



# **2/2 COMMANDO COURIER**

Print Post approved 637597 / 1646

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

President R. Parry, Secretary J. Carey, Editor D. Carey

**Vol 138**

**MARCH 2002**

## **THE UNIT HISTORY**

After deliberating for many months it was finally decided at the committee's February meeting that the Association should go ahead and produce a book on the Unit's war history. It was felt that before the Association finally winds up we should ensure that a history of the Unit, as we knew it, be written. Most of the other Commando Associations have already done this and done it well. All are a good read. Our aim is to produce a quality book, interesting and factual for posterity. It is a big challenge and one that will require the help of members.

Bernie Callinan's "Independent Company," Christopher Wray's "Timor 1942," and Arch Campbell's "The Double Reds of Timor," deal solely with the Timor campaign while Colin Doig's, "A History of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company and 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Squadron," covers all our campaigns.

Our intention is to draw on material from these books particularly that of Colin's. It is also planned to include a short summary on the Association's achievements over the past 56 years to close off the book. We will be assisted in the project by John Burrige Jnr who has been involved in the publication of a number of other Associations' war histories. We expect it to take up to 15 months before the book is available so wish us luck and please do what you can to assist us achieve our objective. J. Carey

## **A FINAL REMINDER!** **MILDURA SAFARI.**

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May to Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2002.**  
**Venue The Grand Hotel, Seventh Street, Mildura.**  
**P.O. Box 800, 3502.**

Daily Rates \$48.50 per person sharing  
\$66 " " single  
Grand Room \$63 " " sharing  
\$79.50 " " single.

Rates include breakfast.

Book by ringing **03 5023 0511**

Or toll free **1800 034 228**

Enclose \$50 deposit to above Box No.

### **Planned Itinerary.**

Wed. 1 <sup>st</sup> May	6.30pm Welcome Social at Hotel.
Thurs. 2 <sup>nd</sup> "	Murray River Trip - Lunch at Trentham Winery Estate.
Fri. 3 <sup>rd</sup> "	Commemoration Service 11am followed by Luncheon at local R.S.L.
Sat. 4 <sup>th</sup> "	Day free. Official Dinner at the Hotel at 6.30pm.
Sun. 5 <sup>th</sup> "	Morning free. 3pm Ecumenical Service followed by afternoon tea.
Mon. 6 <sup>th</sup> "	Bus tour of Mildura, luncheon included.
Tues. 7 <sup>th</sup> "	Final day. Am. General meeting. 6.30pm. Wind up Social at Hotel.

With the exception of the Saturday evening dinner, all evenings are free of engagements. The Grand Hotel has excellent facilities and a number of our functions will be held there. The above programme is not too demanding which should suit us oldies!

**TRAVEL INFORMATION:**

Mildura, in the North-West tip of Victoria, is 526 kms from Melbourne and 401 kms from Adelaide and 1046 from Sydney. Members who have still to work out how they will get there may find the following information helpful.

By coach:-

Greyhound/McCaffertys, a joint service  
Ph. 13 2030

**Sydney - Mildura**

Leaves Sydney 3pm daily arrives Mildura 8.50am. next morning.

Fare \$81 concession.

Leaves Mildura 5.40pm daily arrives Sydney 11.10am next morning.

Fare \$81 concession.

Buses are comfortable but bear in mind it is a 17/18 hr trip.

**Adelaide - Mildura**

Leaves Adelaide 10.15am daily arrives Mildura 5.30pm.

Mildura - Adelaide

Leaves Mildura 8.50am arrives Adelaide 2.15pm

Fare \$38 pensioners, \$43 seniors one way.

**Melbourne - Mildura**

Train to Bendigo then bus from Bendigo to Mildura.

Leaves Melbourne 8.40am, arrives Mildura 5pm.

Leaves Mildura 8.40am arrives Melb. 5pm?

Concession fare is approx. \$70 return.

**BY AIR.** Ph. 136789

Virgin - Perth - Adelaide \$209 one way  
\$415 return

Leaves 10am arrives 2.20pm

Sydney - Melbourne \$98 one way.

Qantas rates are at present higher but should have concession rates April/May period.

**Adelaide - Mildura**, O'Connor Airlines.  
\$152 one way, 9-seater plane leaves 5.30pm daily.

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED BY ALL CARRIERS.

---

**Safari Notes.**

Bluey Bone and Ed Bourke made a 4-day trip to Mildura in early February and are confident Mildura will provide for a good Safari. They are also trying to arrange for the local Council to grant us the honour of a civic reception. The local R.S.L. Club is looking forward to our visit.

Bluey guarantees the days will be sunny with the temperature in the lower 20s and the nights crisp and nippy - good sleeping weather, so ladies make sure you bring a warm nightie!

As previously stated this may well be our last Safari so let's make it a memorable one. Be in it!

The following list of 55 includes firm bookings and also those who have signified their intention of going and are still yet to book in. Bookings can be made right up until the last moment. If you are considering attending for a few days for the main functions, please come, we need your support.

Queensland: Ron Archer, Lyn Love, George and Margo Shiels (4)

New South Wales: Bill & Coral Coker, Betty Devlin, Harry & Amyce Handicott, Happy Greenhalgh, Paddy & Nora Kenneally, Alan & Edith Luby, Pat Weller, Marge Goodacre. (12)

**Victoria:** Fred & Mavis Broadhurst, Arch & Dawn Claney, Margaret Monk & Don Thomson, Pat Petersen & Miriam Van Dyke, Cath Roberts, Betty Craig, Bluey & Mary Bone, Ed & Dorothy Bourke and Doris Joy. (15)

**South Australia:** Bert & Sylvia Bache?, Keith & Kath Blomeley, Kel Carthew, Hazel Hollow, Anne Goolie, and Janette Reid. (8)

**Western Australia:** Tom & Mary Foster, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Iris Rowan-Robinson, Len & Betty Bagley, Jess Epps, Nellie Mullins, Col Hodson, Dick Darrington, John & Olive Chalwell, Jack & Delys Carey and Maureen Baker. (16)

Members are requested to bring their War Medals to wear at the Commemoration Service.

---

### **Vale Fred Bryant VX 2913.**

*Fred's vale was kindly provided by his son Peter who resides in Wheeler Heights, N.S.W.*

Fred was born in Richmond, Victoria on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 1917. Little is known of Fred's early life other than he lost his parents at an early age and spent his youth growing up in Marysville, country Victoria. He was a very keen sportsman in his youth and was a devout supporter of South Melbourne, now the Sydney Swans.

Fred enlisted on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1940 and served in Timor and Papua New Guinea. In all, Fred served a total of 1981 days of which over 1400 days were spent overseas. Fred was discharged on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

In September 1945 Fred married Phyllis in Beaudesert, Queensland and shortly afterwards returned to Marysville where their first son was born. Shortly after the arrival of Peter they moved to Rockhampton where Phyllis's family now reside. The move must have been productive as shortly afterwards their second son Raymond was

born. During Fred's years in Rockhampton he owned and operated a very successful catering business.

Around 1954 Fred moved his family to Brisbane where he lived until his death on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2001. Fred continued working in the catering industry until his retirement in the early eighties.

It took a little time for Fred to re-acquaint with wartime friends however he became a participating member through the 60, 70 and 80's and together with Phyllis enjoyed a number of Safaris and many social events. Phyllis and Fred made many friends and they both cherished these friendships greatly.

In 1990 Fred lost his wife Phyllis and this proved to be a very difficult and destabilising period of Fred's life. It was only in recent years the family realised the real effect this loss had on Fred. None the less life went on, Fred loving his sport, the mateship of his friends and the love of his family.

Many friendships forged during the war years remained in place until Fred's death. Although not in the best of health during the last 12/18 months, Fred never complained and looked towards the positive. Fred is survived by son Peter and seven grandchildren. Fred lost his other son Raymond in 1995.

Fred's funeral service was held at Mt. Thompson crematorium, Brisbane on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2001. He was 84 years of age. It was a great honour to have Ron Archer, Fred Otway and Paddy Wilby in attendance.

Footnote: The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Courier was a publication very much enjoyed by Fred. If he read each publication once he read the same publication 12/15 times.

Peter Bryant.

Fred, an original member of the Unit began as a Corporal cook being promoted to a Sergeant on our arrival in Timor. Though



small in stature Fred was a lively chap and a top cook (a rarity in the army!) He could knock up a good meal out of next to nothing and did what he could to take the monotony out of the army fare of m & v, bully beef and goldfish (herrings). He served on HQ and with a number of sections in both the Timor and New Guinea campaigns and would have prepared hundreds of meals while with us. He enjoyed his beer and was one of those 'rascals' involved in the rum rebellion story. (see Sept. Courier) He was an affable bloke and was well liked by his fellow diggers.

Fred and Phyllis attended a number of Safaris and Fred maintained an active interest in the Association to the end.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Peter and family on the loss of a loved one.

Lest we forget.

J. Carey

---

### **"Memorial Mass with Ashes"**

Family members from as far away as Wagga Wagga and Numina in New South Wales and Exmouth in WA, together with friends and representatives of various community organisations, gathered at St. Lawrence's Catholic Church at Bluff Point, Geraldton, on January 21<sup>st</sup> for a Memorial Mass for Eric Weller.

Formerly of Bluff Point, Eric passed away peacefully at Woy Woy Nursing Home in N.S.W. on October 30<sup>th</sup>, aged 79 and was cremated there in association with a thanksgiving Mass on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Father Brenton Taylor celebrated the follow-up mass at St. Lawrence's, in the presence of Eric's ashes and army hat. He described Eric as a friendly, no-nonsense man whose community contributions included work in the church hall; a nice man whose lasting gift from God had left a continuing legacy of service among the assembly.

Father Brenton, an army chaplain with the rank of Captain, had earlier praised Eric's community service that included renovation of the old Presentation Convent at Port Hedland, now a boarding house; odd jobs for the Dominican Sisters at Dongara; restoration work on the historic Geraldton building known as "The Hermitage"; as a founding member of the Local Vincent de Paul Society; and Legacy and RSL service that included house maintenance jobs for widows as a retired master builder.

A feature of the Memorial Mass was the participation of family members in several roles including singing, playing the organ, the readings, hymn screening, offertory procession and family eulogy.

In the latter, the youngest of Eric and Margaret's family, Josephine Easton, said she went to work with her father when she was 17. After his initial concern about having a girl on the site, he was determined she would be his first apprentice. She thought he was disappointed when she quit at 18 to get married but he did have her back under instruction and the two of them built her home which was a source of enormous pride.

The only reason she survived Uni was because her parents would come and run the house and look after her children while she studied for exams.

After her mother's demise in 1994 and in accordance with a promise to her mother, she accepted the responsibility of looking after Eric who came to live with her family for eight months. Having promised Margaret he would remarry, Eric married Patricia Sullivan in 1998, and she quickly became a very special person in the family.

Tom Foster paid this tribute: Eric Weller WX 13382, always a quiet achiever. We joined up about the same time, trained together, and eventually served in the same platoon during the Timor Campaign. I feel humbled and privileged on this solemn occasion to represent his wartime unit, the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>

Commando Squadron, whose members convey through me their sincere condolences to his bereaved family, relations, and friends here present

"To share extreme adversity with others is a unique opportunity to observe human nature at its best; we as a unit had that privilege and came to know Eric as a willing, reliable, conscientious and courageous soldier with an unselfish sense of duty and never a complaint."

"Where else would you expect to find the Eric Weller that you all knew, at a time of national peril, other than to be out there confronting such an enemy, pulling his weight, as always, in changing what was regarded as 'Australia's finest hour.'

"Eric was a true ANZAC of the highest tradition and this world will be a lesser place without him."

"Well done Eric, rest in peace old mate, we salute you."

Father Brenton also officiated at the lawn cemetery where Eric's ashes and remembrance poppies were interred in Margaret's grave in the presence of a guard of honour led by RSL and Legacy stalwart Kevin Grey, interspersed with family members and friends.

Having lost their son Tony in 2001, Eric is survived by wife Patricia of Numina, NSW; daughters Patricia O'Donnell of Exmouth, Anne-Marie Baguley of Wagga Wagga, NSW and Josephine Easton of Kelmscott and their families; Tony's widow Graziella and family; 13 "grandies" and five "great-grandies."

Peter Barden

### **Christmas Social 2001.**

Our Christmas social held at the Terrace Hotel on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December was a very happy occasion. Although the number attending (39) was down on previous years all that attended had a great day. Our

special guests for the day were the President of the Australian S.A.S. Association, Bart Mavrick and his charming wife Loris.

It was good to see Len Bagley back in harness in his customary role of M.C. Len was just getting over a year he would like to forget and was soon back in top form. Small Xmas trees made for attractive table decorations and after a few refreshers the tempo lifted and the room was soon abuzz. A nice luncheon followed by a short speech from our president Ray Parry who wished all present all the best for the Festive Season. Doc told a few of his stories and all in all it was another of our very happy gatherings.

Those present included: - Ray Aitken, Len & Betty Bagley, Maureen Baker, Tony Bowers, John Burridge, Jack & Delys Carey, Joy Chatfield, Dick Darrington, Jess Epps, Beverley Frankée. Keith & Val Hayes, Jean Holland, Colin Hodson (nice to see you again Col.) Barbara Goddard (you too Barbl) Bernie & Babs Langridge & daughter Gem Mackenroth, Dot Maley, Bart & Loris Mavrick, Don & Ida Murray, Nellie Mullins, John Lillie, Stan & Barbara Payne, Joe Poynton, Ray Parry, Dusty Studdy, Bob & Margaret Smyth, Vince Swann, Nancy Timms, Hazel Wicks, Claire West, Doc Wheatley. There were 12 apologies.

J. Carey.

### **Australia Day 2002.**

For the second year running the Association was invited to the Australia Day celebration function at "The House", the headquarters of the Australian S.A.S. Association at Campbell Barracks.

Although our numbers were well down on last year, the seventeen who were able to make it had a terrific day. It is an ideal spot for a barbecue or whatever and the old hands of the S.A.S. are experts in presenting a first class barbecue luncheon with all the trimmings. A cold beer or two with Aussie music in the background under

shady trees made for a very relaxing and pleasant 3-4 hours. Unlike last year we never had any luck in the raffle but there's always another day. With most of the serving SAS boys away on active service overseas the rollup was below that of last year. This did not stop "Advance Australia Fair" being sung with great gusto. How lucky we are to be living in such a wonderful country.

We are indebted to President Bart Mavrick, Mick Malone and all the other veteran helpers for the invitation and thank them sincerely for another Australia Day outing. Roll on Australia Day 2003!

Ray Aitken, Maureen Baker John Burrige, Jack & Delys Carey, Dick & Melvin Darrington, Jess & Sue Epps (Peter had the flu), Keith & Val Hayes, John Lillie, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Ray Parry, Claire West and Doc Wheatley made up our party. There were a number of apologies.

J. Carey.

---

### **Victorian News.**

The Christmas luncheon went ahead as planned. It was a great success - 18 attended. Marge and Leith Cooper, Mavis & Fred Broadhurst, Joan Fryer, Wally Kerr, Shirley & John Southwell, Eddie & Dot Bourke, Margaret Monk and Don Thomson, Pat Petersen and sister Miriam Van Dyke, Jack Fox, Patsy Thatcher, David Brown (Thai had to pull out, sprained her back), Kath Roberts.

Those unable to attend Beryl Boast, Win Humphreys, Dot Veitch, Nina Grachan (all mobility problems), Bruce McLaren - heart surgery and stroke, Betty Craig shoulder treatment. Bluey and Mary Bone cancelled. Bluey had a doctor's appointment. Arch and Dawn Clancy find it too far to travel now. Blue Sargeant is having cancer treatment. Peter Krause has health problems. Harry & Olive Botterill were at their grand-

daughter's wedding at Hamilton Island, Queensland.

Patsy Thatcher spoke interestingly of what was happening in Timor today, also of their great respect for Australian forces 1942 and present day.

Mavis and Fred Broadhurst went to the Commando Committee Xmas get together at Highett RSL. Another great day for them.

I would like to thank Mavis Broadhurst for the wonderful work she did to make the Xmas luncheon such a great success. She took over the responsibility when Olive and I had to go to Queensland and made a great success of it - thanks very much Mavis.

I'll take this opportunity to wish all members a very healthy and prosperous New Year.

Harry Botterill.

---

### **N.S.W. News.**

Dear Editor & Courier Team.

Once again the time comes around to compile the history of the past three months and put it into writing. For years I've been arriving at some sort of diary of events, but like many such resolutions they haven't got past first base.

The year 2001 ended with many happy memories as well as its sad ones, more especially with the loss of many members of our 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Assn., family, some relatively young, others reaching great ages.

To the remaining relatives of those who have left this world, we extend our sincere sympathy.

In regard to the demise of Artie Cullen, after our visit to Darwin in '99, I advised that to the best of local knowledge he had passed on, and this was confirmed by Jack Porter (2/8) who had been unable to obtain anything official as he was not a relative. Warren Snowden would be able to access if required.

Our social gathering at Dee Why RSL Club on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. was a happy occasion with only 16 present. Those present were Nora & Paddy Kenneally, Col & Val Holley and Muriel, Alan & Edith Luby, June Bennett, Marilyn & Kevin Birmingham, Frank O'Neill & Verena, Arthur & Gwenda Littler (1<sup>st</sup>. & 3rd.), Ted & Lola Workman rep. NSW Cdo. Assn. Apologies Bill & Coral Coker (Coral only home from hospital the day before.) Ray & Bonny Whitely transport, Ken & Pat Glover, Harry & Amyce Handicott & Snow Went.

In regard to any request for a copy of "A Round Tuit", Ken Glover who only lives 5 ks away was the only person who came up with one - even though it took a while to get around Tuit as could be expected!

We are happy to hear the news that Father Don Sproxton has been inducted as the Auxiliary Bishop of Perth. Aren't we fortunate that we've had such a number of distinguished people in so many facets of careers throughout our 2/2<sup>nd</sup> family in political, religious, military and community services over the years? I think we have something of which to be proud.

On the Health Front: Thankfully many people keep in touch and I might mention this should be a two-way thing and I make allowances for those who are worse off than we are.

Betty Craig, Joan Fenwick, Kath Press, Win Brown, Maria Hartley & Betty Devlin have all been fairly regular correspondents. Hap Greenhalgh has his own "North report" and Harry Handicott keeps the Hunter report going.

I tried to phone some of our Shoalhaven members when the bushfires were on but had no luck. Bill Tomasetti had no damage.

Edith has been in the wars again and finished the year in Manly Hospital with a laceration to her left instep, caused as I stepped back on to it, not knowing she was close behind me. As on two occasions last year the wound developed a staph infection

and apart from pain and discomfort she has needed much attention from a very caring G.P., the Home Nursing Service and yours truly, even though the old hands are not as skilful as in past days. Presently she is almost okay.

As you are aware Jack, our friend Jim Walker recently obtained for us copies of the recommendations and approvals for the many Field Promotions during our service in Timor during 1942, which shall forward to you soon.

Those surviving might appreciate a copy unless they already have one.

One item which attracted my attention was in the early pages dated 15/9/42 where it is suggested that the order of battle be amended to read 2/2 Independent Company.

Just to place something unique on record, at 2 minutes, 2 seconds past 2-yesterday morning the time and date read 020202020202. Think about it!

One thing for sure, we won't see it again!

Will close off at that with best wishes to every one. We have booked for Mildura but there is a growing element of doubt.

Congrats again on that well deserved Order of Australia Medal.

Sincerely Alan Luby.

P.S. Next week on the 13<sup>th</sup> Feb. will be our 59<sup>th</sup> wedding Anniversary. I guess there are a few others - we send our best wishes.

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

Because of my trip to W.A. this is a phone through call to catch the deadline. Fortunately all up this way are well at the moment although a couple have had their ups and downs.

Ted Cholerton from Evans Head had a fall and suffered a hairline fracture of his pelvis late in January but after a spell in hospital

is back home being looked after well by his Dianne - God bless her. Ted is getting about with the aid of a walker.

Russ Blanch from Bangalow is well and like me is waiting for some cool weather and rain.

Ken and Edith Jones of Barraba are not sure yet whether they will be going to Mildura.

Eric and Lorraine Herd from Iluka still enjoy their golf and have no complaints. They both send their congratulations to Sproxo.

Jack and Beryl Steen from Thornlands are happy now that Jack is much healthier having recovered from a slight heart attack and finding he was a diabetic while in hospital, on top of which he got the gout which has stabilised now. Recently, he and Beryl had a few days at Caloundra where they ran into Gordon and Joan Stanley. Jack said Gordon looked extremely well.

I spoke to Bill and Beryl Walsh of Kempsey recently. Bill said Noel Buckman is in a nursing home at Macksville but unfortunately Buck cannot recognise anybody. We still think of him so please remember him in your prayers. Bill is fairly stable even after six bypasses but realises he has to pace himself now.

Tom and Jean Yates from Kyogle are okay and looking forward to a busy schedule they have coming up including a grandson's wedding in April, another wedding in June and a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in July all in Canberra. It's all up and go with the Yates family.

I'm well but tired after my recent trip to the West. I'm convinced I will not be driving down to Mildura. I intend to fly to Melbourne and hope to motor to Mildura in the company of my niece Heather and her husband David.

Ron Archer and Lyn Love dropped in early in February and we had a pleasant couple of hours talking about things in general. It made my day. Ron and Lyn both looked well

and were visiting friends in Grafton and Coffs Harbour.

Harry Handicott saw me before I went to WA. He and Amyce are well and looking forward to their Mildura trip, God willing. (And so say all of us!)

God bless, Happy Greenhalgh.

---

### Re Unit History Project.

Apropos to the editorial on the above we are asking for your help. Assuming you have a copy of Colin Doig's book, here is a way you can: -

If you are aware of any errors or omissions (and there are plenty) please let us know in writing. Your name may have been overlooked altogether or be shown in the wrong section. Getting the nominal rolls for each campaign spot on is important.

Members are welcome to send in an account of any action or humorous incidents they may have been involved in. This applies in particular to the New Guinea or New Britain Campaigns for which we are light on for information.

It would also help if you provide your army number, date of birth, rank and which section you served in say by June of this year.

Any suggestions or ideas you may have which will help the book along are welcome.

No money or orders for books is required at this early stage.

So put your thinking caps on now, we need your help!

Jack Carey.

---

### Dave Ross Memoirs.

The Timor Campaign is now part of military history and much has been said and written about it.

The following extract is from an interview with the late Dave Ross, a Group Captain and the Australian Consul in Dili at the time of the Japanese invasion on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942 and is worth repeating. The interview was conducted by a Bill Tilly and Bill Scott in 1982.

Dave was born in Melbourne on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1902 and joined the navy on 31/12/1916 as a cadet midshipman at Jervis Bay after winning an Australia wide scholarship at the age of 14. After 5 years, at 19 he served in the British Navy for the next three years, eventually returning to Australia and transferring to the Fleet Air Army at Point Cook in 1925 where he started flying. He spent six years at Point Cook and transferred to Civil Aviation of the Department of Defence in 1931. In early 1941 he volunteered to go to East Timor and was there on the 19<sup>th</sup> February when the Japanese landed. His story goes:

"Yes, I was caught. The Dutch were evacuating. They could smell a rat about two weeks too late and they were leaving Dili and going back to Koepang.

And being Dutch the first thing they evacuated was the Gin - fine Gin too - and the ammunition second and it was the night, the last dinner before they shoved off. This meant there was plenty of Rum and I got choc-full. I'd had too much and I went to sleep on my bed and suddenly I heard a "roomp". I looked out to sea as the house was right on the beach and I could see a flash of light and hear the "roomp". I suddenly realised that's warm, they're shellbursts and here I was with a couple of Jap destroyers shelling me - so I called my small native helper and said, "Shut up the house. I'm going up in the hills and I'm not stopping.

Dave never made it to the hills eventually settling back in his house, which had been ransacked. Food was scarce and he lived on rice and oranges for quite a while with

an occasional chook thrown in. He continues

"In about the first fortnight the Jap Consul came and said we would like you to go and find the Australian soldiers who were up at a place called Ermera because the East Indies have surrendered - Singapore has surrendered - therefore these soldiers must surrender. If they don't surrender they will be treated as bandits and executed. I said, that's nice, a dear little civil aviation officer getting mixed up in so much turmoil so he said tomorrow we will take you along to a place we know about 20 miles along the beach. Liquica it was called and from there you will go over the mountains to about the middle and he said we know the Australian soldiers are there. I said "Well that's good. What do you want?" He said "We want them to surrender" - I said "Alright off we go and off we went. When the patrol was ready they had a Bren Gun carrier which was the first item and then two or three ton trucks. The officers always wore white gloves. They used them as a signalling device. Anyway I was in the leading truck with a driver and he had a Tommygun alongside him. We came to Liquica; they decided to have lunch and sat in the gutter. They didn't have any lunch for me. They proceeded to send out patrols and wanted to take me back. I said I wanted to get out and see how our troops were going. And so I went along and went inland on a Timor pony with a woman's saddle and haemorrhoids and you can't beat that on a wet Sunday and an empty stomach. After about a day, and just the two of us, me and my boy Salvadore, poor bloke, I bet he's dead now we came in and found an Australian officer Bernie Callinan an interesting bloke with a good brain.

Following Dave's arrival at Hatulia, a meeting was held by Major Spence and the Platoon Commanders who were told of the Japanese demands to surrender or else!

This was swiftly turned down and Dave Ross was obliged to make the trip back to



Dili to convey the Australians refusal. Dave continues:

"I remember I walked the last ten miles to Liquica as I couldn't stand the sore backside on the pony. I returned to Dili on a Bren carrier hoping we wouldn't be ambushed by our troops. On my return the Jap Consul saw me the next morning and was told what had happened. He then said - oh. We will bomb Hatulia tomorrow. I said that's a waste of time and ammunition because they're leaving there tomorrow. I explained that the Australians were an independent company and their operations were controlled by the H.Q. in Melbourne. They had nothing to do with the Dutch Forces, nothing at all and therefore there was no question of banditry or anything like that. This information was passed on to the General in charge and seemed to satisfy him. So time passed by. Next door to my house was a house occupied by Japanese officers. There must have been 7 or 8 of them. There was a piano in there and I could see shoes and sox and eye shades. White boxes kept appearing on the piano. They contained ashes of officers who had been killed in ambushes. A hospital ship came in one day and took all those Japs in boxes away. Our blokes killed a lot of them."

A few months later Dave Ross was sent out again by the Japanese to ask the Australians to surrender. By then he was in an emaciated condition and when he made contact with the Unit force it was decided he should return to Australia. Before he left he wrote an awfully rude letter to the Japanese in Dili. He would never say what was in it.

Following his return to Australia Dave became the Director of Transportation and Movements 1943/46 and later Superintendent of Flying Operations, Dept. of Civil Aviation of Ivanhoe, Victoria. He went on and was at one stage First Director of the W.A. region of the Department of Civil Aviation.

After a distinguished career Dave retired, living in Applecross, WA until his death in August 1984 in his 83<sup>rd</sup> year. He attended a number of our annual reunions and always received a warm welcome as an old friend.

Dave Ross was a great bloke and a fine Australian. Lest We Forget.

Jack Carey.

---

### A Close Shave.

We lost George Thomas & Andy Smeaton on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1942, a day I remember only too well

We stood to at dawn, and then George and Andy went to our O.P., which was located fairly close to our camp. They did not report back so it was all clear so we set about getting breakfast ready. There was a little spring nearby where we used to wash while breakfast was cooking. Another mate and I went to the spring to wash. Walking down a little ridge on the way down he went to relieve himself, at that stage the Japs opened fire on us from the O.P. He came flying over to me unhurt. The only way we could go was down hill to the valley. A cliff face blocked us. The only other way was open country so we were trapped. There was a small patch of scrub near the spring and we had to make a quick decision - open country or hide in the bushes which was hardly big enough for us and our credo to hide in. We chose the bushes, the Japs came down to the spring and were talking away not knowing we were a few yards away. After a while they went away. Then we had to decide what to do next. We decided to stay, as we didn't know if they were still in the area. It was a very long day and as it got dark we moved out. We didn't know what happened to the rest of the Section or where they went. We walked all night to where they might be and found them safe and all well, so ended a very traumatic and lucky escape.

We never found out what happened to George and Andy as far as I know.

Alan Adams.

George and Andy both worked on the mines in W.A. before enlisting. Andy was a former Fairbridge Farm boy and turned out to be a top soldier as was George.

Lest we forget.

---

### **"Caught Out!"**

Headquarters moved from Three Spurs to Railaco towards the end of January 1942. The 50 reinforcements, who had arrived on January 20<sup>th</sup> 1942, supplied the labour force. Railaco was a good spot; a huge thatch covered open shed provided shelter for the men. Tents were erected for officers quarters and latrines dug. The latter for some unknown reason known only to the officers were dug alongside the track coming up from the villages down by the river.

I was digging a slit trench on the opposite side of the track when Major Spence in obvious distress and in a hurry, made for the latrines which were open to view from all sides of the compass. At the same and most inconvenient time, a long line of Timorese women, children and men also appeared from the river villages. Major Spence got up; sat down, got up, and flopped down, "Bondia Tuan" (good day) said the dusky maidens, as they passed the major on his throne, with down cast eyes and expressionless faces. So the Bondias went on from that long line of Timorese men, women and children. I grinned and returned the salutation as I swung the pick and wielded the shovel.

The major sat in contemplation as he inspected the ground at his feet.

Paddy Kenneally, Oct. 1992.

---

### **Enduring Miracle.**

Almost daily, in homes around the world, a minor miracle takes place. Bits and pieces of this that and the other - animal, vegetable, mineral - have come together and been transformed. Maybe salted, sifted, spiced, probably mixed with a moist additive, then subjected to heat treatment. Abracadabra, the result is something new, something that wasn't there before. Something that can please the palate, tickle our nose, strain the trouser button.

The name of this magic is cooking, and there is no end to its marvels and variety. If you were to eat a never-before dish every day for a long life, you still would not have chewed on all that are worth trying at least once. As a pal of Mark Anthony (almost) said about Cleopatra "age cannot wither it, nor custom stale its infinite variety"

Cooking of course goes well back in the story of mankind - even before that biblical gent put fatted calf on the menu for his returning son. And through the ages it has been associated with celebration. In our own day we know that the show is not over till The Two Fat Ladies cook.

Romans revelled in it. Bread and circuses were enough for the poor old plebs, but emperors and the rich gave feasts of wasteful extravagance to demonstrate their wealth, their power, and their exquisite taste. One fellow had an olive stuffed into a nightingale; the bird stuffed into a pig; pig into an ox that was then roasted on a spit. He just ate the olive! But one famous gourmand wore gloves so that could he get at the choicest hot meats before anybody else. One finicky fellow let oysters go putrid and then ate them with honey. Another enjoyed regular suppers of lark brains. Often the Romans would take a mix of meats and pound the lot to a pulp before cooking. They had schools for cooks, and "the Banquet of the Learned" was their equivalent of the Naked Chef cookbook.



Choice ingredients came from all the Roman outposts.

But most people through the centuries used ingredients that were readily available, and devised multiple ways of presenting them cooked: Normandy its apples, Italy's olives, and coastal towns their fish. Religion or superstition limited some eating. (At one time frogs were classed as fish, and could be eaten on meatless Fridays) Sometimes the limitation was physical - as with the Chinese who, by and large, cannot tolerate dairy products.

To compensate, China has a vast range of cooking delights. It's not just stir-fry with peanut oil in the wok. They ladle hot oil over the food till it's cooked, deep-frying, smoke, and steaming, stewing, wind-dried, long-seasoned in salt or in soybean paste, braising in a consomme, and cooking in a master-sauce. There's red cooking, crystal, and many, many ways of cooking rice. Rice grains vary in size and use: short for puddings, medium for risotto and pilau, long for curry.

Curries, of course, vary widely, so much so that the everyday curry powders of India, of Vietnam, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Burma, Pakistan do not have one single ingredient in common.

There's cooking variety as wide as your imagination. Try fish and chips where the washed and sliced potato is left with skin-on, boiled ten minutes, sprinkled with Parmesan and baked in the oven. Lamb cooked slowly with prunes, apple, ginger and a pinch of cinnamon. The Spanish chicken seasoned with Thyme, basted with brandy, topped with foie gras and truffles - all baked in a clay pot and brought to the table with a small hammer to crack the pot open for your startled guests (who may think you're a veritable crackpot!)

In the Basque area of Spain are groups of men who privately cook, eat, drink and carouse behind closed doors. Ladies are admitted once a year - if they are good.

Even before Mrs Beeton published the recipe for the "Benevolent Soup" she made - nine gallons at a time - during the winter of 1858 to give each week to deserving cottagers of a nearby village, England dragged fifty years behind much of Europe in culinary enterprise. Probably lags a bit today, when so many Brits have virtually stopped cooking to patronise foreign restaurants and take-aways. (There are more Indian restaurants in London than in Bombay.)

"Take-away is not a new fad. In Victorian times - when Charles Dickens was alive for instance - many of the poor had no chance to cook for themselves, and scraped up the pence and halfpennies to buy from the street vendors of baked potato, sheep trotters, pea soup, eels, and 'fish and bread for a penny'. Meanwhile the novels of Dickens frequently referred to meals at the inns and private homes: lobster salad, mushroom ketchup, marrow pudding, suet dumplings, sweetbreads, calf's foot jelly and treacle pud.

Ah, so much lovely food to be cooked; so little time left to eat it.

Finally: if you want your name to be blessed in the kitchens of posterity, buy your granddaughter a copy of Arthur E. Grosser's magnificent volume "The Cookbook Decoder, or Culinary Alchemy Explained". Bribe her to study it closely, to do each one of the "autodemonstrations" and relish it's wisdom, then she (and her husband if he's bright enough) will be forever able to cook with confidence, and to devise new delights for the dining table.

The poet George Meredith has warned her "Kissing don't last; cookery do".

Peter Mantle.

*Thanks Peter for a very interesting article.*

*(Peter is an avid reader and tells a good story. He will be 86 in August.)*

*Ed.*

---

**"Hard Times" PART ONE**

Fred Otway was in Perth earlier this year to attend the funeral of his brother.

Fred was born and bred in W.A. and now lives in Queensland. He has written an article on his life and times in the West as a boy and youth, until he enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF early in 1941. This is his story: -

My mother died when I was very young. My sister was put in the Cottesloe Girl's Home. Three of my brothers went into the West Subiaco Boy's Home and my younger brother and I went into an orphanage till we were old enough to go to the boy's home, that is 5 years old. At that time we lived at Boddington. The West Subiaco station is now called Shenton Park.

The boy's home was a Salvation Army Home situated at Hardy Street. I think Chook Fowler is living in a unit, which is where the home used to be. The Hollywood Hospital was all bush those days. We had a fig orchard at the home and we used to grow wheat to feed Dandy the horse. There was also a cow and a couple of pigs, which we had at Christmas. It was fairly open country, there was a dairy thereabouts and every Christmas holidays we cut down a big tree. About ninety kids of all ages up to fourteen years old and two Salvos took part in this, and of course Dandy the horse with the cart to take the wood back to the home, probably half a mile away. We hated this, as we would have preferred to play. Later on we cut the logs with a crosscut saw into blocks of wood. Four kids on each saw, 2 on each end. Then we split the wood into smaller pieces big enough to go into the wood stove. This was done over several months before and after school and then stacked and left to dry out. We always had about a years supply of dry wood.

The school was in the home grounds. We used to walk down to the Crawley Baths of a Friday afternoon for a swim in the Swan

River. The headmaster always went with us. The school belonged to the Salvation Army but we were educated by government teachers.

We went camping in the Christmas holidays for a fortnight down at Safety Bay. We were never taught to swim, we just dog paddled. I still cannot swim even though I paddled for miles in small canoes when in "Z" special in the army.

When I was 13 years old all my class left the home to work on farms because as soon as you were 14 years old you left the home. I was the only one in 8<sup>th</sup> class. The headmaster had already taught 8<sup>th</sup> class curriculum, so all I did at my last year of schooling was to correct the other kids work. In other words I suppose I was an assistant headmaster!

My first job was at a poultry farm at Belmont just outside Perth. There were a lot of chooks. They would deafen you when they laid their eggs with all their cackling. Belmont had a few poultry farms; a duck farm and a dairy that I know of with all bush out the back of us. It was very sandy and it was hard work pushing the wheelbarrow through the sand with a bag of wheat on it. I learnt to ride a pushbike at Belmont

The crows used to pinch the eggs and the shotgun was always loaded and handy. I was not allowed to use it. Some years later, perhaps two years, Mrs Bell the farmer's wife accidentally killed herself when she rushed in to grab the shotgun.

My next job was on a dairy farm at Serpentine. This job meant that I started work at 3am. every morning as we had to get the milk to the Serpentine station by about 6am. In the winter time we used to fill the copper up and light the fire. By the time we finished milking it would be boiling. We then drained the water out of the Ford utility and filled it up with the boiling water. This helped to get it going. Sixty odd years ago most cars had to be cranked with the

handle. They would never start straight away.

The Serpentine River was a picnic spot for the city folk as well as the locals. They used to run special trains from Perth.

I learnt to do a bit of ballroom dancing whilst I was at Serpentine. We used to ride our pushbikes (we - means Bill the farmer's son and a couple of other farmer's sons) to the dances but we still had to get up at 3am! Every day we used to have a sleep after dinnertime.

I went back to have a look at the old farm about thirty years ago. There was only paddocks and stock. I saw straight away that the feed and ground looked like quality stuff that's because the soil now has trace elements added to it. Trace elements were unknown when I was on the farm.

My next job was down at Pingelly, about fifteen miles out. I think it was only wheat. This was a dawn to sundown job. There was no 40 hours in those days. It must have been an off time, that is not planting or harvesting wheat etc. We were building a machinery shed. This requires finding suitable trees with the fork just right and also the right thickness that makes it easy for the crossbeam to fit into the forks. The beds supplied were like the palliasses in the army only these were filled with chaff and fleas. As soon as you lay down on these chaff bags, for that is what they were, you were set upon by hungry fleas. I stuck it out for about six weeks then left for home, the Salvo home.

I was a ward of the State until I was 18 years old. I had no home other than the boy's home. They would fix you up with another job. Legally I had to go back to the home if I left my employer but if I decided otherwise nobody was going to go the expense of finding me. But, the home was a way of getting another job as farmers used to write into the Salvos requesting that they wanted labour. By the way my first job was paid two shillings and sixpence per week, that

was standard. What I can remember is, icecreams were three pennies, a haircut 10 pence, a gallon of petrol 10 pence.

My next job was up at Moora 3 miles out of town. It was a mixed farm: wheat, sheep, pigs and about 8 cows and quite a few chooks. The farmer's wife used to make butter from the cow's milk, sell it and eggs to the town's folk. Once a week she took the sulky into town. The skim milk went to the pigs and some was mixed into the feed of the chooks. I learned to harness up and drive a team of eight horses, ploughing and harvesting etc. Those days we used to bag the wheat, also some barley. What has become of those wonderful wheat bags and sugar bags? They were my bed and baggage and my raincoat. You just tucked one corner of the wheatbag in, and you had a raincoat. This is when I carried my swag. Being only three miles out I could easily ride my bike into town and go to the pictures. I have forgotten how to harness up a team now.

My next job was at Mandogalup. A farmer from Corrigin decided to raise some pigs at Mandogalup. He built some pigsties and put up a windmill and he brought barley down by the truckload. I think his wife may have had to spend time at the doctors or hospital, so this was a good way of saving costs. She and some of the elder family were there. We had the inevitable cow, which meant I had to be there to milk it of a Sunday. Mandogalup was mainly vegetable farms as there was a lot of peat around the place. I used to ride my bike all around the place, go for 50 or 70 miles of a Sunday. Bikes were common on the Fremantle to Perth Highway and everywhere else. I could go down to Rockingham or through Spearwood to Fremantle or whatever. There used to be a Saturday night dance on the Rockingham Fremantle Road.

(To be continued in June Courier)

---

### "Terowie Trouble"

The "sheep" incident at Terowie when the Unit was en route to Katherine in October 1941 has been told many times. This nostalgic account from Colin Doig's article under the title "Historically Yours" is worth repeating.

The late afternoon found us in Terowie, the head of the 5ft 3in. gauge and we were to entrain on the 3ft 6in. line for Alice Springs. We took up temporary residence in the local show ground, a bare expanse of red clay and dust. Some of the lads of "B" Platoon in their wanderings in the near end of the camp had found a sheep "straying"?

They promptly arrested it for loitering and moved it off smartly to an old tumbled down house. There they proceeded to slaughter it with the aid of a small pocketknife, skinning it in a rough and ready manner. Using some old timber from the tumble down shack they built a big fire and barbecued it. Two officers who were wandering around came on the scene and were quickly offered a chop or two probably with the idea of incriminating as many as possible. The offering was declined and the officers moved off. One a city type said to the other, a cocky in civvy life, "What is the chance of the farmer missing that sheep?" The reply was "Depends on the size of the flock. If a big flock he may never miss it, if a small flock he probably knows it by name." It so turned out the "flock" comprised two sheep.

The local copper was early on the scene with the sheep owner in the morning. It did not take many inquiries to find the culprits. Eric Smyth who was Orderly Sergeant at the time relates what followed.

The day after "The Bad Bold Boys of "B" Platoon", B.B.Q'd the sheep, I was Orderly Sergeant for our transit camp at Terowie. All was quiet until about mid-morning when the 'Local John' called in to see Major Spence. He had a complaint from a local

that 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company members had killed and B.B.Q'd one of his two sheep and gave a pretty good eye witness description of Pte. Paddy Knight. The sheep owner did not wish to press a sheep stealing charge but expected to get paid for his missing sheep.

Major Spence did not query the accusation; he just asked the Orderly officer to parade Paddy Knight. This was dead easy for the Orderly officer, he just ordered me to parade Paddy Knight in the orderly room forthwith. I had no trouble finding Paddy and on the way back to the Orderly Room I told him the bad news was that the "Grazier" only had two sheep, so they had eaten half his flock, an eye witness had given a good description of him (Paddy). The good news was that no sheep stealing charge would be laid as long as somebody paid for the dead sheep.

The formal proceedings went something like this:

Major Spence to Paddy "Well did you enjoy your B.B.Q. last night?"

Paddy, "Yes Sir, it was very tasty."

Major Spence, "Because somebody now has to pay for it."

Major Spence asked the local John for a valuation and he came up with 2 pounds 10 shillings. Paddy still standing to attention, fairly shuddered so Spence queried it back to "The Law"

"The sheep was a full mouth," said the Local John

"What do you think of that?" said Major Spence to Paddy.

Quick as a flash, Paddy came back with, "Sir, they must have been all gold!"

The resultant laughter dissolved the formal proceedings and Pte. Paddy Knight was officially fined 50 bob.

Things didn't quite end there because Paddy (and I suppose all his mates) was

flat broke and could not pay the fine. It was actually Col Doig who "Stepped up with 50 bob to square the local john."

---

### A Nostalgic Occasion.

Tony Adams kindly sent an article from the Courier Mail/16<sup>th</sup> February, part of which reads: -



When Robert Doyle graduates from Duntroon today, his late grandfather, World War II commando Angus Maclachlan, will be watching over him.

Next week marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japanese landing in Portuguese East Timor, and the beginning of almost yearlong guerrilla fighting between the independent company and the enemy.

In 1941, Private Maclachlan, a 21-year-old apprentice signwriter from Rainworth Brisbane, signed on with the company at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds. He landed in Dili a month before the Japanese landed on February, 19<sup>th</sup> 1942, and became part of the Allies "Sparrow Force" to defend Timorese airfields.

Reflecting on the uncanny timing of his graduation as a reservist yesterday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Doyle said his grandfather's role in East Timor had inspired him to follow in his footsteps.

"I only heard snippets of stories from him, and he didn't talk about it a lot, but I was always very interested in it," said the 26-year-old Victoria Point construction manager.

"It's funny how things work out, and I sometimes wonder what Grandad would think if he knew I was graduating, I think he'd be pretty proud."

Lieutenant Doyle's father, John, a police superintendent, has researched the history of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> and the article goes on to give details of the Company's exploits in East Timor and touches on the Trust Funds achievements.

*I'm sure Angus who was a fine man and great Association member would be proud of his grandson. We wish Robert good luck in his army career.*

*Angus passed away on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 1992. Lest We Forget.*

*Editor.*

---

The Editor 20/2/02 The Australian

### A Correction.

Re Major Cape's story in today's Australian by Gabrielle Chan. It is apparent Gabrielle has not done her homework when she writes quote: "Eventually the Australians took command of all the stray forces, including the Dutch force and launched the operations in Portuguese East Timor that lasted about 12 months."

The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company was sent to East Timor on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1941 along with a small Dutch force. When the Japanese landed in Dili on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1942 the company of 300 men retired to the mountains and carried out a successful guerilla campaign for the next 10 months until they were evacuated on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1942.

Major Cape and over 200 men of the 2/40<sup>th</sup> Battalion who escaped from West Timor joined up with the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> and many served with the Company until also evacuated. The campaign in East Timor did not come about as your article asserts. It does discredit to the men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>.

Major Capes was a good officer and I'm sure would readily confirm what I have written.

Gabrielle should read "The Japanese Thrust" by Lionel Wigmore, the section on "Resistance in Timor" pages 466/494 and learn what really happened 60 years ago and the hardships endured in those times.

J. W. Carey. Hon. Secretary.

Of Interest:-

Army records reveal that "Sparrow Force" in East Timor as at 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1942 consisted of -

	Officers	O/Ranks.	Total.
Aust. Force	32	429	461
Dutch	<u>10</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>260</u>
Total	42	679	721

Working on the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> as numbering 300 this means 161 were from other sources, mainly West Timor. The Dutch Force comprised mainly of Javanese and Manadonese troops whom Ray Aitken claimed didn't hit it off too well. There had been a number of personnel evacuated in the May/June period.

J. Carey.

### Correspondence.

#### **Ron Archer, Toowong, Brisbane.**

Dear Jack, Yesterday Paddy Wilby, Fred Otway and I attended Fred Bryant's funeral and said our last "goodbyes" to another great mate. Also apologies from Tony Adams and Ralph Conley.

Fred's son Peter attended the funeral and I conveyed our Association's condolences to his family and him. I asked him if he'd like copies of his father's "2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Courier" and he said "yes." His name and address are: -

Peter Bryant  
13 Lantana Ave.,  
Wheeler Heights  
Sydney 2097.  
Ph. (02) 9971.6580

He doesn't live far away from Alan Luby and is occasionally in touch with him.

Although our members have not had close touch with Fred in recent years, he was always keen to keep up with our news and to read the Courier. At the family gathering afterwards Fred's wedding photo was produced. Fred and Phyllis were married at Beaudesert and Max Davies was best man. How's that?

All the best to all our mates.

Ron Archer.

#### **Mrs A. Moore, Dwellingup, W.A.**

Please find enclosed donation for the Courier and thank you for sending it to me. Xmas wishes and Happy New Year to all members.

Alma Moore.

#### **Gerry Green, Shoalwater Bay, W.A.**

Dear Jack & Delys, Herein cheque towards whatever cause you decide.

Congratulations on your Award, a well-earned gesture! As the young people of today say "Top Stuff."

Wish you both all the nice things for the Xmas and New Year. Please give our regards to the rest of the family.

Sincerely yours, Gerry Green.

**Leith Cooper, Cowes, Victoria.**

Dear Jack, Held on Mon. 3<sup>rd</sup> December, our annual Xmas luncheon was very enjoyable, though attended by only 18, 6 of whom were males. One notable attendee was Jack Fox, transported by Fred and Mavis Broadhurst. The Bones were not able to attend.

Wal Kerr (ex 2/1) who always attends, has donated \$25 (cheque enclosed) to W.A. funds to be used wherever suitable.

Best wishes for Xmas, Yours sincerely, Leith Cooper.

---

**K. B. Sargeant, Gympie, Qld.**

Dear Jack,

Another year all but gone and what a tragic year it has been for all.

I think the whole world has been shocked by the tragic happenings in America and other places.

It hasn't been a good year for me healthwise but I am still here and being well cared for.

I trust all of your members are as well as is possible. It is really great to know that those of you who are able can meet now and then. It is nice to keep in touch.

My best wishes to all members for a Happy Festive Season and wishing all good health in 2002.

Enclosed cheque towards Courier. Sincerely Kathleen Sargeant.

---

**E. Prior, Wantirna, Victoria.**

Dear Jack, Thank you for your letter and the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Courier.

I have been in touch with Fred and Mavis Broadhurst. Unfortunately I wasn't well at the time of their Christmas social. Perhaps next year I will be able to attend some of their outings etc.

I would like to receive the Courier and am enclosing a donation towards the printing

costs. Would it be possible to put a small notice in the Courier asking if anyone has a "spare" copy of Colin Doig's book (I could buy it). Hope I am not being too much of a bother. Thank you again. Yours sincerely, Elizabeth Prior.

---

**M. Monk, Poowong, Victoria.**

Dear Delys & Jack, I am late getting my annual letter written, I'm sure Christmas has come around quicker this year. I hope this finds you and yours fit and well as we are all here. It has been a very busy year for us, Centenary of federation and lots of celebrations all over the country. I always remember being told by my Dad's eldest brother, Uncle Frank, that he went to Melbourne in 1901 to see the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary) when they came out for the opening of Parliament. He brought home a Norfolk Pine and a lovely white camellia for Grandma and they are still alive, healthy and huge at "Avondale."

We have had a lot of rain over the last few months and the countryside and gardens are beautiful and green. Just one problem for the farmers, they need a spell of sunny warm weather to get the harvest done.

I am still very busy in lots of ways and Don and I have enjoyed a few short trips away this year. After the Safari in May we may venture further on from there for a week or two. I still enjoy my judging - two friends and I went to Traralgon Show last Friday and in September Don and I went to Kerang for a judges get-together. We saw some lovely gardens and interesting places. Don plays a lot of golf and does very well. He won the West Gippsland Veterans Golf at Warragul back in September and so is B grade Champion.

Our families have had numerous reasons for celebrations throughout 2001. Wedding anniversaries and an engagement and significant birthday celebrations.



We will have Christmas Dinner here again this year. Don and I then go to his place for Christmas tea. His family will be there so it works out very well. We both send our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

With love, Margaret and Don.

---

**B. Craig, Bethanga, Victoria.**

Dear everyone 2/2<sup>nd</sup> & friends, Lovely to hear from you and the family, have a wonderful time at Christmas and New Year. Also that you are keeping well.

Janette is going to come with me to the Safari; we are both looking forward to that. She has rechecked our bookings for the Safari so all is okay here. We hope to take a 3 or 4 day trip down the Murray. It will be lovely to meet up with friends that I haven't seen for a long while.

I have had a very slight stroke, but it hasn't affected me a great deal. A bit slower and I have to stop and think. Have to rest a bit more too.

Talking to Jess Epps and she is doing well. Says she is saving her pennies for the Safari.

Janette and Stan are well. Donna is working in a chemist shop. Marc is mad on basketball and is tall. Has to stoop to get through doorways and still growing. Janette is always busy driving family here and there.

As I turned 80 years young last June, with Phillip's help the dancing group at Young arranged an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party. My sisters all sent flowers. They were beautiful and Phillip took me to Young and I stayed with friends for a week. I was the guest of honour at the Federation Ball. I was amazed at the number of people who were there. I was so pleased to see so many of the folk that I had taught to dance. It was a night I will never forget. The ball was super. I went to church on the Sunday morning... it was good to have morning tea with the

congregation again. On the Monday evening I went to the dance practice, and my "little girls" were there to see me. The dancers had a beautiful supper and birthday cake for me, and it was just wonderful to have them all there and help celebrate my 80<sup>th</sup>. I saw as many folks as I could whilst I was there, of course missed a few.

Young township has not changed a great deal, but good to see it all again. Phillip came back for me again. On the way home we went to Goulburn. We went to check on my parent's graves at the cemetery, which I have had restored, and I was pleased to see that they were in good order. I was searching for my maternal grandmother's grave and found it. I was so pleased to find it after all this time. Now I have all my family listed.

Phillip, Lorraine and Janette were also thrilled about that too, because it is our family history. Janette has done a lot of research into Keith's side of the family. It is interesting to meet up with relatives and friends from all over Australia.

We are having a quiet Christmas this year. Just the three of us.

All the best now and any new now will have to wait until we meet up.

Best wishes, God Bless, Betty Craig.

---

**Australian Commando Association.**

President W.J. Hardgrave and myself extend hearty Christmas Tidings and wish all a healthy and Happy New Year.

The President has now responded well during his hospitalisation.

Our condolences are forwarded to the Commando Association (Victoria) following the passing of their very capable Secretary, Bruce Coleman 2/7, 2/9 recently.

Confirmation is to hand that the Annual general meeting is to be held on Tuesday 12 March 2002 within the Sergeant's Mess, Royal Military College, Canberra. Meet and



greet 1200 hours, followed by the luncheon, then the AGM.

Would each State, Region please notify Secretary George Buckingham who, or, how many delegates will be in attendance. The Association is responsible to pay for whatever meals are ordered in advance.

Kindest regards, George Buckingham, Hon. Secretary.

---

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

Seasons greeting to you Jack and all members and families of the Association.

With regard to the whereabouts of Artie Cullen, I have had mixed information from all my enquiries - the Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages wrote to me that there was no record of his death in the Northern Territory.

I then went to the RSL and checked his membership standing and found the last time he paid his dues was in 1992. Having his enlistment number D66 - all I can find out from a man here who knew him is that he enlisted in Tennant Creek, NT. Apparently he lived a long time in the Tennant so it is possible he returned there and maybe he is still there.

However, I have phoned the Police Station, Nursing Home and Hospital at Tennant creek but no news of Archie. So where is he? I'm sorry but at this time I can do no more but I will still look for him.

Regards from Peter Spillett.

P.S. I have just received a copy of the "Courier" - thank you for that.

---

**Robert Gregg, Beresfield, NSW.**

Dear Sir, The Christmas edition of the Courier is with me and I enjoyed reading it. What I would enjoy reading in its entirety is the Doig book on the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. There was a copy in the Mitchell/State Library, because

I skimmed bits of it years ago on previous visits. The first time this year, I went to the trouble of getting a reader's card, did all the right things and waited, and waited, and waited. Couldn't find it, but as this was the first day that the Library had been open since a major refurbishment, it was doubtless mislaid, could I come again tomorrow? Only if I wanted to do a 250 kilometre round trip.

Having come to Sydney again, I went through the routine and in a shorter time was given the message that it was AWOL, not been seen for some time (this was several months later). After reading the president's stirring speech, I feel that it is a volume no library should be without. Indeed, were I suddenly to become sufficiently wealthy, I'd put copies of the unit histories of all the Independent companies in all the high school libraries in Australia.

I did find a reference on the computer catalogue saying additional copies were held with you in Perth, though realise with the passage of time this may be no longer accurate. If there are any copies still in your possession, I would dearly like to have one. And will pay for it and its postage to me.

I wonder who took the copy out of the library? The circle of suspects would, of necessity be limited, or is it a simple case of amnesia?

All the best for all members over the Christmas and the New Year.

Robert Gregg.

---

**J. Peattie, Tamworth, NSW.**

Dear Jack, Our eightieth year has turned out to be quite an interesting one that ended up with a bit of a hiccup at the end but all appears to be OK now. We had booked into the above address some years ago and offered our home for a couple of years to Sue, our daughter, so that she could come back to Australia and her twin daughters

could complete their last two years of secondary school. This worked out well and has given us time to dispose of 50 odd years of accumulated junk before selling the home.

For more than ten years we had been spending a good part of our winter months in western and northern Queensland helping with surveys of wildlife with a group of friends and finally one of the projects, to rehabilitate the native bilby was finalised so we set off in April in the van travelling in the desert and semi desert areas.

We were so pleased with the way that we handled that when a call came for volunteers to go to Newhaven Station, about 200 kilometres north-west of Alice Springs we decided to give it go too. Newhaven was bought by "Birds of Australia" to help conserve the habitat of the Night Parrot and other desert birds and animals. This was an extremely interesting place, well written up in the last issue of "The Australian Geographic". Luckily Newhaven was at its best as it had good rain for the last two years. Most of the work of the thirty volunteers was burning firebreaks but luckily pity was taken on us and we did little of this.

As Newhaven is approximately half the size of Tasmania and tracks and roads either go to the bores or to the uninitiated just wander to other features it would be easy to get lost and this in summer could be fatal. A simple method was devised to bring the wanders home and this job fell to me. With Marj and usually one other helper we would travel out from the homestead stopping every 5 kilometres to drive in a star picket post on the left hand side of the road, take a GPS reading plus the distance from the homestead and record it on the post (We also used different coloured ribbons to designate different tracks but the bloody cattle or camels ate them so we gave that one away.) Anyone lost would know that if they kept the post on the right they would

end up back at the homestead. In our spare time we made rough signs to name the tracks.

There could have been no better way to see this vast area before we headed back to Alice Springs and spent some time in the Macdonnell Ranges.

We called in to see Lionel and Elsie Newton in Broken Hill on the way to the Centre but their neighbour told us that they were in England. However they were home on the way back and it was great to see them again.

Things turned sour soon after getting home as first of all I had a bad dose of flu and then started losing weight. Tests proved negative until I had a scan, which showed that I had a haemorrhage on top of the brain. I was immediately flown by air ambulance to Sydney and operated on that night. Things have gone well since then as far as my health is concerned but the congestion has not cleared up properly but is expected to do so.

At times like this one experiences the great fellowship of our Unit Association. Marj had to get a train and follow down to the hospital, knowing nothing of the area or who to contact for info. She rang Alan Luby, who was able to give her all the help she needed. Alan rang me when I was more or less becoming sensible again and was able to organise some hearing aid batteries for me - an absolute necessity for me these days. He kept in touch until I left hospital. Paddy rang and later made the long trip out to see me. The word spread and we both had calls and cards from others. Thanks to all those who contacted us. It was greatly appreciated.

Belated congratulations on your award Jack. You certainly earned it. All the best to Delys and yourself. Donation to wherever needed.

Thanks for you Christmas greetings we were able to appreciate it but not able to send cards before this.

Please not the address change. We are still at St. Andrews Village but are moving to a ground floor unit in about three weeks time to make things easier. Phone number the same 02.6766.8070

---

### **P. O'Donnell, Exmouth, WA.**

Dear Jack, Thank you for the Courier. I have been very busy since I last wrote.

Well there is only one word for the weather in paradise and that is hot!

We are back home on the 24<sup>th</sup> Jan, after spending four days in Mullewa visiting John's sister. They had eight years of catching up. While we were there we went to the old cemetery and the new one and took some photos of family graves to add to the family tree that I am doing. We also saw war graves in the old cemetery.

We left for Geraldton on the 18<sup>th</sup> to give us time to do all the last minute things. Monday morning I went to the church very early to make sure that everything was ready and I played the hymns through. The Priest and a friend sang with me. By the time the people started to come I was feeling a little more at ease.

I played Amazing Grace while they were walking up the aisle with the little box of ashes and then I went and met and introduced people to each other there.

The service was lovely. Dad's granddaughter, Julie Easton and grandson Paul Baguley did the reading, Father read the gospel and talked about Dad. I read a poem that I wrote and the builder that was there gave a chuckle. One of my relatives Josephine Easton spoke and one of the original 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commandos Mr Tom Foster from Huntswell farm "Alinka" spoke about when he met Dad when they first formed the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>.

After mass everyone went to the cemetery and by the time we arrived all the old army mates and some from the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>

Commandos marched and stood on either side as the Priest blessed the little box of ashes and said a prayer. Then I laid him gently in the bottom of the hole with his fishing hat and placed a little poppy on top. The army men said a remembrance prayer - Lest We Forget - and we went off to Birdwood House for a cup of tea or coffee. I felt very happy about the conclusion, a job well accomplished.

My Dad received a very warm and friendly send off.

In the afternoon our stepmother Patricia, my sisters Ann-Marie and Josephine and I went back and cleaned out the flat.

Last night with eyes glued to the telly we watched a nail biting finish as the Aussies clawed their way back to show the Kiwis what we are really made of.

It's quiet here as John has gone fishing with a friend and Eric has gone out.

Well it is that time again so it is with regret that I must say farewell until I write again.

May God's blessings be with you, from Tricia & John.

---

### **W. Brown, Fairfield Heights, NSW.**

Dear Jack, Enclosed is cheque for \$40 towards the "Courier". I would very much like to be kept on the mailing list.

As already advised ("Courier"/December, 01) by Paddy Kenneally, Keith passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on the 29<sup>th</sup> October.01. The past ten years had seen decreasing mobility, pain and frustration from multiple medical problems but, apart from Prostate Cancer under control, we (and his GP) assumed there was no life threatening condition. In fact, Keith was most fearful of what the future held for him.

Sadly, Keith had little contact with the Association apart from Jack Hartley and in the past year, Paddy Kenneally. Thank you Paddy for those visits- they really cheered

Keith up and brought lots of memories back to him.

Although not an active member of the Association, he always read the Courier from cover to cover so had a good idea of what was going on in people's lives. I feel in the latter years he regretted not keeping in touch, but I guess in his youth (and later) football/cricket were his priorities.

Yet another thank-you to Paddy for making the time and effort to attend Keith's funeral. What an effort - Liverpool via Woy Woy!

Thank you to Alan Luby for card and phone calls - I do appreciate them. Last but not least - Maria Hartley has been a really good friend visiting Keith and giving me valuable support at this time.

My best wishes to all for 2002.

Sincerely Winifred Brown.

---

#### **K. Blomeley, West Lakes, SA.**

Dear Jack, Do enjoy receiving the "Courier" and have enclosed a cheque to help toward its printing. Health permitting, Kath and I will be attending the Safari in Mildura and look forward to renewing old acquaintances.

Sincerely, Keith Blomeley.

---

#### **J. Hanson, Hervey Bay, Qld.**

Dear Jack & Delys, I'm writing to say I've enjoyed the phone calls when we rang you and also I've kept in touch via phone with Tom Martin. We are still going strong trying to keep aches and pains away through our life with pills.

I've been doing cassettes of the war in Timor and Borneo, talking on cassette as my wife has been typing up my life. I still have bad dreams some nights, one never forgets.

My bad stomach played up a lot for many years after the war and still does. I have

pills to try and calm this problem. Often think of my old mates. I sent a couple of cassettes that I had done to Col Doig - God bless him, quite a few years ago.

Here is a bit from our local paper of ladies from the Lion's Club making bags and filling them to send to Dili in East Timor and they send lots of other things.

Yours faithfully, Jack Hanson.

---

#### **A.V. Adams, Steels Creek, via Yarra Glen, Vic.**

Dear Jack and all who help to produce the Courier for doing such a wonderful job over all these years.

I am on my own now as my wife passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> December after a year of ill health. It has not been a good year for me having lost two brothers and a sister as well. I am the last of seven boys and two sisters. It's very lonely now on your own. I am in good health myself, still fairly fit for my age - 83 on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

I've been living in Steel's Creek for seventy-six years and seen a few changes over the years from small dairy farms to grazing cattle and sheep and now to grapevine growing and tourists.

All the trouble in Timor brings back memories of names and places. Things have changed since we were there. We used to walk into Dili from Three Spurs where we were camped. We might have been a bit lucky as our party walked in the day before the Japs landed, being on foot we had have more of a chance than our comrades the next day in their transport.

I've got an acre of garden to look after so it will help me to get through my very sad loss. It's a full time job looking after it. I don't play any sport now. I only played football and cricket. I played for the Yarra Valley team and won the Healesville District batting average twice at 48 runs. I was a better bowler than a batsman. My best bowling

was eight wickets for six runs - we won that match. I'd better stop blowing my trumpet as I might go and on!

I hope the Safari goes well. I might get there for one day. I'll say cheerio for now, wishing all the very best of everything to one and all, from a very sad Alan, "good luck".

Alan Adams.

---

**Kirsty Sword Gussmao, Dili, Timor.**

Dear Bob, These Season Greetings are frightfully late but nevertheless they come to you with our sincere good wishes and a special vote of thanks to you, to Keith and Val Hayes for the tremendous efforts to collect and dispatch goods for East Timor.

Today (22/1/02) part of the consignment of 35m cartons for me/the Aloha Foundation was delivered to our home. All of the contents are very useful and will be broadly distributed amongst the Aloha Foundation network of women's organisations with special attention to the more remote districts.

Thank you once again for your friendship and solidarity with the people of East Timor.

Our fond regards and God bless, Kirsty.

---

**2/2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Trust Fund.**

Dear Kirsty, re Shipment via Lions International.

Copy of shipment and covering letter is enclosed.

Patsy faxed me 8/2/02 to advise you were in Melbourne for a further two weeks and to forward the above.

That you had received some 15 cartons and were advised that more were coming from another container.

George Garten of Lions, Kwinana W.A. receiving depot, advises:

The volume of goods received does not allow for identification of a particular group of goods, but that is possible the balance of cartons may still be at Kwinana. In which event they would go up in the next container.

It has not been possible to monitor the movement of a container once shipped.

Distribution of Lions shipping in Dili is handled by Sister Aurora Piries who works at the hospital clinic. (Glad we finally got the name right). Please return one copy of the manifest indicating the items received to date.

Keith Hayes, who daily gathers items, asks to confirm that more of the same could be forwarded in due course.

Our best wishes, Sincerely, Bob Smyth.

---

**J.P.Kenneally, Yagoona, NSW.**

Dear Jack, Life, just free and easy for our clan, unfortunately it wasn't so far for untold thousands. The fires played havoc with the lives of so many people, some losing all they possessed during three weeks over the holiday season. Thank God there was no loss of life resulting. More experience, better equipment and the devotion of the fire fighters did much to mitigate, what, could have been total disaster. As usual calamity brought out the best in people. It's over but it will come again, that's the nature of the land we live in.

Beyond comprehension, but some of those fires were deliberately lit.

I saw Curly O'Neill before Christmas. He is keeping reasonably well, but very limited in mobility, unlimited in mental capacity. I saw Ron Hilliard after Christmas. We spent a few hours in Arncliffe RSL, not as long as we would have a few years ago. "Drip" only has to walk a short distance up the road to arrive in port. I have to catch two trains,

climb up and down steps, and walk a half-mile before reaching my homeport and seeing I'm using nautical terms, I may as well add STONE COLD SOBER. I have the balance of a drunken sailor these days, consequently I have to be careful on the number of schooners I partake, and I'm not referring to the sail specimens.

The family all well, Sean is back in Canberra working for Boral. Helen, Michael, and Gerald still operating in their usual occupations. Gerald could be thinking of a change.

I celebrated my 86<sup>th</sup> birthday on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Nora's birthday is also this month, her nativity not the same year. Michael and Gerald gave us a day out. A taxi arrived at our door at 6am on the 7<sup>th</sup>, into the Rocks area where we went through a series of tests including a breath test, fancy at 7am, by 9 o'clock Nora, Gerald, Michael, Gerald's daughter and I were on our way up the harbour bridge, railing each side and a safety harness hooked to half inch steel cable. Nora climbing ladders as if she had been doing it all her life. We finally got to the arch, then up, up, up a series of steps until we reached the top 430 ft above the harbour. The view was limited as it rained practically the entire trip up and down. Nora amazed me, for a woman who got dizzy if she was standing on a brick, she nonchalantly leant on a railing over 400ft in the air, talking and admiring what view there was.

Gerald and Michael certainly gave us a great day. It was 5pm when we arrived back home and I wouldn't have passed any breath test at that time.

Life is getting a bit hectic. A cousin of ours, and her husband, will be out from France, so that means some more conviviality. On the 24<sup>th</sup> we will be having a clan gathering at the Kirribilli RSL, with more of our cousins and on the 17<sup>th</sup> March our respective children are putting on a house party for my brother, two sisters and I. It is to

celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our arrival in Australia.

I remember it quite well... a beautiful day, sun shining, an entirely new world, St. Patrick's Day 1927. That evening we had a real Aussie welcome in the park, a local kid back-handed my brother knocking him over, My brother grabbed a bottle, jumped up and crowned the local, poor bugger, he'd back-handed the wrong newcomer!

It was a long time ago, we have had a great life in Australia, but none better than when we were youngsters going to school, and growing up down in Miller's Point and the Rocks area. I look at it now, a tourist area, the wharves along Walsh Bay being developed for the people who can afford to occupy the development. It will finish up like another waterfront area quite close, Pyrmont, these days high rise apartments take up all the space, once it was rows of terrace houses occupied by families, the streets filled with kids playing. The War Memorial in Pyrmont lists the names of 900 men who volunteered and served overseas with the First AIF. Miller's Point and the Rocks were similar but their days are numbered. The working port of Sydney from Woolloomoolloo (that's correct) in the east to Glebe Island, and Bold Rock in the west are finished as a port. Three container areas are left, Darling Harbour, Glebe Island and Bald Rock Balmain. A harbour that was once crowded with shipping and alive with men, vibrant, full of character and characters now dead as a dodo inhabited by the affluent and pet cats. Ah well! I suppose we can console ourselves in that we are all far, far better off materially, but somehow I think we gave up an awful lot to achieve it.

There's Anzac Day and the Safari in May to come yet. If I'm around it will take the rest of the year to recuperate from all the festivities during the first half of it.

Nora is well; she joins me in wishing all our members happiness and good health.

Paddy Kenneally.

---

### **Pars On People.**

Jean Keenahan has written to advise that Jack has developed Alzheimers Disease, which makes life hard for his loved ones. Jack has had more than his share of health problems over the years including 5 heart bypasses, which he was tough enough to survive. One of his great loves was fishing which he can no longer do. Jack turned 81 on the 19<sup>th</sup> February. He turned 21 on the day the Japs landed in Dili - a nice birthday present. He still enjoys a beer or two. Keep your chin up Jean and Jack; our thoughts are with you.

It was nice to hear from Betty Devlin recently. Betty is kept busy with her grandchildren. Her granddaughter Aimie won gold medals in America for skipping and along with another granddaughter, Naomi is in contention for a World Championship in skipping in Brussels later this year. Betty hopes to make the Mildura Safari. It would be great to see you again Betty.

Tom and Mary Foster are well. Tom had a wonderful year on the farm with good yields and top lamb and beef prices and wool on the rise. They intend to motor to Mildura. See you there Tom and Mary.

Mal Lindsay, our old 9-section mate has had a spell in hospital. A man of few words, Mal seems to be battling along okay.

Life is treating the Shiels kindly. In January George and Margo flew to the USA where Margo attended a reunion of her wartime POW friends at San Antonio, Texas. George was looking around for a ten-gallon hat before take off! Margo's book "Bends in the Road," is a good read and is recommended to members.

Hazel Hollow advises that Allan who has shown remarkable courage and resilience

is slowing down and rests up most of the time. Your old mates of 4 section, Ray and Charlie send their regards. God bless you both.

Lionel and Elsie Newton of Broken Hill had a very busy 2001, which included trips to London, Singapore and Hong Kong catching up with the family. Elsie described their stay in a cottage in Dorset as sheer magic! Elsie cracked her right kneecap late in the year during which time Lionel proved to be a wonderful nurse. Both are now well and send their regards to all.

Beryl Cullen, Jim's widow, lives on her own on the family property at Kyogle which can get very lonely. Beryl recently joined an indoor bowling group and enjoys the game and the fellowship. She also finds gardening a wonderful therapy.

Jack Steen who has had his share of problems of late retains his keen sense of humour. In his Xmas card he writes, "All my best mates are doctors!" he even calls them by their first name!

Jewell Soper from Townsville is another who has been in the wars, Jewell has had a knee and hip replacement and had trouble with her new hip. She is feeling a lot better. Her main interest is in her grandchildren who are all doing well. God bless Jewell.

Word from the U.K. from Ian and Margaret Ronald. They spent last Christmas at home and intend to be in Australia early this year. Ian and Margaret look forward to their break in South Australia each year.

Percy McPhee who had his gall bladder removed recently is back home making a slow recovery. Perc, who is 85, has lost a lot of weight but is picking up gradually. Don Turton keeps in touch and sees him regularly. Happy Greenhalgh, his old Sig mate, along with Harry Sproxton, Don and Jack and Delys Carey all spent an hour or so reminiscing with Percy in February. Percy held our attention with interesting stories of his boyhood days. I'm sure the



visit did him the world of good. His daughter Colleen, who lives at Kalbarri, is looking after Percy so he is being well cared for. Good luck Perc.

Joe and Helen Poynton have sold their home and bought a new home at Wintersun, which is about 2 kilometres north of where they were. Helen is very happy with the change while Joe is taking time to adjust to the change, which is understandable. Joe still meets up with Tony Bowers and Jim Lines for a beer every Wednesday.

Don Young has been trying for some time to get a place to live in Manjimup, his old home town. Since losing his wife Barbara, Don has been pretty lonely. He finally obtained accommodation at the Moonya Nursing Home at Manjimup and moved there mid March. Don still has three brothers in the area and is looking forward to catching up with them and some of his former old mates.

Blue Pendergrast suffered a mild stroke shortly after the loss of his beloved Edith. He has been recuperating at his daughter's home in Kingsley, Perth. Tom and Mary Foster, who dropped in to see Blue and celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with him on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February, said Blue looked well. Blue intends to move back to his home at Dongara when he feels up to it.

Blue, a plumber by trade, did a lot of work for us especially when the reticulation system was installed in our King's Park area. He was made a life member in 1976.

It was a joyful, memorable occasion for the Sproxton family when Henry's son, Father Don, was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of the Perth Diocese at St. Mary's Cathedral on the evening of 21<sup>st</sup> February. Don, now 48, was ordained at St. Marys in December 1977. Since then he has served as secretary to the late Archbishop Goody and the late Archbishop Foley for over 8 years. He was also a parish priest in the Wongan

Hills - Ballidu and surrounding areas for a number of years. Since 1993 he has been in charge of the Mirrabooka parish. His pastoral care for his parishioners and ability as a capable administrator resulted in his elevation to Bishop.

The cathedral was packed to overflowing with some hundreds witnessing the ceremony on a large screen in the lawn area of the grounds.

The family group of Henry, daughter Kerry and grandchildren Stephen and Catherine, brother Colin, close family friend Happy Greenhalgh were in the front pew. Jess Epps, Tom & Mary Foster, Keith & Val Hayes and Jack & Delys Carey also attended.

Everything went off beautifully. Henry, who is far from well, had doubts about seeing the 2 hour service out but handled it very well. It would have been one of the proudest and emotional evenings in his life, the only regret being that his beloved Thelma, who died suddenly six years ago, was not there with him.

We congratulate the new Bishop and wish him well in his future post, one which carries a lot of responsibility in these trying times for the church and all churches for that matter. We can only hope that Henry will be spared many more years to follow his son's progress. God bless them both.

Lorraine McLaren, Bruce's wife, attended the anniversary dinner organised by the Victorian Branch of the Commando Association, which was held on 13<sup>th</sup> February. Lorraine said it was a highly successful function with approximately 400 attending. She caught up with John Southwell, Tom Nisbet, Fred, and Mavis Broadhurst. The function marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the Independent Companies.

J. Carey.

---



**Sick Parade.**

Syd McKinley who is suffering from chronic emphysema has moved from his home in Seacombe Gardens to the War Service Home in Myrtle Bank, SA. His daughter told Kel Carthew that Syd is seriously ill and his future prospects are not good. He is being well cared for and is receiving loving support from his family.

Don Turton spent 8 days in Hollywood Hospital in February. Don has shingles on the feet. He is back on deck and is getting around okay. His lovely daughters and granddaughter keep an eye on him while his new great granddaughter, Annabelle, is his pride and joy.

Dan Daniels is making a slow recovery from a fairly serious health problem. Dan did not help matters when he hurt his hip wheeling barrow loads of bricks around the yard. Sunny also has her problems but both have a cheerful outlook on life, which helps things along in the home life.

Lorraine McLaren said Bruce has been moved from hospital to the Yarra Lee Convalescent Home in Kew, which is a short distance from their home. Bruce who suffers from a short-term memory loss would like to be home but in his present state of health, needs professional care. He is gradually putting on weight, which he lost during his illness, and can get around with the aid of a walking frame. He would like to see some of his old army mates. Victorian members please note!

Our WA quartet of Wilf March, Charlie King, Bill Howell and Henry Sproxtton who have endured serious health problems for some time now are all battling along courageously. Spare a thought for them. A phone call can be a good tonic at times.

God bless, Jack Carey.

**Birthday Boys.**

Reg Tatum	3 <sup>rd</sup> January	82
Don Turton	13 <sup>th</sup> "	84
Keith Hayes	15 <sup>th</sup> "	81
Peter Campbell	18 <sup>th</sup> "	81
Bruce McLaren	19 <sup>th</sup> "	77
Eric Herd	20 <sup>th</sup> "	83
Paddy Kenneally	7 <sup>th</sup> February	86
Henry Sproxtton	8 <sup>th</sup> "	79
Ed Bourke	8 <sup>th</sup> "	79
Wilf March	15 <sup>th</sup> "	85
Jack Keenahan	19 <sup>th</sup> "	81
Blue Pendergrast	24 <sup>th</sup> "	80
Albie Friend	26 <sup>th</sup> "	83
Stan Payne	27 <sup>th</sup> "	86
Bernie Langridge	3 <sup>rd</sup> March	85
Ted Monk	13 <sup>th</sup> "	82
Alan Adams	18 <sup>th</sup> "	83

**Change of Address.**

Syd McKinley  
War Service Homes  
55 Ferguson Avenue, Myrtle Bank.  
S.A. 5064.

Don Young  
Moonya Nursing Home  
57 Ipsen St., Manjimup.  
W.A. 6258  
Ph. 08 9771 1975

Joe & Helen Poynton  
17 Cuvier Place, Wintersun  
W.A. 6210  
Ph. 08 9581 7735.

Bernie & Babs Langridge  
33 Nottingham St, East Victoria Park  
W.A. 6101  
Ph. 08 9361 3603

Len & Betty Bagley  
5/25 Gibson St., Mandurah  
W.A. 6210  
Ph. 08 9535 6186

John Lillie  
Unit 12/10 Comer St, Como.  
W.A. 6152  
Ph. 08 9367 2111

#### **Add.**

Mrs Patricia O'Donnell  
Post office Box 822, Exmouth  
W.A. 6707  
08 9949 1381

#### **A Prayer From One Who Is Getting On In Years.**

Today, dear Lord, I'm 80 and there's so much I haven't done,  
I hope, dear Lord, you'll let me live until I'm 81,

But if I haven't finished all the things I want to do.  
Would you let me stay awhile until I'm 82?

There are so very many places I'd very much like to see,  
Do you think that you could manage to make it 83?

The world is changing fast and there is so much in store,  
I think that I would much prefer to live to 84.

But if my doctor tells me that by then I'm still alive,  
It would be super good, dear Lord to live to 85.

Then maybe you'll go further and will let me choose and pick,  
In which case I'll be grateful if I can live to 86.

The Scriptures tell us often of the joys of reaching Heaven,  
But maybe you could grant me one, the joy of 87.

By then, Lord, I'll age and maybe totter be slowed down and sometimes late,  
But even then I will have seen that life is rich at 88.

Each year on earth is precious, so I'm asking one more time,  
Please Lord, with your permission could I try for 89?

Whatever years are granted me, whatever is my fate,

I'll pray throughout them all that we'll meet at Heaven's gate.

Anon.

#### **Courier Donations.**

Ron Archer, Faye Lawrence, Ray Aitken, Tony Bowers, Dick Darrington, Jess Epps, Keith & Val Hayes, Colin Hodson, Don & Ida Murray, Dusty Studdy, Hazel Wicks, Doc. Wheatley, Vince Swann, John Lillie, Walter Kerr, Les & Verna Cranfield, Elizabeth Prior, Gerry Green, Maria Hartley, Kath Sargeant, Alma Moore, Mavis Sadler, Ian & Margaret Ronald, Peter Mantle, Jack & Marj Peattie, Alan Adams, Winifred Brown, Terry Paull, Keith & Kath Bromeley and Fred Otway

#### **Trust Fund Donations.**

Gerry & Lal Green	\$100
Mavis Sadler	\$50
Alan & Edith Luby	\$50
Jack & Marj Peattie	\$50

*Sincere thanks to all donors for your generous support.*

**NOTICES.**  
**Attention W.A. Members.**

**ANZAC DAY**  
Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2002.

Assemble at our normal spot at the Barrack St. end of St.  
George's Terrace by 9.30 am.  
March off at 9.50am.

This year we will be marching as a group with other Commando  
Squadrons.

Those who cannot march and would like to join in are asked to  
contact your secretary on 9332.7050 no later than a week before  
Anzac Day so transport can be arranged.

The traditional get-together will be held in the Terrace Hotel,  
195 Adelaide St. after the service from 12 noon.

---

**Norma Hasson Day.**

The Terrace Hotel has been booked for this function for Friday  
5<sup>th</sup> July.

Full details will appear in the June Courier.  
Members are asked to please support both events.

*Thanks to those members who sent Christmas greetings  
And a "Happy Easter" to you all.*



*Harry Sproxton and "Happy" Greenhalgh with Harry's son the newly ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Perth, Donald Sproxton, after the ceremony in St. Mary's Cathedral, Perth.*



*This 6 metre fibreglass boat was built by Barry White, a retired builder, for the ABET scheme (Aussie Boats for East Timor); one of three sent by container. This one kindly donated by Happy Greenhalgh of Maclean.*