

My letter concerns 'The Infantry Combat Badge' referred to as the I.C.B. I have several pages of information regarding the entitlement and rules associated with the wearing of the I.C.B.

I have been president of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Aust. Commando Assoc. for the past 3 years and served with that unit during WWII.

In 1950 when North Korea crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel the United Nations voted to help the South Koreans, I decided to enlist and joined K Force. My tour of duty was 12 months in Korea (1950-51).

I was on operational duties that entitled me to wear the ICB. On Anzac Day I wear it above my medal ribbons and medals. The men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando are not

permitted to wear it, nor are the men of our proud Infantry Battalions. The Infantry and Commando Units during WWII fought long and hard through many tough campaigns.

Some six weeks ago I learnt that only those on operational duties beginning in 1950 are eligible.

The men who were engaged in operational duties in WWII have no Insignia or Badge to indicate that they have engaged the armed enemy in combat.

We were issued with an active service badge, which was to be worn on the lapel; there are many thousands of Australians who were never on operational duties who were also issued with an Active Service Badge.

The men marching on Anzac Day who never experienced operational duties wear the same campaign medals as those who were on operational duties, there is no distinguishing those who fought the armed enemy and those that did not. However the Units who were not on operational duties played a very important part in the success of the war in the South West Pacific.

Prime Minister John Howard was present at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Kokoda Trail which was telecast on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of last month. Our infantrymen who fought that terrible campaign are not entitled to wear "The Infantry Combat Badge".

At the time of Kokoda in 1942 the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Sqn. were fighting for their very existence in Portuguese Timor.

Along the equator in 1941/42 there was a thin line of khaki that stretched from the Malayan Peninsular through the Netherlands East Indies to New Guinea. New Britain and south to Bouganville and the Solomon Islands. Early in 1942 we stood little chance against the powerful southwards thrusts of the Japanese Imperial Marines, their Army, Navy and Airforce.

I have no knowledge of the people who declared that 1950 would be a satisfactory start date for those entitled to wear the ICB whoever they may be. They apparently considered the task of including the

infantrymen and Commandos of WWII a too daunting and expensive one.

Today there are not many of us left. Each association is aware of the men who were on operational duties during WWII and each association would pay for the ICB and distribute the "Award" to the individuals and families concerned whom I firmly believe have more than earned the distinction of being granted permission to attach the ICB which is to be worn on the left breast, centrally placed 1 cm. immediately above the medal ribbons on medals on occasions such as Anzac Day.

Two decades have passed since 1950 when some of the lads said to me, why aren't you wearing the ICB? I had never heard of an ICB. They explained that it was an award for Infantrymen who were on operational duties. I purchased mine from a military memorabilia shop, that was after I had produced my regimental No. and rank plus material related to my military service.

The greater percentage of ex infanteers throughout Australia would be unaware of the existence on an ICB and what it stood for.

There is a handful of members of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Assoc. who have some understanding of the award and that was only after I had explained it to them.

I had been pressing my committee that it was high time we did something about it. At that point in time I was unaware that the qualifying service began in 1950.

There is a clause in the I.C.B. schedule No. 12612 that reads "claims for Eligibility based on service prior to 1950 are to be determined by SCMA.

I appeal to you to give every consideration for the granting of the Infantry Combat Badge to all personnel who were engaged in combat duties during World War II.

R. Parry  
President.

*Footnote: 12605. The badge, finished in bronze, is in the form of a bayonet surrounded by a laurel wreath. It is*

*approximately 28 mm wide and fixed to the uniform by means of pins and clutch grips.*

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### Correspondence.

**G. & G. Smith**

**37 Shaw Cresc. Muswellbrook. Qld.**

Dear Mr Carey, Thank you for continuing to send us the Courier. Please find enclosed our annual cheque.

Best regards to all. George & Gloria Smith.

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**J. Steen, Thornlands, Qld.**

Jack/Delys, Herewith a cheque for the Courier or for whatever. At the moment I am going strong but still keeping 4 to 5 doctors off the breadline. You know how it is, one sends you to another, and so it goes on.

The wife and I went down to Lismore the other day to see "Happy" after his hip replacement and he is going really well.

Will take this opportunity to wish everybody a "Happy Christmas" and a "Healthy New Year".

Best regards, Beryl & Jack.

---

**C. West, Waterman. WA.**

Dear Jack, Thanks for safe arrival of Courier. I'm very happy to join the gathering for Christmas Luncheon on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December (all being well.)

Cheers, Claire West.

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**E. Prior, Wantirna, Vic.**

Dear Jack, Thank you for your note. I received it a few days before I went on a coach trip to Alice Springs etc - returning to Melbourne on the Ghan.

Enclosed cheque for \$50 for the Courier.

I received an invitation for the Melbourne Christmas luncheon from Mavis and Fred Broadhurst. Unfortunately I will be unable to attend, as I will be in Queensland for a family reunion.

Thank you for the Courier, which I am now receiving regularly.

Yours sincerely, Elizabeth Prior.

**T. Adams, Toowong, Qld.**

Dear Delys & Jack, I am ashamed it has taken me so long to write and thank you for the birthday card you sent me - I was particularly pleased and honoured to see it was 'created just for me by Delys.' Thank you very much.

Had a lovely day, lots of calls from grandchildren and cards, and phone calls from local friends. I spoke to Mary McKenzie who is my twin!

Yesterday Bulla Tait phoned and I got all the news from him about the trip to Mandurah and details of all the chaps he had seen. From all accounts he had a great time and is on his way home today. His legs are playing up and I'm sure he will be glad to get home. It is a long way from Ayr to Perth! Betty Coulson's mother died the other day aged 105!! Margaret Hooper is well again - she has had quite a year but is up and around again.

Iris is going into a respite Caring Centre at the end of this month for a couple of weeks and I will be waking up to go to sleep again! I get dreadfully tired but at least she looks well to everybody. We celebrate our 57<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary next Wednesday (Oct. 16) - how's that?

I guess I heard you barracking for the Lions when they beat Collingwood. I was less than impressed by the Collingwood coach's tears! Unfortunately lots of sportsmen don't know how to lose, which is very sad.

What a wonderful job you are doing with the Courier. Each edition is just as interesting. Thank you for your hard work and keeping us in touch. I enjoyed the joke about married bliss!!

Cheers and best wishes to you both, Tony.

**P. Krause, Parkwood, Qld.**

Dear Folks, Just a short note to let you know I'm finding Qld a nice warm state which suits me greatly.

Hope this finds you all well.

Enclosed a little nourishment for the "Courier."

My best wishes to all, Peter Krause.

**T. J. Pulleine, Young, NSW.**

Dear Jack, Have been meaning to write this past few months but somehow I never seem to make it. I've enclosed a cheque for \$50, half for the Courier and half for the Timor Fund. I've just spent a couple of weeks in hospital with a chest infection, still huffing and puffing but getting there. I'm going to Canberra for a Prostate check on Friday. I had another great grandchild last month, No. 17 to go with 42 grandchildren so I don't get much time for anything but family. Here's hoping and wishing all is well with everyone and may God bless you all.

Yours sincerely, Tom.

**P. Spillett, Darwin, N.T.**

Just a quick note Jack to thank you for the June copy of the Courier which I enjoy reading. I enclose my cheque for \$30.00 to go towards the cost of production.

Should you have the address of Patrick Daluz I would appreciate it so that I can write to him. I was in touch with his father for a long time and then I lost contact with him after his wife died and then I heard he had died. I want to let him know that Domingus Amaral, the former Liurai of Luka, who helped out with our men in the eastern part of Timor, has passed on.

I am still in contact with his son Francisco who is currently translating my book on the precolonial history of Timor into the Tetum language.

Again many thanks, Peter Spillett. 7/9/02

**E. Howell, Mandurah, WA.**

Dear Jack & Delys, Thank you for your care and compassion for Bill and the family. I am enclosing a copy of the poem preceding the eulogy and with the number of friends and family attending and cards etc I think it says it all.

Enclosed is a cheque. Put it where you think it will help the most.

My sincere thanks to all members, wives and widows who attended Bill's farewell. He is now at peace and the Venus star is his star as the grandchildren chose it.

Best wishes and God bless all. Elvie Howell.

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### I. Nisbet, Kew, Vic.

*Ian Nisbet has kindly provided us with news of his father Tom. The old warrior is still going strong which I'm sure members, especially the boys of B Platoon, will be pleased to hear.*

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Dear Ray (*Aitken*), Thanks for the letter and the notice about Charlie King. I am afraid Dad is not up to responding to your letter but could wax lyrical on Charlie King.

Vascular dementia has got the better of him meaning short term memory is pretty well shot but he still able to conduct an interesting discussion on matters past and still reads the newspaper with an inquiring mind although context of it all must be confusing, eg what is Kyoto?

At other times some questions or comments have you falling out of the chair. Just the other day while parked outside the Bank, which has a Travel Agent next door, Dad commented that "he certainly would not like to have a name spelt like that." On inquiring what he was talking about, he alluded to the sandwich advertising board on the footpath outside the Travel Agent which was advertising holiday specials to the famous beach resort in Thailand called PHUKET. It took me a few seconds to get what he was on about!!

He is still a member of the independent company, living on his own but is oblivious to the support structures that enable him to do so. With a whisky in one hand, a cigar in the other, sitting up in bed reading *The Age* or in the family room watching TV, he is generally comfortable with his lot, albeit it is lonely at times. But he would not have it any other way. "I am quite capable of looking after myself, now you get on home to your family." He is still the Brigadier.

I took him to the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Victorian Commando Association earlier this year, but even though he is patron, succeeding to Bernie C, he was not up to participating in a formal sense. Fred Broadhurst and his wife Mavis were there plus a number of 2/2<sup>nd</sup> widows. Being basically born and bred in Perth their names meant little to me. Fred has been a regular visitor to Number 54 Tuxen Street over the years and as Dad is want to say, between the two of them they have fired off a few rounds over more than one or two Johnnie Walkers.

East Timor is still a part of his life and only recently a young chap, who recently served in East Timor, and who has a brother serving over there at present, came to interview him the other day for a film he is proposing to make. He said that he had met up with Rupino who turned 75 the other day, but reported that his overall health was not as good as one would like. He is currently in East Timor and I am led to believe will interview Dad on camera when he returns.

I have tried over the last ten years to get the *old man* (when he was fitter, both mentally and physically) to take a trip back to Perth, (he did get one more trip out of the Government to go overseas as part of the Australia Remembers contingent and "this time no-one shot at us") but without success. Alas, it will never come to pass now, as just a trip to the dentist in the city is a mental and physical challenge, and that is not just for him.

On behalf of Dad thanks for the letter. Yours sincerely, Ian Nisbet.

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### W. Snowdon, MHR, Alice Springs, NT.

Dear Editor, Thank you for the most recent copy of the Courier. I have always been an avid reader more so since the death of my father, Tom Snowdon in 1987, but am ashamed to say that this is the first time that I have corresponded with you.

Over the years I have had contact with Paddy Kenneally, particularly in the mid nineties when he was an occasional and very

welcome visitor to our home in Alice Springs. We had a number of lively discussions about East Timor.

I have been a regular visitor to East Timor since November 1999 and was honoured to be an invited guest to the independence celebrations in Dili, which was a very emotional occasion. What is clear in East Timor is the widespread memory of, and respect for and even reverence for the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> amongst the East Timorese.

Over the years I have, on a number of occasions, mentioned the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> in speeches in the House of Representatives. Prior to the United Nations intervention in 1999 these were invariably in the context of the special responsibility and debt that Australia had in relation to East Timor as result of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> experience in WWII.

The work of the Association and its members are a constant source of inspiration.

Please find enclosed two cheques one a donation to the Courier and the other a donation to the Trust Fund.

Yours sincerely, Warren Snowdon.

#### **J. Chatfield, Pinjarra, WA.**

Dear Delys & Jack, Enclosing a cutting, it went through my mind you may be interested to know this is available when you are planning the Safari outings. When I was away in Thailand visiting the Burma Railway, the organisers arranged for a lunch on the move: it was a box of chicken and salad, even included a hard-boiled egg. I think it was done by one of the fast food chicken outlets and it was received very well.

Hope I have been able to help if I come up with any other suggestions I'll let you know. I hope this finds you both well as it leaves me. Looking forward to seeing you at the Xmas social get-together.

Kind regards, Joy Chatfield.

#### **W. Thomson, Capel, WA.**

Dear Jack & Delys, Thank you so much for coming down and bringing the flag for Alex's funeral, it was most appreciated. I know he

would have loved knowing you were there. I'm enclosing a cheque for whatever you think, to use it on. It's a bit hard trying to adjust to living on your own, but we have a large family around, right down to a 7 week old great grandchild, so I'm never really lonely.

I'll let you know if coming to King's Park on 17<sup>th</sup>, trying to find out which ones are available on that day. Thanks again.

Love Wyn Thomson.

#### **L. Davies, Caloundra, Qld.**

Dear Jack & Delys, Sorry about further delay - trouble with scanning - so back to snail mail!

Enclosed these photos and screed on Eric - hope it is okay for you. Also enclosed my cheque for \$100 for you to put to the Trust Fund and Courier expenses.

Hope you are both well.

All the best, regards Lois Davies.

#### **G. Middleton, President R.S.L. Northam, WA.**

Dear Mrs Carey, Many thanks for the thought and the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Courier. The Katrine ceremony was of great interest to me as my great-grandfather, Dr. Viveash, gave the land for the church and graveyard in 1861 and the church has been our place of worship as far back as I can remember though no services are conducted there these days.

Called on your father last Wednesday, he seems very well and is as cheeky as ever (at 92). He was most amused by the efforts of his granddaughter, Melita, to save the nesting magpie.

Once again thanking you and all good fortune to you and yours.

Yours sincerely, Gerry Middleton.

#### **J. Epps, Karrinyup, WA.**

After the Mildura Safari, which as always, was a great show, I had a very nice stay with Joyce Smith for a week. Colleen Strickland

was there for the first few days before going home.

It was a very restful stay and Joyce was feeling pretty good, except for the legs and her voice.

From there I had a week with Linda and Terry up in the Gold Coast. Terrific weather and hated leaving.

Invitation from Kath Press and another weeks pleasant stay. Only thing, going from heat to 1 below and rain was a bit hard to take. The company made up for it.

Kath had just come out of hospital after an operation on her face near the eye. Very nasty but it looked very much better by the time I left.

I never knew Orange had so much to interest one. The autumn colours in the streets parks and gardens reminded me of Canberra. A lot of history etc and plenty of places to visit.

This trip was one of my best trips ever, being with people I love, like, and admire.

The object of this note is to wish all my friends especially 2/2. A very Merry Xmas and a Healthy Happy New Year.

I'm being 'ikey' and not sending cards this year.

May God bless you all and the best of wishes for 2003.

Love and regards, Jessie Epps.

#### **N. Wilson, Gilgandra, NSW.**

Dear Jack & Del, Sorry I haven't sent cheque for Courier before but things have been happening and time gets away.

The Safari sounded such a great success. I was thinking about you all. Just couldn't go. Keith loved seeing you all so much, my regret is that we didn't go sooner so as he could have spent more time with his old mates.

Olive had told me that your daughter was very ill too about Safari time. I do hope things have improved.

So sad about Betty Craig, it seems to have been a peaceful passing. She would have

loved the Safari and it was good that she had gone.

Well our family has had a hard time. Julie (our daughter) was so happy early in the year that she was expecting again (5<sup>th</sup> time and only has Laura 2 1/2) when her husband Wayne, was diagnosed with cancer and had to have treatment. It is better than it was earlier but he still has to have more treatment so hopeful and trusting in God that it will come good. (They live out of Orange, 130 miles from Gilgandra. I go down at times.)

Julie was then told her baby had a 50% chance of survival due to complications and would have to have the birth in Sydney where they operated immediately. At 21 weeks, Julie lost it. She's tried so hard and can't try any more. It's so hard on her but she's been wonderful through it all and supports Wayne so much. She deserves all to come good with him.

Son David had great success again at the National Aust. Stock Horse Championships. His young stallion was Supreme horse of the show. Won 4 champions and 3 Reserve champions with his horses.

They were held at Albury (approx. time of the Safari). I went with them to look after granddaughter Paige (3) so I was busy.

"Happy" rings sometimes with the news - very caring fellow. Give my best to "Sprocky" - must write to him soon. He said you are in touch so perhaps you can fill him in. Also Tich and Olive.

Sorry, with all my news being mostly sad, as well as the drought, will survive,

Love Nola.

#### **A. O'Connor, Busselton, 6280.**

2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Assoc.

Enclosed cheque for \$25 to be used in any way you deem fit.

(Mrs) Augusta O'Connor.

**Ian & Margaret Ronald,  
Flat 9, Kelsey Gate,  
27 Court Downs Rd,  
Beckenham, Kent BR3 6LP U.K.**

Dear Jack, Margaret and I are still going well. To make things easier for us, we have moved into a flat not far away.

We are looking forward to a visit to Adelaide after Christmas. We are celebrating that with our family in this country.

During the year we had a trip by train through the Channel Tunnel to Biarritz in France. This is a lovely place, with sheltered bays and good surfing beach. There were Australian surfies there, among others.

Enclosed is a cheque for the Courier.

Best wishes to you all,

Ian .

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### **Paddy's Trip to Timor. (Part I)**

*In the August/September period, Paddy Kenneally spent three weeks in East Timor. Paddy describes his trip in his own inimitable style thus:*

The drought is still with us. Actually all we seem to get in NSW for the past 20 odd years is an alternate weather pattern, a few good seasons followed by severe drought. The farmers barely recoup when they start sliding down again, with that kind of pattern one would think farm properties would dive in price, not so. Where the millionaires come from to gobble them up, I know not.

There seem to be plenty of takers, but then property everywhere is way up above the clouds in price. Someone paid \$600,000 for an old fibro house a couple of hundred yards up the street from here, a good block of ground and that's what the buyer wanted. The fibro house will end up in the tip.

Our tribe is going along well, apart from Helen's son Christopher. He had an accident during the holidays, which kept him off the sports field for a while, otherwise okay.

Sean changed jobs, good money where he was, however, a lot of the time, he reckoned

he was getting paid for doing nothing, and that doesn't suit him. I remember years ago in the Northern Territory he was working with a Government survey team in fact they surveyed much of the country for the new Alice to Darwin rail-line that will follow. Besides good wages he was on fifty dollars a night camping out allowance. When he got the job it was on a three-month contract basis. At the end of three months the department wanted to renew it. Sean refused. He told me later, it was a good job if I was sixty, no bloody good for Sean, he likes to see something more than his pay achieved at the end of the day.

His brother Michael will be home from London on Friday. He was sent there for two weeks work. There must be thousands in London who could have done the job. He didn't argue, he saw a couple of soccer matches and the matchplay golf. I suppose he did a bit of work too.

Gerald and his family are well. His seven-year-old son can sit and tell you a story that makes Grimm's Fairy Tales sound or read mundane and it all happens to Daniel. The teacher doesn't believe him any more, just says, "Is that so Daniel?"

Nora is fine, and if she wasn't she would still say I'm fine. She keeps herself very busy. The church fete will be on next Saturday and she loves it, the people, the talk, the bargaining. She will be dead tired at the end of the day. No matter how tired, to her it will be worth it.

I went to Timor for three weeks. I could have got a return ticket Sydney to Los Angeles for a couple of hundred dollars cheaper than it cost for Sydney - Dili return. Didn't arrive in Darwin until 11.30pm, consequently I, and many more people slept on the terminal floor. All were catching early morning flights to their various destinations. Air North's flight to Dili left at 6.30am. I arrived in Dili at 7.50 local time. I was met by a Timorese who was driving a four-wheel drive belonging to a woman I know in Canberra. She gave me the use of it while I was in Timor. I was to pay for the fuel and pay the driver 7 American dollars per day. Left for Turiscai about two hours later. Our memorial pool at Fatunaba was bone dry. I

have been to Timor six times since 1990 during months spread from April to the end of September. I have never seen Timor so dry, bare or shrivelled. The whole country from West to East, and North to South was just a scorched mass. Ironically something else I had never seen in a September there I witnessed about five short heavy showers of rain, what I felt made no difference to the landscape scene.

I reckon if you put a jumbled mass of high mountains in the Janimi Desert, it would replicate Timor in the middle and end of the dry season.

A rough bumpy road into Turiscai, and when I got there, there was no Turiscai, just a few houses, one policeman and a ruin where the Posto had been in 1942. I wanted to go on to Fatu Maquerec Laclubar, then down through Lacro to Manatuto, the driver wasn't keen. Back to Maubisse, which is always busy as all the buses and transport to Same, Hiraro, Hato Balico and Suai pass through there. Back in Dili I reckoned up the costs nearly 100 Yankee dollars to go to a town that no longer exists. That of course included meals and a tyre puncture. Four wheel drive transport went off the agenda. Back to buses, bemos and trucks.

I spent a couple of days wandering around Dili. Much of the town rebuilt, in fact what has been achieved since our party was there in April 2000 was amazing. All the rusty iron and plastic sheeting shelters are gone as are all the stalls they housed. The supply of Timorese grown fruit and vegetables plentiful and first class. I can well imagine the long back breaking hours the Timorese gardeners spent in carting water for their gardens. The people in Dili better dressed and looking far better in physical appearance than I have seen previously. More importantly the fear and agitation, which was quite obvious when Indonesian Military and police were on the scene no longer exists. The sight of soldiers and police from various countries causes them no fear or apprehension whatsoever.

Unemployment is, and will be for a long time ahead, a huge problem. The Timorese, who have found work with, the various

organisations, including the peacekeeping force, working within the country are very fortunate. I may be wrong but I believe their chances of being employed during the Indonesian occupation were better, even though that work was in the menial and bottom bracket. In four visits to Timor during the Indonesian regime, I was under no illusions as, to where the Timorese people fitted into the scheme of things. They were the wood and water joeys, there to serve the Indonesian master. All the good positions, ranks, Post Office, Telecommunications, customs, contracting commercial and food stores, run and worked by Indonesians.

Unfortunately it will be some time before the Timorese will inherit these positions. However advances are being made in the field of medicine and education. Thanks not only to the aid workers but to the religious orders as well. Up in Baucau I met five Australian Marist Brothers setting up a teacher's college. At present they are renting various buildings but are hoping to get a land grant from the Bishop, and then build their own complex. The Salesians, Carmelites and Canossians are of course carrying on and expanding their educational projects coupled with their medical clinics and orphanages. The Government is of course doing as much as possible with the confines of its budget.

Heres food for thought for ourselves: - under the gap treaty with Indonesia the Australian Government was sharing 50-50 with the Indonesian Government on the gas and oil deposits under the Timor Sea. Now our Government is claiming 100%. All such gas and oil under the Timor trough. Furthermore the Howard Government has stated it will not recognise or abide by any decision brought down by the International Court of Justice on the matter, neither will it abide by any seabed boundaries which may be reached by any authority set up to adjudicate on such a boundary. The Timorese will get the crumbs that fall from the Australian table. Only a complete change of heart by our Government will ordain otherwise.



On the 30<sup>th</sup> August I went west. The Carmelite nuns are having a pre-school child care centre built in Maubara financed by our Parish Bass Hill, and aided by Auburn and Leumeah Parishes. Also across the road is an orphanage financed by an Irish organisation "Good Ireland" is being constructed. The orphanage will hold 80 orphans in four dormitories with ablution and toilet blocks adjacent. There will be two dormitories at each end of the building. The orphanage is about 50 metres long by about 20 metres wide. The pre-school is about 26 metres long and 15 wide. I'm enclosing a floor plan of each. An Indonesian builder is constructing the pre-school, and an Australian builder Hazel Bros is doing the orphanage. I met the foreman on the job. He told me Australian specifications are the official building code for East Timor now. So from education to building construction Australian influence is very strong in East Timor. The Josephite Nuns are of course deeply involved in the advancement of the Tetum language in East Timor.

At Batugade I saw a big convoy of returning refugees from West Timor. There were about fifty trucks in the convoy. Not all trucks had people aboard. However, everything they were permitted to bring came with them. Rusty sheets of corrugated iron, plastic sheeting, bamboo poles and whatever else that would make a shelter, plus what they possessed in livestock, a few pigs and chooks. How many people I couldn't estimate.

On up to Balibo on a better road than I remember in 1990. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion is based in Balibo and covers the Western border region from west of Batugade to west of Bobonaro, probably meeting New Zealand Territory somewhere south of Memo. They have taken over Bobonaro from the Kiwis.

There's a Japanese engineer unit based in Maliana. They cover a lot of territory too. I struck them in Bobonaro, Zumulai and Suai. Their equipment is first class, so is their erection of formwork, some of which I saw near Bobonaro. I was going to stay in Bobonaro and work my way west from there,

the transport to do so was not very encouraging, neither was the information, so I kept going to Zumulai. The road varied from fairly good to absolutely awful, understandable it's a long, long climb down from Bobonaro to Zumulai, camped the night there at the Carmelite residence. It's a huge parish about 30,000 all poor, so there is much demand on the parish's resources. One of the priests was going to Suai the next morning, he took me to the New Zealand Force H.Q., and if I was going to Tanorman or Fatu Lulic I'd be depending on them. Their compound is named Upham Barracks in honour of Captain Upham who won two V.C.s in World War II. To my knowledge he was the only man to win two V.C.s in the one war. It was achieved on two occasions previously but it happened in two different wars, the Boer War, and the Great War and if memory serves me right one of the winners was a doctor.

Security very tight, I only got as far as a guard. Perched about 3 metres above the road, protected by concrete piers and razor wire and an automatic weapon hanging across his chest, he rang a message through and a captain drove up to meet me. Captain Peter Mortimer, born in Dublin, now a captain in the New Zealand reserved Forces. He was busy as another convoy had come in from West Timor with more refugees, this time on the South Coast, I saw it too, about the same size as the one I saw at Batugade the previous day, and its cargo of human beings and their worldly possessions very much identical. Captain Mortimer took me to the Aussies. The C.O. of the area is an Aussie, or rather a New Zealander, but is a colonel in the Australian Army. I met a Mayor Gaynor there, in fact met several officers, all interested in the campaign the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> had waged in Timor. For security reasons I couldn't stay or sleep inside either the New Zealand or Australian compound. They kept me busy asking questions about 1942, about Captain Laidlaw and Merv. Ryan. Major Gaynor was particularly interested in Merv Ryan. All of them appeared to have some knowledge of Timor 1942; this tied in with what a 3<sup>rd</sup> Btn Officer had told me in Dili, that

they had studied the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> tactics in East Timor. I think for different reasons, not as a guide to their operations, but rather as a guide to counter or work out counters to guerilla operations should the militias in camps in West Timor were to infiltrate into their (the Australian and New Zealand) areas in East Timor. I got a couple of beers and a beautiful dinner, but no promises of transport to Tanorman or Fatu Lulic. I met the Colonel at dinner, a giant of a man about 6ft 3 or 4 inches, big lean and hard.

The officers wanted to pay for my accommodation in the hotel in Suai, 90 Yankee dollars for bed and breakfast, they were insisting and I was equally as insistent, I would not accept. I finally said to Captain Gaynor who new the local priest I would stay in the latter's residence, and the officers could give a donation to the parish, that was agreeable all round and they would also try and get me transport back into the mountains. They tried but there was no transport. I also believe that the powers that be didn't want me in the mountains, it happened that way in the Bobonaro area in 2000.

Next day, Sunday, I went to mass in Suai, there I learned a Japanese priest was going to Maucatar to say mass there, so I asked him for a lift, he said he had other passengers. I saw the vehicle a double cabin ute and I said "I'll ride in the back" he took me in the front. So I went to Mass again in Maucatar. The priest said "I'll take you to Fatu Lulic"

Everything was fine. A few miles further on I looked at the fuel gauge; it was getting down towards a quarter. His presence and I agreed Fatu Lulic was out, in fact he'd better turn back. He was bowing and saying sorry repeatedly. In the end I said, "You have nothing to be sorry about, there's no place up here you can get fuel, I'll be alright, I'll get there". Just then a truck going to Suai turned up. I asked the driver how much to take me to Fatu Lulic. He didn't want much, only 50 American dollars. I told him I'd walk. The Japanese priest still full of apologies headed for Luai, the truck followed him, and

I sat on a chair surrounded by villagers, and in a mixture of Tetum, Bahasa and English we got along great. I thought I'll have to walk, camp the night and walk in the morning. As I looked into the distance at a native track, half an hour later a big army truck turned up with an Irish flag painted on the side, but it was a New Zealand driver and New Zealand troops in the back. They were going to Tanorman. I asked them for a lift, they were a bit dubious. Taking a look at the huge army truck carrying nine of them, I said, "I'm only small, I don't weigh much". The corporal said okay get in the back. There were six of them in the back, sitting on two seats facing out, their flak jackets draped over each side. One of the soldiers was a girl and the only one that spoke. The five male soldiers did not utter one word and it must have taken a couple of hours to get to Tanorman.

The girl talked and smoked, and smoked. They were going in to caretake the camp for a week. I knew Tanorman. I was in there in 2000 when the Irish Rangers were there. The platoon there now was from an infantry Btn. apart from the officer and a sergeant they were all young, 19 or 20 and not nearly as big physically as the Australians or New Zealanders. That wasn't the only difference, they laughed, talked and joked more as well. I remarked on the fact and a young fellow named Wallace said, "When there is nothing to do we know how to relax," then becoming serious he said, "If there's a job to be done, Paddy, we'll know how to do it, and Paddy we'll do it." They were setting out next day, two of the patrols were going to be dropped in by helicopter, the third one was going on foot. I slept in a container there that night outside their compound. The army eats well these days. These blokes' rations and water were brought in each week by helicopter. They had a freezer, and refrigerators, milk, fresh vegetables, desert, the lot! I've been fed by Aussies, Kiwis, Irish and Nigerians and all the tucker was plentiful and first class.

I got in alright now I had to get out. The officer came over and said they'll be sending a water truck in. We are getting low on water for cooking and showers. (They drank bottled

water). I thought, the river is only about a mile away. That's not for present day soldiers.

The truck with the water arrived in Suai too late for me to catch transport to Hatu Udo or Ainaro. It gave me a chance to do some washing. I don't have much to wash. I travel light, a pair of jeans, a pair of shorts, a towel, 2 underpants and two shirts finish.

Left Suai by bus 2.30am a long slow trip. One of east Timor's problems is lack of forests. It's going to get worse. West of Ainaro every tree that stands is being cut down for firewood. Previously you would see small bundles of firewood for sale near the villages and along the road. Now you see 8-ton trucks loaded with firewood. On one occasion I saw four big trucks heading for Dili from round Aileu, their only cargo firewood.

By the time I got to Ainaro, I was still debating what I would do, where I would go. I thought up to Hatu Builco via the Nunamogue Track, I then reckoned if I do that I'll have a hell of a job getting out, not much in the way of transport goes into Hatu Builco. I went on to Maubisse and decided I'd go to Same. I should have made my mind up about that at Aitutu, where the Same and Ainaro Roads to Maubisse meet. A long wait in Maubisse for transport to Same. Everything that moved was full, or not going to Same. Finally got a lift in a ute. From Same I wanted to go East to Nataboro then if possible Lacluta and Viqueque. Things had changed, no buses to Nataboro, only possibility a truck. All inquiries only had one answer, no one knew of any trucks that would be going, of course you can't take much notice of what the Timorese will say when it comes to transport. All the misinformation I've gathered on that subject in Timor would fill a huge book.

Next day I headed for Dili, three times over the Cablac Range in twenty-four hours. Now a days I look at the hundreds of feet of fresh air and nothing else, as the vehicles going on the Same, and Ainaro Roads, the wheels about six inches from the edge wend their heart stopping way. I was looking at two Timorese standing on the running board

looking calmly down into hundreds of feet of space. I never worried about it before, now I close my eyes and say a few mental Hail Marys.

An Australian girl Tricia Johns, runs a project call "East Timor Self-Help Projects", gave up a good position in Sydney to help East Timor in 1999. She is still there and what she doesn't know about East Timor and its problems in 2002 is not worth knowing. She works alone, knows everybody, and achieves much. On of the projects is a place to sleep and eat. Five dollars bed, and breakfast a dollar extra. It's right by the old markets and buses going everywhere can be caught there. I was going to Bacau next day so it suited me fine.

Went to the ANZ Bank to replenish the finance. The girl in the Foreign exchange grill had paid me \$20 over. So I asked her if she was short in her balance on August 28<sup>th</sup>. She didn't know the date but she had the money deducted from her salary. So I gave her the 20 dollars. "Oh, you lovely man, I will never forget you, you are so good, you're the man in the photo". There's a huge photo of Rupino and myself framed and hanging on the wall above the desk in the bank. I hadn't seen it until she mentioned it. This time I made sure she made no mistake.

The bus for Baucau was leaving at 2am. It turned up and was full. No other bus until 8am. I was lucky; I only had to walk a couple of hundred yards to where I was staying. The Timorese just sat on the ground and slept. There was room on the 8am bus. One of the Timorese knew me. He had seen me at Fatumaca in 1998.

The bus was going to Los Palos, so it dropped me off at Fuiloro. Father Jose was gone. He was in America or on the way there. School holidays were on so Fuiloro was empty. I'd done a lot of travelling since I left Sydney on August 27<sup>th</sup> so the few days I spent in Fuiloro gave me a chance to just laze about. The two silos Les Cranfield had planned were up. The dairy is run by a couple from the Goulburn Valley in Victoria. They leased their own dairy farm and signed on for two years to run the Fuiloro Dairy and to

improve the dairy herd. They have achieved quite a lot. There are currently 15 well-bred calves and more on the way. The yield in milk is about 120 litres a day; it supplies 112 villages with milk.

The poultry farm produces about 800 eggs a day and there is a piggery as well.

Brendon and Robin, the couple running the dairy farm, will produce good silage. What's in the silos now is only good for the garden. Until they arrived no one had the experience or knowledge to produce good silage. Some agriculture still carried out in Fuiloro however the bulk of the production of farm produce is done at Fatumaca now. Fuiloro misses Les and Verna Cranfield.

/to be continued.....

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### Unit History.

I am afraid we are dragging our feet with the Unit History project and are well behind schedule. The committee intends to make every effort to make up the lost ground in the New Year. We thank all those members who have sent in photos and information on their experiences while serving in the Unit. By all means keep on sending them in - it does help.

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### Address Book.

As mentioned in recent Couriers our aim is to have a new and our last address book published early in 2003.

If your address shown in the present address book is incorrect or if you are on the move please let us have your new address by mid January 2003.

There will be no charge for the new book.

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### Pars On People.

Blue Pendergrast, who suffered another stroke in September, is making a slow recovery. Blue gets around with the aid of a walking frame and in a wheel chair when he goes shopping. He will be moving to Joondalup just before Christmas to the new St. Lucy's Home set up and will be closer to

his family, which is a good thing. Blue sends Christmas greetings to his old mates and looks forward to a phone call or two on 9355 0707.

Arthur Marshall had a hip replacement in St. John of God, Bunbury in October. Marsh is making a good recovery and can't get back to making his famous emu pies quick enough. If you are passing Harvey over the holidays call in and get an emu pie - don't expect a freebie - it will cost you \$3!

Our list of Nonagenarians is growing with Doc. Wheatley and Jack Fox celebrating their 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays recently.

Doc turned 90 on 28<sup>th</sup> October after recovering from a stint in hospital. Doc is back in fine form and still giving plenty of cheek.

Jack's birthday was on 20<sup>th</sup> November. He's okay and sends his regards to all.

Fred Stewart, who joined us in Timor in 1942 after getting out of West Timor, will be 90 on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. Congratulations to all three.

Rolf Baldwin, our oldest member, will be 93 on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. Eric and Twy Smyth who visited Baldy in Geelong earlier on, reported the old chap was in good form and is still enjoying life. A great bloke is our Baldy.

Blanche Sadler celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday at her son's Peter's farm at Calingiri recently with a gathering of old friends and rellies. Blanche was a good sportswoman in her day and was active in community affairs for many years. Congratulations Blanche!

Buller and Jean Tait along with daughter Vicky spent a couple of weeks holidaying in the West in October. After two days in Perth which included an outing at Fremantle with the Carey's, Jean and Vicky hired a car to see our South West while Bulla settled in with his old 2 Section mate Tony Bowers in Mandurah. Tony, a good host, showed Bulla around catching up with as many as the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> as possible. Helen Poynton kindly turned on a Sunday luncheon and afternoon tea, which was attended by Tony Bowers, Jim

Lines, Dick Darrington, Don & Ida Murray and Len & Betty Bagley.

Jean and Vicky enjoyed their car trip and rejoined Bulla at Mandurah before flying out. Bulla hasn't changed much. His back gives him hurry up which also makes it difficult for him to move about but Bulla takes it all in his stride. These Queenslanders are sure tough people.

Bulla and Jean are still adjusting to town life in Ayr after spending years on their cane farm. We hope to see you both back in the West again one day. Good luck.

Les and Verna Cranfield left for Laos in September and no doubt will now be busy, Verna with her dressmaking skills and Les with his carpentry and all round ability with anything he undertakes.

Laos, a Peoples Democratic Republic headed by a President and Prime Minister has a population of about 5 million. Its capital, Vientiane, and main source of income is through agriculture so Les should be a happy man in this field.

We wish them all the best in their new venture and look forward to news of their progress with interest.

May they enjoy a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

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### Sick Parade.

Don Turton spent a week on Hollywood Hospital receiving treatment for a badly infected left eye following a cataract operation but is back on deck and making a good recovery. For reasons best known to himself he still gets up at 4 am every morning and has his walk.

Stan Payne is going through a rough period and has spent some time in the Merredin hospital. Stan's eyesight is failing which makes life difficult. Stan who will be 87 in February has been a staunch supporter of the Association over many years and we can only hope his health will improve. - God bless you Stan.

Clarrie Turner had a short stint in Hollywood with a waterworks problem. Clarrie also

suffers from emphysema and has to watch himself.

He turned 85 on the 30<sup>th</sup> October. He and Grace will celebrate their Diamond wedding anniversary early next year.

Peter Campbell had the misfortune to fall and break his left arm near the shoulder blade whilst opening the garage door. He has been in pain for the past six weeks and it will be at least another month before he gets any real relief. Peter puts it all down to old age - how right he is!

Edna Olde (Gordon's widow) has had a hard time. Following on from a knee operation, Golden Staph set in which resulted in Edna spending 5 painful months in hospital. Paddy Kenneally, the Good Samaritan, was going to see her and cheer her up. We hope your health improves Edna.

Henry Sproxtton and Wilf march continue their battle - both having serious health problems, which prevent them getting about and enjoying life more.

Both Henry and Wilf welcome a call from their old mates - so keep this in mind members.

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### Health Report NSW & ACT

No doubt Harry and Hap will have a recent report in, as most of our members now are in the North Coast area.

I keep in touch as much as possible and am aware that once again Bill Walsh has been and is having a rough time. Our thoughts are with Beryl and family.

Col Holley has been one of the health adverts for years but is finding out about old "Father Time" and the effects.

Fred Janvrin helps to keep the "Replacement" business going.

Ron Hilliard has his fair share but like a true sailor sticks to 'schooners'

June Bennett and Kath Press both seem to share similar kinds of problems but maintain their good outlook on life.

Joan Fenwick has been a patient instead of a carer recently and had some setbacks. We hope to hear better news in the future.

Ron and Hazel Morris have both been keeping the doctors busy - we trust you're both on the improve.

Sunny Daniels has a reasonably bright outlook and with the help of her family is sorting things out after the sad loss of Dan.

Bill and Coral Coker have had many ups and downs too but are usually bright.

Like everyone else we hope to be able to join with you all for the last Safari next year. Will enclose a deposit with a good wish.

Best wishes to all for the present.

**Alan Luby 18/11/02.**

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### Birthday Boys.

Tom Martin	5 <sup>th</sup> October.	86
Bob Smyth	8 <sup>th</sup>	'85
Len Bagley	13 <sup>th</sup>	79
John Chalwell	20 <sup>th</sup>	'79
Jim Smith	28 <sup>th</sup>	'82
Doc. Wheatley	28 <sup>th</sup>	'90
George Robinson	29 <sup>th</sup>	'85
Clarrie Turner	30 <sup>th</sup>	85
Dick Darrington	31 <sup>st</sup>	'80
Ray Aitken	7 <sup>th</sup> November	87
Tom Nisbet	12 <sup>th</sup>	'83
Jack Steen	16 <sup>th</sup>	'79
Jack Fox	20 <sup>th</sup>	'90
Ross Shenn	23 <sup>rd</sup>	'80
Ted Cholerton	24 <sup>th</sup>	'87
Bulla Tait	29 <sup>th</sup>	'80
Tom Bateman	6 <sup>th</sup> December	80
Leith Cooper	8 <sup>th</sup>	'86
Don Young	8 <sup>th</sup>	'85
Les Halse	8 <sup>th</sup>	'83
Kel Carthew	12 <sup>th</sup>	'80
Rolf Baldwin	16 <sup>th</sup>	'93
Fred Stewart	18 <sup>th</sup>	'90
Alan Hollow	22 <sup>nd</sup>	'82

*Drop me a line or ring 08 9332. 7050 or e-mail [delcarey@yahoo.com](mailto:delcarey@yahoo.com) and give your birth date for publication in the Courier. Ed*

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### Courier Donations.

Peter Kraus, P.G. Spillett, Tom Pulliene, Jack & Beryl Steen, George & Gloria Smith, Ethel Kanganos, Bull & Jean Tait, Elvie Howell, Nola Wilson, Paddy & Nora Kenneally, Elizabeth Prior, Warren Snowdon, Eric & Twy Smyth, Wyn Thomson, Lois Davies, Wilf & Lorraine March and Mrs Augusta O'Connor.

### Trust Fund Donations

Tom Pulliene	\$25
Jack & Beryl Steen	\$50
Bulla & Jean Tait	\$100
Paddy & Nora Kenneally	\$50
Warren Snowdon	\$150
Lois Davies	\$50
Wilf & Lorraine March	\$50

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### Change of Address.

Mrs F. Lawrence, (Faye)  
P.O. Box 256, Glen Innes,  
N.S.W. 2370  
(02) 6732 1564

Mr B. C. Langridge (Bernie & Babs)  
4 Whittlesford St. East Victoria Park.  
W.A. 6101  
(08) 9361 3603

War Memorial Library  
P.O. Box 568 Fortitude Valley,  
Queensland. 4006  
(07) 3835 7500

### Additions.

Glenyce Veovodin  
129 Hardey Road Glen Forrest  
W.A. 6071  
(08) 9298 9034

Lindsay Timms  
64 Queens Crescent, Mt. Lawley.  
W.A. 6050

G. Tyerman  
P.O. Box 3  
Canungra, Queensland. 6275

**A New Years Resolution.**

There are many members on our mailing list that we never hear a word from one year's end to the other. So what about making a New Years Resolution to phone or write a letter (or even get an offspring to e-mail) this coming year. We would be delighted to hear from you and let everyone know just how you are getting on. That's what the Courier is all about!

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**Christmas.**

I have a list of folks I know, all written in a book,  
 And every year at Christmas time I go and have a look  
 And that is when I realise that these names are a part,  
 Not of the book they are written in, but of my very heart.

For each name stands for someone who has crossed my path sometime,  
 And in that meeting they've become the rhythm in each rhyme,  
 And while it sounds fantastic for me to make this claim,  
 I really think that I'm composed of each remembered name.

And while you may not be aware of any special link,  
 Just meeting you has changed my life a lot more than you think!  
 For once I've met somebody, the years cannot erase,  
 The memory of a pleasant word, or of a friendly face.

So never think of Christmas cards as just a mere routine,  
 Of names among a Christmas list, forgotten in between.  
 For I when I send a Christmas card that is addressed to you,  
 It's because you're on the list of folks I am indebted to!

And every year that Christmas comes, I realise anew,  
 The best gift life can offer is meeting folks like you!  
 So may the Christmas spirit that is timeless and endures,  
 Leave its very richest blessings in the heart of you and yours.  
 Author Unknown.

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*The Courier Committee wishes one and all the very Merriest for Christmas and the Happiest of New Years.*

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**NOTICES.****W.A. Members please note:**

The A.G. M. will be held at  
**Anzac Club on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2003.**  
 Refreshments to follow.  
 Please make a special effort to attend this important meeting.

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**General.**

We unearthed six copies of Colin Doig's book "A Great Fraternity"  
 which is a story of the Association from its beginning in 1946 until 1992.  
 It is a good read and while in the main it deals with the W.A. Branch, other State Branches are also included.  
 We recommend the book to those who missed out previously.  
 The cost is only \$15 plus postage.

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**Jim Smailes Poems - "The Independents"**

An account of the Timor Campaign is a gift at \$1 a copy plus postage.

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Members wishing to obtain either of the above should ring (08) 9332 7050 or e-mail [delcarey@yahoo.com](mailto:delcarey@yahoo.com)

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Top: L. to R. Bart Mavrick (rtd SAS), Captain Alan Williams, President Ray Parry and W.O.I Bill Maher relaxing at "The House" after the commemoration service.  
Bottom: Our memorial in Lovekin Drive, King's Park and floral tributes.

