



# 2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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

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## *President's Christmas Message*



The 12th to the 18th of November 2003 will long be remembered as the gathering of a great family, who just met when we were a mix of boys and young men, soon to be engaged in operational duties. You can be proud of your achievements during those dark years and just as proud of what you achieved when building a home for your wife and family during the post war years.

We may not see much of other but we can take comfort with the thought that our 2/2nd Commando courier will remain our means of communication.

Today I wish you a Merry Christmas followed by the Happiest of New Years surrounded by your family and friends. May you all be blessed with good health and much contentment over the years ahead.

R. Parry.

**Vale Lyle Henry Litchfield SX15579.**

We regret to advise of the passing of Lyle, who died in the Quorn Hospital, S.A. from a heart condition, on the 9<sup>th</sup> September at the age of 81. Some nice tributes were paid at his funeral at the Quorn Uniting Church on 12/9/03 including the following eulogy from a very old family friend, Mr Arthur Whyte who was Marree's Federal Member for many years.

The Litchfield family has accorded me the privilege to speak about the life of a man who was a true legend in his own lifetime.

A man whose name was synonymous with every facet of the bush.

Drover, horseman, cattleman, soldier, head stockman, station manager and since 1958 the proud proprietor of Mundowdna until ill health forced his retirement.

A man whose word was his bond - a man whose advice was sought and taken far and wide by people of all colour and creed.

Lyle was born in Broken Hill on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1922 where his father Hubert worked in the mines. They returned to Adelaide and ran a delicatessen in Royston Park. His mother died when he was 12. He was educated at Norwood High School to intermediate level and left at the age of 16. He had an older brother, Gordon, who was killed in Canada aged 21, after he had joined the RAAF and was on a pilots training mission.

From there on Lyle's life reads like a best seller and some day I hope that Lois who is already a noted author, will put it into book form for us. First to Moolooloo and from there to Marree where he joined

drovers from Birdsville and made a number of trips with his boss drovers Teddy Sheenan and Larkins. That was in the days of pack horses - not feather beds and chosen wine with the evening meal - and the stars that blaze at night tell you the frost will be 1/2 inch thick when it's your turn to go on watch and tomorrow will be as hot as hell.

From Birdsville to Marion Downs in the heart of the channel country north of Birdsville until he enlisted in 1941. Lyle never one to do things by half joined the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commandos and spent the next 3 1/2 years in New Guinea and New Britain. Discharged in 1946 he hot footed to Queensland and joined Jack Jones with a mob of cattle from Glengyle to Quinyamby - a trip of 15 weeks. More feather beds and hot chocolate at bedtime!

Next adventure was head stockman on Glengyle for 5 years. It was here in 1950 that he turned his hand to sailing. He was in charge while Harry Crombie and family was holidaying in Townsville.

The Georgina came down in record flood and the Crombies spent a month waiting in Winton. They were then able to charter an aircraft, which flew them to Coorabulka.

Meanwhile the sailor had fitted a flat bottomed boat with a camp sheet for a sail and negotiated the back waters of the Georgina to Kings Creek where he picked up the family and with the current towing him took them home safely to Glengyle, sailing among the treetops in the main channel. {Verbal: There was a pretty girl on that boat.}

Lois Anderson and Lyle were married in 1952 and went to live on the biggest sheep station in the world, at



Commonwealth Hill - a cattleman among sheep.

Lyle soon became overseer. Gordon was born while they were there. Two years later Lyle was offered a job as manager of Kenmore Park. Beautiful country between the Musgraves and Everards near the NT border. Sheryl was newborn during the shift and Peter was a two-month-old when they left - so you see it was all so easy for Lois.

They shifted because of a deal, which didn't eventuate on Horsebend. Back to Glengyle and then as manager of Clifton Hills.

No sooner settled at Clifton than Mundowdna came on the market, which to them was a suburb, a city with a school and a hospital.

As was to be expected the Litchfields were main players in the welfare of their community. When the RDN Service was about to close, they called all their friends together, organised the fund raising gymkhana, and were part of all activities for the good of the cause.

Lyle was president of Stockowners Assoc. He was also a JP and as such as always called upon to mete out justice. He nearly always knew the defendants and as most offences were petty minor he would prescribe a few days cleaning up around the town.

However some were sent to Leigh Creek k-up and the more serious to Greenash in Port Augusta. They didn't like Leigh Creek and would ask to be sent Green-Bush. Facilities were better; they had a TV.

Lyle loved the bush - his wife and family.

Lyle never discussed his war service but now he was highly regarded by his friends of 7 Section.

I leave you with that picture of a man I was so proud to know and I thank the Litchfields for the privilege to say so.

Arthur Whyte.

### **A Tribute to Lyle.**

Lyle Litchfield joined the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> at Canungra, Queensland, when it was reformed after service in Timor.

He was posted to 7 Section, "C" Troop and served in New Guinea with distinction. "Litchy", as he was known to one and all, was a fearless soldier. If anything needed to be done he was the first to volunteer and became a very reliable and well-respected member of his section. Lyle, a natural sportsman, showed his skill as an Aussie Rules footballer and was a member of the Unit's team.

After leave in Australia, the Unit was sent to New Britain and Lyle now a Corporal stayed with the section and his mates until discharge.

The rest is history, Litchy the competent soldier became Litchy the competent farmer/grazier at Marree - devoted husband - father - loved and respected by all.

Tony "Basher" Adams, former Captain of "C" Platoon.

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To Lois, his devoted wife of 51 years, Gordon, Sheryl, Peter, Jeffery, Ian and their families, the Association extends its deepest sympathy. Lyle's ashes will be spread along the Channel country rivers.

**Lest We Forget.**

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**.Vale Peter Alexander WX12344**

**2/4/1918 - 12/9/2003.**

Peter passed away in Kalgoorlie on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September at the age of 85.

His daughter Margaret has kindly provided the following on his life.

Peter was born in Boulder on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1918, one of ten children born to Peter and Catherine Alexander. He grew up in Trafalgar; a small town situated about two kilometres east of the Golden Mile. Peter had wonderful stories to tell of his childhood in Trafalgar and as a kid growing up there never found life boring. He and his friends would spend the weekend out in the bush trapping rabbits, which they would clean, skin, and sell in the neighbourhood for threepence. Swimming in the mine vats, playing all sports, breeding pigeons, musical concerts and school kept him busy.

At age 23, in 1941, Peter enlisted with the Australian Army and after training, departed to Timor and landed at Dili. Shortly after the Japanese invaded and Peter was taken as a Prisoner of War. Time spent labouring on the Burma Railway and in Changi jail was faced with courage and long-life friendships were formed. Peter served his country from May 1941 to February 1946 and was honoured to receive a Life Membership of his Commando Association in 2001.

Peter had varied occupations, his last employment being with Western Mining at Kwinana before retiring in the early 1980's.

Peter married Shirley Tillet on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1948 at Queen's Methodist Church in Boulder and they were happily married for over 35 years until Shirley's untimely death in 1983.

Peter's hobbies mainly involved sport - playing football and cricket in his younger days and later, golf along with watching and attending the trots, fishing

and his love of gardening. His garden was always filled with colour.

He loved his home and garden, but unfortunately in January 2003 after he had suffered two previous strokes and Parkinson's Disease had started to take its toll on his body, the decision was made to move him to Kalgoorlie to be closer to family. Peter moved into the Edward Collick Nursing Home in March and was settling in well when sadly a third stroke in September was too much for him to overcome.

Peter is survived by his daughters Nola and Margaret, two sons-in-law, and six grandchildren who adored their Pop.

A wonderful gentleman who loved life and was happiest spending time with his family and playing golf. He had a touch of larrikin about him, with a great sense of humour to the end.

He is so sadly missed by his loving family.

Keith & Val Hayes and John Sweet, an old POW mate, attended Peter's funeral at the Kalgoorlie cemetery's chapel on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Margaret, Nola, and their families on their sad loss.

Peter's graphic story of his 3½ years as a POW under the Japanese which appeared in the April and August 1989 issues of the Courier is a monument to a man of great courage and endurance.

Lest We Forget.

## **FOND MEMORIES OF A GREAT FRIEND AND BATTLER.**

### **A Tribute from Keith.**

It was in Northam Army Camp where we did our basic training in May 1941 that I

met Peter Alexander. During this time a request was made for volunteers for a special unit. We applied and were accepted along with others and were sent to Foster in Victoria to carry out our specialised training. It was here that we were formed into 7 Platoon of approximately 20 men, a wonderful group. During our training there and up to our departure to Katherine we formed a wonderful friendship with many a laugh.

Peter was captured on East Timor on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1942 and spent 3 1/2 years as a POW being entertained by the Japanese.

I met again with Peter on his return by ship to Fremantle and from then on had an ongoing friendship with him on my fairly frequent visits to Kalgoorlie. We also met up on his holidays to Fremantle where the family holidayed at South Fremantle and the Davilak Hotel became a meeting place. It was when the family came to live at Forrest St. Palmyra that from then on until Saturday night was transferred to Friday night, that we went most Saturday nights to the trot meetings with his wife Shirley, daughters, Margaret and Nola, his sister Janet and brother-in-law Bill.

I forgot to mention that we had mumps together at Foster and malaria in Dili at the Dutch Hospital.

Peter enjoyed his outdoor activities, fishing, football, cricket, golf, and the odd wager. He received trophies for cricket and cycling in Kalgoorlie. He also loved music, was an avid reader, and was also a fair hand at writing a good story.

He worked on the mines in Kalgoorlie on his return as a POW, went to Quorn in South Australia for a while, and eventually came to Palmyra when he worked for W.M.C. KWINANA, then

British Paints, and W.A. Newspapers if my memory is correct.

In later years he suffered a stroke and then Parkinson's Disease, during this time, good and bad, he never complained of his troubles, was always a happy person. No bad word of anyone, a fiercely independent person, so much so he could have named the Unit!

One incident that his daughter, Margaret and her husband Kevin did not know of, or he would have been in Kalgoorlie much sooner than he was. It was on his return home from hospital after his stroke that he decided to take a bath. No trouble getting in the tub, but getting out was the issue. He just did not have the strength to get out, so no trouble for Peter, he simply turned on the taps, filled the bath to the top, and slid over the side!

Another episode was his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday. A cake had been provided and Peter went to the kitchen to cut it. He appeared in the doorway with a large carving knife waving to all points of the compass and as he advance on those present, asked as best he could, would anyone cut the cake. But due to his difficulty with speech, by the time he had completed the sentence he had all present baled up against the wall! Wonderful times.

PETER YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED.  
Keith Hayes.

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### **Vale Tom Bateman WX29436**

Members will be sorry to hear that Tom Bateman collapsed and died at his home late in the afternoon on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September. He was 81.

His sudden death came as a great shock to his wife Jean and family and his many friends. Jeff, his eldest son, said it might have been caused by a blood clot. Tom had a benign brain tumour removed in

2001 and when it flared up again early this year had further treatment. Tom had been in good spirits and he and Jean had spent a pleasant day together up until he collapsed.

Tom was born in Toodyay, a small town 85 kms Northeast of Perth, on the 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1922 and did his schooling at Northam, a nearby country centre. On leaving school he moved to Kalgoorlie and did odd jobs including working in the mines before enlisting in the AIF in July 1942. Like Peter Alexander he did his share of rabbit catching to get a few extra bob - these were tough times.

Tom went on to serve in the islands with the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. Tom, a good soldier, possessed a happy disposition and was well respected by his mates of 3 Section. While on leave in Fremantle early in 1945, he met an army lass, one Jean Middleton, whose parents ran a country store in Kirup, a small town in the Southwest of W.A. They fell in love and married in Donnybrook not far from Kirup in July 1948, two years and 3 months after his discharge. They had over 55 happy years together and raised three sons, Jeff, Michael, Peter (dec.) and daughter Judy. They also had 8 grandchildren.

Tom worked in the Kalgoorlie mines when his discharge came through and in the early 1950s moved North getting a job at the Carnarvon Whaling Station. His next job was driving a polio immunisation van and from there he joined the Public Service as an administrator with the Health Education Council. Part of his job was to discourage people from smoking. At the time he was a heavy smoker himself so he decided to do the right thing and give it up. Tom was a great family man and always found time to have fun with his sons and daughter. Tom and Jean had a lovely five-acre property in Canning

Vale for a number of years until it was acquired by the Labor Government of the day. As a result they moved to Argyle Court, Thornlie where they have been ever since.

His big break came in 1968 when he contested the seat of Canning for the Labor Party. It had been a swinging seat for elections held previous to 1968 but Tom won in a canter going on to hold the seat for the next 20 years! He became immensely popular in his electorate working tirelessly for his constituents. To relax he enjoyed playing cricket and lawn bowls.

He was the Party Whip in the Burke Government and was a very good politician. He retired in 1988 at the age of 66. In recognition of his service to his electorate of Canning, a large sporting reserve in the district was named "The Tom Bateman Sporting Complex" in his honour. It is still in an early stage of development and will be a magnificent centre when completed. One section will be the headquarters of the W.A. Baseball Association - a fitting tribute to a good man who worked so hard for others. In his retirement years Tom was able to spend more time enjoying playing bowls. He was also on the committee of the retired parliamentarians association and still took a keen interest in his old electorate happenings. He liked doing things.

A large crowd attended his funeral at the Fremantle Crematorium including many of his former parliamentary members from all parties. Dave Evans, a former Labor cabinet minister said in a tribute, "His reputation for kindness and the willingness to help anyone at anytime of the day or night made him a friend to all."

Tom was a generous member of our Association and will be sadly missed.

Ray Parry, Jack Carey, Keith Hayes, Bernie Langridge, Doc. Wheatley, and Bob Smyth represented the Association at Tom's funeral with Ray saying the Ode.

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to Jean and all members of his family.

Lest We Forget.

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**Vale Bernard (Peter ) Barden WX 21588**

Peter passed away in the Palliative Care Unit at St. John of God Hospital, Geraldton on 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2003. He was 82. His brother Monsignor John Barden has kindly provided this eulogy.

Peter was born in Dongara on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 1921, the fourth in a family of ten to Ernest and Janet Barden. In 1926 the family moved to Mullewa where Peter did his schooling with the Presentation Sisters until he was fourteen. On leaving he got a job with the local newspaper, "The Mullewa Mail" in the printing office. A bright young man, he went on to become the Mails sole employee filling the duties of manager, journalist, typesetter, job printer and running the printing press. Mullewa in the depression years was a sizeable town being an important railway junction linking Perth with Geraldton and Wiluna, and a centre as well of an extensive farming community.

Peter also enjoyed his sport, was a handy cricketer, and played football with the Federals, the local team.

He signed up for the AIF in October 1941 and was called up in April 1942. He was posted to the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse and was not released until 2 years later eventually joining the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron going on to

serve with the Unit in New Britain. Peter was a willing soldier, well respected and soon settled in with his 9 Section mates. He remained in the army for a time after the war and attained the rank of sergeant until discharge in November 1946.

Peter rejoined his wife Joan whom he married in June 1942 and with their young son Ross they moved to Harvey where he took up a position as journalist and manager of the Harvey and Murray Times. He spent four years there from 1947 to 1950 during which time his second son Rex was born. In 1951 Peter and the family moved back to Mullewa and he recommenced working for the Mullewa Mail where they remained for five years. In 1956 the Mail closed its operations and moved to Geraldton as did Peter. For a short time Peter became the foundation manager of a new weekly newspaper "The Geraldton Sun". Soon after he received an offer to join the ABC as a journalist, which he accepted. He began reading the regional news, which he compiled and read for the first time in October 1956. Over the next thirty years Peter built up a network of correspondents throughout the Mid West along with the business people of Geraldton, until his retirement in July 1986. He was also closely involved with all the sporting clubs and farming groups throughout the region. He was most diligent in attending and reporting on meetings of the Geraldton Town Council and was on good terms with Mayors, Vic Askew, Charles Eadon-Clarke, Lyle Harris, and Phil Cooper. He stood for the Council and was elected for the years 1957/58 but resigned at the request of the ABC.

His biggest scoop was when he announced to the world the discovery of the Batavia wreck. His sister Eva told

him that something of importance was taking place at the Abrolhos, which Peter followed up and obtained a sensational story, this was in 1963.

Despite his very busy schedule Peter also had a long association with the R.S. & L. The League honoured him with a Service award in November 1997 for fifty years continuous service to the League.

He was also the PR officer of the Geraldton sub-branch for forty-two years and was made a life member in November 1980.

In January 1997 he was awarded the Meritorious medal from the National headquarters of the R.S. & League Canberra - a great honour indeed. His reports on the Geraldton sub-branch activities in "The Listening Post" were outstanding and he played a major part in his branch being awarded the Colonel Collett Cup for the best country sub-branch 29 times and the Women's Auxiliary award 33 times.

Peter was a loyal generous and devoted member of our Association from its very beginning and was made a life member in 1971, for the many letters he provided on news of Geraldton members for the Courier.

He along with Paddy Kenneally were by far the best two correspondents we ever had. Those were the days when Bill Drage, Bruce Fagg, Eric Weller, "Nip" Cunningham, and Joe Brand were still with us. Now Peter has joined them. Eric Smyth, who now lives in Busselton, was another Geraldton identity while Tom Foster is the only remaining member.

The tragic loss of Joan, his devoted wife of nearly 61 years, in May of this year was a severe blow to him. Peter, a diabetic, experienced failing health in

recent years. He underwent extensive chelation therapy in Perth in 1994 to improve his blood circulation, which was very poor and from then on made the trip to Perth for treatment at regular intervals. During the last months of his life he suffered immense pain which he bore with great fortitude. His ordeal ended on the 6<sup>th</sup> November.

Mass was celebrated for his life at St Francis Xavier Cathedral on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, Armistice Day. At 11 am Mass was suspended and all present were asked to stand. The Last Post was sounded followed by two minutes silence and the Rouse. I'm sure this would have met with Peter's approval. Tom and Mary Foster were the only representatives of the Association at the funeral, but mainly through the effort of Tom our Unit flag was sent up to Geraldton and was draped over the coffin during the mass. It was unfortunate the funeral clashed with the start of the safari; otherwise more members would have attended from Perth.

So passed a good Christian man, a fine man, and a great Australian.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Ross, Rex, Monsignor John, and all members of the Barden family.

May he rest in peace. Lest We Forget.

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The Association extends its sincere condolences to Tom & Mary Foster on the recent loss of their beloved eldest son, Richard.

Our sincere sympathy also to the Brown family in Victoria on the passing of Thais, widow of David, who died in September of this year.

**COMMEMORATION SERVICE 2003**

Our 54<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Service was held on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November in our Honour Avenue area in Kings Park. Blessed with good weather, the attendance of approximately 180 people was probably our biggest ever, falling as it did in the middle of our last Safari. For many of our interstate members and those with family members, it would have been the first service they had attended here and an occasion of which I'm sure they will take home fond memories.

The service commenced at 3 p.m. when secretary Jack Carey introduced Ray Parry, our president, who in turn invited Sergeant Pavrick who, was in charge of the Catafalque Party of four to take up their positions around our memorial, which they did with precision.

Mrs Hazel Hollow then laid a double red diamond wreath following which Captain Alan Williams also laid a wreath on behalf of the SAS Regiment, a nice gesture indeed.

Don Murray read the Remembrance Day prayer which included a prayer for Australia and one for peace. Our president Ray Parry then delivered his address, which was received with applause on completion. His fine address is featured in this courier. Ray then read out the names of our Fallen and then invited all present to join with him in saying the Ode. Bugler David Scott then sounded the Last Post then there was one minute's silence and then The Rouse. All joined in singing 'Advance Australia Fair' and so ended the first part of an impressive and moving service.

Our Marshall John Burrige, at the invitation of Ray, took over the parade inviting veterans, sons & daughters and the wives of members to march. Suffice to say the march in columns of threes under John's patient guiding went off well with President Ray, Captain Alan Williams and W.O.1 Gary Kingston of the SAS Regiment taking the salute accompanied by the members of the Catafalque Party who presented arms as we marched past. All in all it was a pretty good effort by we oldies, the ladies, and sons and daughters. Thanks go to John who did an admiral job as Marshall.

We are indebted to and extend out thanks to the SAS Regiment, the Australian Army Band, and the Botanical Gardens & Parks Authority for the assistance given to ensure our 54<sup>th</sup> Commemorative service went off so well.

Thanks also to all those good people who attended the service especially those from country areas. We need your continued support as numbers grow less. God bless

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**Presidents Speech.**

Welcome ladies and gentlemen, friends, boys and girls, and members to our 54<sup>th</sup> Commemorative Service, the first being held here on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 1950. I also extend a warm welcome to Mr Roger Fryer and his wife. Roger is the acting director of the Botanic Gardens, Parks and Recreation and to Captain Alan Williams and WO1 Gary Kingston of the SAS Regiment.

Many years have passed by since we have had an attendance that could match today's. What an encouraging



and wonderful sight it is to see so many of our members, some with their families from other states, present here today to take part in this our most important service to honour our fallen.

Kings Park came into being in 1872 when the then Commissioner of Lands, Sir Malcolm Fraser, recommended to the Governor of the time, Sir Frederic Weld that 432 acres (175 hectares) of the land, now known as Kings Park be gazetted as a reserve which he did. 28 years later in 1900 when Sir John Forrest was premier, Kings Park became an "A class" reserve with an area of 1000 acres (400 hectares). 103 years later Kings Park has become our greatest treasure and recently was voted the No. 1 Heritage Icon for the states 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004.

One feature of the park is that its three main avenues are all lined with trees, at the base of each tree is a plaque, which bears the name of a serviceman sometimes naming two servicemen who paid the supreme sacrifice in past wars. On the marbled wall in the undercroft of our State War memorial are thousands of names of those who were killed in action during the terrible wars of the last century.

That our small Association was granted the right to have a small section of this wonderful park can be considered a great honour. Working bees in the early 1950 s saw the area reticulated by 1955, and the two wooden plaques erected in 1962. Sadly many of our old mates who worked so hard on this avenue are no longer with us. The Kings Park Board took over the care of our area in 1986 and we are extremely grateful to the Board for all they have done for us in that time. Our thanks also go to the Highgate Sub-branch of the R. & S.

League who see that any missing plaques are replaced and maintained - they do a great job.

Today is a time, brief as it may be, that we reflect on our own men, our former mates who paid the supreme sacrifice serving in the Units campaigns in the islands from 1941 to 1945. How can we measure or try to come to terms with the enormity of their giving, in reality we can't. As veterans, most of us in our 80 s, we have lived a full lifetime in a great country and experienced all the good, and sometimes not so good things that life has had to offer. Not so for the young men whose names are enshrined on the plaques I have spoken of. Sixty years of living - this is what they gave. It is a sobering thought for us all and one we should not forget.

We remember them as young men who volunteered to defend their country in a time of crisis. They went cheerfully, full of spirit and love of life, and we think of them today with a feeling of great pride and sadness as fine Australians.

We remember today too the 380 of our comrades who have passed on since 1950. The vales which appear now in every Courier are a timely reminder that as the years come and go, our time as an Association is slowly but surely drawing to a close. We are all mature enough by now to concede we have had a pretty good innings and the 57 years we have spent together in this very fine Association have been a fruitful and rewarding experience for every one of us.

The Unit, which was formed in July 1941, went on to serve with distinction in East Timor, New Guinea and New Britain. The Timor Campaign was unique. Conducted in a neutral country, most



action took place in the mountains of Timor.

The capture of Dili, the capital of East Timor, by the Japanese on the 19/20th February 1942, following a gallant action by the men of 2 section under Gerry McKenzie, the Company took to the hills. The loss of the greater part of 7 Section on the 20<sup>th</sup> February when 14 who had been taken prisoner were shot in cold blood was a tragic event. Peter Alexander & Keith Hayes, who survived and were great mates, remained close for nearly 60 years until Peter's recent death. Keith and his wife Val who are with us today have been tremendous workers for the Association for many years.

During the months of 1942 the resolve of the men remained strong and determined. Dave Ross, the Australian Consul, who was a captive in Dili, was sent out by the Japanese on two occasions with surrender notices but each demand was refused. The final refusal to surrender prompted the Japanese general in Dili to place a price on the heads of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>, referring to them as brigands and outlaws and warned the Australians that they knew they would be executed if captured. So much for the rules and laws of the Geneva Convention. That we were able to conduct a successful campaign during the 10 months the conflict lasted was due to a number of factors. The resilience of the men themselves, the help we received from the Timorese people who never betrayed us, the help of a valiant navy who ran the gauntlet in small ships from Darwin to Timor and the strong support of the RAAF.

When the Unit evacuated Portuguese Timor on the night of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> of December 1942, there would have been

no member of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> who thought of that gruelling campaign as an epic. The more the people and press of Australia learned what had taken place in Timor throughout 1942, the circumstances, the privations, the terrible fevers plus being outnumbered by a heavily armed and ruthless enemy - it was duly acknowledged that it was a campaign of epic proportions. Today in the year 2003 it is still considered an epic.

On our return to Australia we enjoyed a brief leave and reassembled at Canungra where the Company was reformed. 140 of the Timor men were either not well enough to carry on or transferred to other units. They were replaced by a fine body of men, mainly Eastern Staters who were keen to do their bit. They were an excellent group. June 1943 saw us on our way to New Guinea, a large island with high mountains and jungles heavy with growth to match any in the world. It was to be our home for some 14 months.

I have lost count of the number of times we crossed that mighty Ramu River and valley, aptly named by the indigenous people of long ago as Death Valley.

While there, A, B, and C Troops were constantly fighting patrols, many firefights took place. Some of the long range patrols were certainly a test of endurance. 60 men of B Troop were on the move for 29 days in hostile territory, their ration of food per day was one biscuit plus 1/3 a can of Bully Beef. Everyone had the same problem, including the 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division, the cause was the lack of labour to load supplies on ships in Sydney.

One of the most heartening features of being in New Guinea was to see

hundreds of allied planes, bombers with fighter escorts heading daily for Rabaul and Wewak to pound the enemy. It was a great sight believe me.

On our return from New Guinea after an extended leave the Company regrouped at Strathpine eventually sailing for New Britain in April 1945 for our last tour of duty.

We settled in at Jacqinot Bay. It was an unusual set up with Australian troops holding part of the island mainly at Jacqinot Bay and Wide Bay to which we eventually moved. Rabaul was the main Japanese base in the South East Pacific area, held by a force of an estimated 80,000 men. Constant daily bombing by the USA and RAAF meant the Japs could do little but keep their heads down. The Company was kept busy patrolling and clearing heavily wooded areas for campsites. After the end of the war in Europe in June 1945 word was that the war with Japan would soon end. This duly happened on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1945 and which the Company celebrated with a few beers by those who had any and a thanksgiving service conducted by our leader "The Bull" Geoff Laidlaw. We then moved to Rabaul and with the aid of a regular Jap working party soon knocked up a comfortable camp on the north side of Rabaul right near the water. Members with families with the longest service were the first to leave for home so gradually our numbers lessened.

It was a sad occasion when the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Commando Squadron was on parade for the last time to hear a farewell address from our C.O. Major Geoff Laidlaw DSO. It ended with the men giving our popular leader three hearty cheers! It was an emotional experience that many of the men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> will long remember. A decision made at a

meeting prior to our breakup, to carry on and maintain the friendships made during the Company's 4 1/2 years as a fighting Unit, was carried unanimously. Thus the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association was born. It was undoubtedly the best decision we ever made.

Australians are learning, and may I add that it is not only the school children who are becoming aware of what that thin line of Khaki across the equator north of Australia meant to the women and children of this country, - early in 1942 it was a wafer thin defence line that separated the power of Imperial Japans air, naval and land forces from the shores of our country. One must make mention of the brave pilots, American and Australian who flew the fighters, dive bombers and bombers that stopped the Japanese invasion fleet in the Coral sea, the fleet and transporting troops for an invasion of Pt. Moresby. To have lost Moresby, would have been a catastrophic event.

Patrick Lindsay, author of best selling 'The Spirit of Kokoda' and more recently 'The Spirit of the Digger' of our diggers he has this to say. "In many ways the Digger is a study on contradictions; he doesn't crave war yet he will fight with unequalled ferocity."

The Digger is a key piece of the complex jigsaw puzzle that makes up 'the Australian'. But who is the digger exactly, and what elements have gone into forging his spirit? Australian soldiers have had an impact in world conflicts far in excess of their numbers. Yet regardless of the circumstances, our Diggers essential characteristics have remained constant.

They've won acclaim for their fighting prowess and bravery whilst retaining

their larrikin spirit, their compassion and their strong sense of mateship.

Those who fought in the trenches of Gallipoli, the Somme and Ypres have an immediate kinship with the Diggers who followed in their footsteps in North Africa and New Guinea and later in Korea, Vietnam, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq. We are justifiably proud of the heritage that our Diggers have bequeathed us.

On Armistice Day, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November last, her Majesty the Queen unveiled a memorial at Hyde Park, London. This memorial is dedicated to the 101,000 Australian men & women who lost their lives in defence of their country. In World War I, 60,000 Diggers died out of a population of less than 4 million, a high price indeed.

Australia also had the only all volunteer army in the Great War and became a feared fighting force because they wanted to be there. Sadly none of the six remaining diggers out of 330,000 soldiers who fought in World War I will be at the unveiling ceremony. All are over 100 years old and too frail to attend.

While it has taken 75 years to have our own "Australian War Memorial" erected in London it will be a lasting memorial to our war heroes and will be paid homage to by today's Australians and generations yet to come.

Over the years the Commando Courier has helped cement the bonds of friendship and maintained communication among members and their families. Without the Courier we would have drifted apart a long time ago. Many thanks to all those who down throughout the years beginning with the Epps family and Colin Doig and continued by Wilf March, Alec Wares,

Arch Campbell, Len Bagley and family to Delys and Jack Carey who have kept this grand little paper going.

Our Trust Fund members in Bob Smyth, the chairman; John BurrIDGE and Keith Hayes are continuing their good work for the betterment of our friends the Timorese. Bob is keenly pursuing a plan to have vegetable seeds distributed on a large scale among the hill people of Timor whose ancestors did so much for us in 1942. We commend them for their contribution over many years.

On the 19/20<sup>th</sup> May last year East Timor became an Independent nation and is now a member of the United Nations Assembly. Our Australian troops who have helped to bring about a degree of security in the time they have been there will be pulling out in May next year. At present they are training the new East Timorese army who will have the difficult task of defending its own borders. We will watch their progress with interest.

The inhuman cowardly attack, born of hate on defenceless holidaying tourists at Paddy's Bar and the Sari Club in Bali, once again shocked the civilised world, prior to that horrifying explosion people were dancing, others enjoying the company of friends, it was described as a tangle of sun tanned bodies, braided hair and bangles, so much youth and promise all about to be extinguished.

In recent times there is a greater awareness by the people of our country of what our men and women accomplished during World War II. It would appear patriotism is taking a stronger hold and more Australians are rallying around the national symbol, our beautiful flag.

In conclusion I wish to thank the men of the Catafalque Party under Sgt. Eric Pavlik, the bugler Dave Scott provided

by the Australian Army band and the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, one and all for your contribution to today's service. I repeat how wonderful it has been to see so many of you present this afternoon. God bless you all.

R. Parry.  
President.

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### **Safari 2003.**

The W.A. Safari has come and gone and those who did make it went home in a happy frame of mind after a week or more in the West.

An average attendance of 100 at six of our functions and 145 at our farewell dinner was more than expected and we thank you all for your generous support throughout the Safari. It was our intention to give a full write up in this Courier but because of lack of space, details will now appear in the March issue.

Jack & Del.

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### **Ralph's Story continues.**

The Duty Officer signed us in and after freshening up met with the Commandant of Tasmania Brigadier Bill Wearne. He was a little terse as we had been expected two days earlier and should have according to the Movement order, flown by RAAF courier aircraft from Melbourne. In his briefing the Brigadier advised we should be aware the people here were so much Australians as Tasmanians. We would stand out as two among few men between the ages of 18 and 50 years left in Hobart, and therefore should be circumspect in our social activities. In some areas there was a level of family intermarriage and one

needed to be careful when being introduced at social functions not to express surprise at the number of people of the same name!

To our surprise our transport to Fort Direction at the mouth of the Derwent River was to be by boat. Fortunately the MV "George Bass" would not sail for 48 hours and this gave us the chance to see the city. I recall being most impressed with my introduction to Cascade Ale and curried scallops and the availability of succulent crayfish. The opportunity to seek out a reasonable hotel in the event we could manage leave for a day or two was taken as well.

Our trip to South Arm via Opossum Bay and several other small settlements was an experience. The "George Bass" was a wooden vessel about 200 tons and provided cargo and passenger services twice each week. The trip took about two hours and apart from the scenery observing other passengers made time fly. No doubt as much interest was shown in us as two obvious strangers.

The arrival of the boat at South Arm was, as we learned later, quite an event with many locals collecting packages, meeting family and friends and waiting for their mail to be sorted at the local store cum Post Office. South Arm was a small settlement comprising a store/post office, Country Women's Association Hall, garage, a few houses and surrounding apple orchards. The Fortress was located on a headland about a mile and a half away. Transport soon had us away over what was then a very rough and steep road to our final destination.

We were greeted by Major Eric Coulter RAA, a most agreeable man and in turn introduced to three other happy officers

whose company we were to enjoy in the months ahead. They were Cdr Athol Townley RAN, also renowned in his civilian days as Hobart's Original Radio, chemist Lieut. 'Bricky' Banfield from Burnie and Lieut Tim Rumney from Hobart. Major Coulter hailed from Launceston.

We formed a happy group over the next few months. The winter season made for cosy evenings after dinner sitting before a large open log fire sometimes chatting and others playing mahjong or cards. Our days were taken up with routine duties and these included manning the fortress for 24-hour shifts. This was necessary as the fortress was installed to protect the carbide plant at Snug, a township on the opposite side of the Derwent River. Carbide was an element in the production of acetylene gas used in oxywelding, a necessity in manufacturing war material. Enemy action was thought possible because Snug was the site of the only carbide available in the Southern Hemisphere at a critical phase of the war in the Pacific. Surface shelling by submarine had to be considered.

At the height of the period of possibility the manpower located was considerable and at that time the officer strength probably numbered 10 or more so that a fair sized standard order for spirits wine and beer was appropriate. A previous Commanding Officer had the presence of mind to foresee the probability of delays to or diminished supplies from the Canteen services Unit and had the brilliant idea of awarding defaulters a penalty for minor offences of digging a cellar under the floor of the officers mess ante room. This was not a great hardship for the area comprised was sandy loam, the spoil being used concreting and

other building requirements. The cellar was well designed with a concrete floor and timber retaining walls and shelving with adequate lighting. Surplus supplies were from time to time stored there.

This well planned concept became a space problem when inevitably our mess members decreased. There was only one possible solution. It became policy to ensure good relationships with our civilian neighbours and goodwill established by inviting guests to our mess and extending largesse every second weekend. Food was no problem for the area abounded on crayfish, sand oysters and all manner of fish, and our smorgasbords had to be seen to be believed. On alternate weekends those off duty partook of the hospitality of our neighbours, the surrounding farmers and their families. I recall my introduction to rough Cider and the father of all hangovers resulting from overindulgence in what I had thought was an innocuous drink.

One of the most likeable people in the township was the local storekeeper Bill Pitt who as well as providing Post Office facilities was the local Sheriff. Bill was also well versed in flounder spearing which was a whole new experience to me. Always a keen fisherman myself we hit it off right from the start and many a great evening was spent in his kitchen cooking magnificent large flounder on the top of his wood fired cast iron fuel stove and enjoying an accompanying Cascade ale.

The shallow waters in nearby small bays and inlets provided a home for the flounder, which in season were plentiful. The technique required some specialised equipment comprising a 6 volt motor cycle battery carried in a

backpack, a length of brass tube through which leads from the battery ran to a sealed bulb in a reflector. A pair of waist high waders to provide protection from the water and cold was essential as was a sharpened piece of 8 gauge fencing wire attached to a short length of broom handle. The final requirement was a small canoe shaped from sheet metal which towed behind provided a receptacle for the fish. The exercise was carried out at night on a suitable tide. Walking in about 3 feet of water making sure the bulb was immersed before being switched on an arc of light some 20 feet or so brilliantly illuminated the seabed. Flounder being half hidden in the sand were easily found when their eyes, located on the top of the body shone brightly in the bright light. They were reluctant to move and by standing directly above, easily speared and deposited in the small container attached by rope to ones belt. I can only describe the resulting feast as magnificent. I doubt that it would be possible to enjoy a repeat performance today because of the inroads made by overfishing by commercial interests.

Neighbourly relationships with the local community developed in a short time to good friendships and whenever we were able to take a day or two leave we were made welcome by the citizens of South Arm. It came as a great shock when we were advised of the sudden death of our fishing mentor Bill Pitt. An impressive funeral service took place in Hobart attended by a large gathering of relatives and friends and a traditional wake of memorable proportions followed at the "Man at the Wheel Hotel" This was the first wake and the last I experienced. We paid homage to Bill in a grand manner and were privileged to have been invited to farewell him. It was a day

to remember.

From time to time we were able to take a couple of days leave in Hobart and my favourite lodging place was Hadley's Hotel. The opportunity was taken to freshen up with a hot plunge bath, haircut, and the ability to enjoy a wide menu for a change. Local trips to new Norfolk trout farms etc. Mount Wellington, Snug, Cygnet, Blackmans Bay and other historic places made for interesting days. On occasion I visited a nightclub run by a gentleman by the name of Fuche where the music was provided by a blind organist who played a Hammond organ brilliantly. The club was located in a basement under the daily mercury Newspaper office and was a popular venue providing top entertainment.

Our officer's mess Committee decided to have a small rowboat built locally to enable us to catch a crayfish in the kelp beds adjacent to the camp. It was from King Billy Pine and light enough to be launched from the beach by two men. We had great success in our fishing venture and enjoyed many a good crayfish meal. It also provided the opportunity for an hour or two off duty relaxation without the need to travel the considerable distance to Hobart.

The Commanding Officer Eric Coulter suggested that it was time for us to examine some detonating fish producing devices thought to be time expired with a view to disposing them if thought necessary. The original concept was to provide flashes simulating anti-aircraft artillery firing at night. Observed from the air by enemy aircraft as a heavily defended area a diversion may be created. It was a good thought but its practicality was never proved necessary at South Arm! The Dummy Flash



containers as they were officially termed, were time expired and it was determined to destroy them. The associated equipment comprised some assorted heavy galvanised tubes ranging up to five or so feet in length and about three and a half inches in diameter. These we concluded were the mortar like barrels from which the flash emerged. The flash canisters were of that diameter about six inches in length waterproofed and on one end was a raised knob of matchhead material. This was surmised to be struck before the canister was dropped into the tube as it were a mortar. As no base was provided for the tube an experimental firing showed that the tube was forced into the sand by back pressure and held quite firmly. Rather than explode the canisters collectively it would be entertaining to provide a surprise fireworks for all to see. Being inquisitive by virtue of our engineering training and qualified to handle explosives, we filled an empty food tin with wet sand, struck the matchhead, dropped it into the tube closely followed by the food can. There was a short delay then a loud whoosh and the sight of our food can soaring into the heavens to a great height, then gently curving and falling into the sea some hundreds of yards from the shore.

Unfortunately Tim Rumny and Brickie Banfield were enjoying a well-earned break at sea in the mess vessel. Their peace was interrupted by a spout of water not a great distance from the boat. They could not understand this phenomena and we were not about to tell them. Ultimately disposal by other means was effected and the mystery of the large splash near their fishing spot was never solved by our messmates.

Time moved on, as did the war in the north. Ultimately Ken and I were

transferred to different units. Ken to Water Transport, me to Artillery this time to South Head Examination Battery, Sydney. My duties included liaison between the Commander Sydney Fixed Defences and the Royal Navy. This entailed meeting RN ships on entering Sydney Harbour and formally advising Commanders that the Port was defended and fuelling may proceed. This was a requirement following the raids in Sydney Harbour by miniature Japanese submarines a few months earlier. This was a pleasant task and resulted in making a number of friendships with ship's officers, which lasted beyond the war years.

Following the Japanese surrender the Royal navy utilised among other ships two aircraft carriers "Speaker" and "Striker" to repatriate Australian prisoners of war to Sydney and there were emotional times when I met at dockside members of my original unit in Timor who had the misfortune to be taken by the Japanese in 1942. They had suffered for three years in POW camps in Java, Singapore and Japan. Several had been working in coalmines in Nagasaki when the second atomic bomb had been delivered there.

I was discharged in November 1945 after 5 years 10 months service. The learning curve had been further extended with a marriage and first son to prove it. The next challenge was to be civilian life. What to do and where to do it? **Ralph Conley.**

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### **An Old Soldier's Memories. Part II** **On the Way to "Z Special"**

Bloss Lawrence also decided to join "Z" at this time. I have no recollection of when Jack Hartley, Col Criddle, Des

Lylya, Allan Stewart left the Unit. I think it must have been a few weeks later after Bloss and I left but these boys were in the Parachute course.

We must have flown out to some airstrip, and then picked up by an army truck, and taken down to an American air base. On the way down we ran into Doc McInerney, who had been sent off to do a tropical disease course. He had been there a week and had found a good source of rice wine or palm wine, something like that, and he said the course can wait, this will do me for a while, so we left him behind on this base while we were waiting for transport to Townsville. I did some washing and hung them on the tent ropes. Down came this American officer who said the CO of this base does not allow this, but I was told where to hang my clothes so I hung them up inside the tent. Apparently my clothes upset the tidiness of the camp. I wonder how the CO would have reacted if the Japs had bombed the place. I don't remember whether we in an American Mess or an Australian Mess. It must have been an Australian because I would have remembered the Yankee food, which was better than ours. I think we were there only a few days.

Early one morning a truck picked us up and took Bloss and I to a seaplane base and we went out by boat to a British Sunderland flying boat. We took off and for about 5 hours it was a bit boring, but then coral cays started to appear. They are a lovely sight from the air. Over thousands of years these little islands have built up, vegetation has grown and sand some how gets deposited to make little sandy beaches.

We touched down at Townsville just on evening. I remember seeing lights, there was no blackout. After a meal Bloss and I went to a dance, army boots and all.. We were there a week or so, I can't

remember how long, but some things linger in the memory. This camp at Townsville was a sort of camp, that was a detention centre for small misdemeanours such as AWL (absent without leave) for a day or so, something like that, and also for personnel, catching up with their units, or being posted to units, so the CO deemed it necessary for these personnel to have guards stationed at the gates day & night, for there was a six foot wire fence around the place, with their tents inside, and our tents outside the fence. Nobody liked doing guard duty on personnel whom most of us had sympathy with, so the CO had his rules, and the camp rules were laid down before Bloss and I arrived. They were that the prisoners could go out through the hole in the fence, which had been made by prisoners probably months before, and the guards could lay down and go to sleep in the guard tent. This was only for night time of course which was good for the guards and good for the prisoners. I suppose these rules were laid down months before we got there. These were simple camp rules, made by all personnel, and were passed along by all transitional men. In effect we were told what went on and we told the next lot of guards. Everyone I talked to thought it was a good idea, anyway who wants to be woken up at 1 a.m. in the morning in Australia to do an hour on guard duty while the prisoners slept? I never heard of any prisoners missing roll call the next morning.

We, Bloss and I, caught the train one day and after a couple of days we arrived in Melbourne. We then caught the electric train down to Frankston and then by truck to Balcombe a "Z" special camp. We went on leave and I was the last one to come back from leave and complete a team of 25 men who were going to do a parachute course.

*More next Courier.*



**Dorothy Maley in Sweden.**

Congratulations on a wonderful Safari. I'm sure you must be looking forward to a well-earned rest once the Courier is out. I'm sending a few words regarding my recent holiday in Sweden for inclusion in the Courier.

Lee and I and a couple of friends set off in September to visit my other daughter Vanessa who has lived in Sweden for almost 20 years. She first went there to join the Cullberg Ballet and danced with them until she retired at age 40 after travelling all over Europe for 16 years.

Vanessa now has her own business as a sail maker of traditional sails, for tall ships. Her partner owns a beautiful sailing trawler, which he has lovingly repaired with great skill to its original state. They charter "Deodar" during the summer months to clients who pay to learn how to sail a large yacht. Vanessa's job is instructor, very scary given the weight of the sails and inexperience of the "crew" and the size of the boom, which she told us would kill us if we didn't concentrate! She is astounding in her ability to control them and when the sails are up (or down) she goes below and cooks lunch for 14.

We found Sweden to be as beautiful as everybody told us. To sail out to the archipelagos is a very special experience, with beautiful wooded hills and lovely rocky banks coming down to the water's edge and beautiful (and expensive) homes along the shoreline. On travelling further, we passed many small islands with little red cottages which are a feature of Sweden. They're used as holiday houses during weekends and holidays in summer. Thomas moored Deodar at a secluded island which we had to ourselves for the weekend, apart from a woodpecker, the first I had ever seen. We had our meals on deck and drank lots of red wine

(Italian!!) The Swedes are very fond of their schnapps but don't seem to grow any wine. Passing vessels looked at our yacht with envy and many came close to admire such a beautiful old boat. It's amazing to see all the various boats on the waterways from huge ocean liners to tall ships and small ships and very small ships. The Swedes spend every minute they can outdoors in summer as their winter is so long. They have only 4 hours of daylight in mid winter. Mind you, I was beginning to think that all this talk about cold weather was a myth as we were there in Autumn and the sun shone non stop, making it impossible for me to wear my flash black coat which I had carried on and off planes from Perth to Singapore to Finland to Sweden and back again.

The food in Sweden is not that much different from our own, although meat is very expensive so they tend to use bacon and pork and piles of butter and cream and cheese in everything. The speciality cheese counters in the big department stores are unbelievable, rows and rows of the beautiful stuff, they also eat lots of knacher bread and the variety is endless, I wished I could have brought some home.

The Swedes are charming once you get to meet them but on the streets there is no eye contact at all. We found that we were bumping into them on the footpath, it took a while to realize as they drive on the opposite side of the road they also walk on the opposite side of the path, no wonder they looked annoyed at us. On the whole not as friendly as the Aussies but then who is? As we all know its great to travel but it's also great to be home.

Dorothy.

**Trust Fund.****Bob Smyth, Nedlands, W.A.**

Lieut Col. Malcolm McGregor  
3/12/2003

Team Leader DEP-EM

Defence Corp. Programme

EAST TIMOR

Dear Lieut. Colonel McGregor

2/2 & 2/4 Commando & Peoples of East  
Timor

Commemorative memorial, FATUNABA,  
"Pool of Reflection"

Lieutenant Colonel Ron Morley Team  
leader, DCP-EM, faxed us a report via  
Mike Gallagher 3 July 2003. Although  
praiseworthy of the site, its convenient  
location and general presentation, it  
evidenced ongoing problems.

A major recurring item is the inability of  
the pool to hold water. We understand  
that its hillside base can be unstable.  
Also that newly installed plumbing is  
invariably destroyed or stolen. We are  
advised that there can be some  
prejudice shown by local villagers. They  
do not want their children to assist in  
keeping the area free of rubbish in return  
for funds; (trust money) paid to their  
school because the pool "uses their  
water".

With a diminishing membership, we wish  
to restore the feature to an acceptable  
standard.

Assuming that a pool cannot be  
preserved then a less costly direction  
could be:-

Fill the pool area with a reasonable  
quality of soil to a depth of say 70cm on  
each side of a small rock filled  
streambed. Accepted that the stream  
would flow only in the wet, the area could  
be planted with a selected tree, shrubs,  
and ground cover. It may be practicable

to remove some of the pool base to allow  
greater root growth.

We have funds available to meet an  
initial cost of up to \$3,000 but for obvious  
reasons are reluctant to have that figure  
released to a third party (eg. any East  
Timor Govt. official!) before a written  
quote, which specifies the requirements,  
is received.

Thank you for your thought and  
recommendation, which would be most  
welcome. I am authorised by the  
President and general Committee of the  
2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association of Australia  
to negotiate the foregoing. This letter is  
forwarded via Mike Gallagher, Northern  
Territory Government Representative  
East Timor, whose services on our  
behalf have been invaluable.

Kindest regards and festive good  
wishes.

Robert N. Smyth Chairman Trust Fund  
2/2 Commando Association of Australia.

One of our Timor veterans, Ray Aitken,  
who is prominent in botany, has  
suggested a Bottle tree (native to  
Queensland).

Ray is holding a 3m plant.

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**"Happy's News."**

Well, home again and cooking my own  
meals. What a let down to getting up to  
a wonderful brekkie at the hotel.

A marvellous Safari and again many  
thanks to Jack and Del for some top  
organising. A wonderful relief for you  
both when it concluded. Everything went  
so well. I'm almost back to earth and  
normality after a week at home.

I've contacted all my 'constituents' and  
am pleased to report all present and well.

Billy Walsh still slowly recovering from his stroke of course but had a talk on the phone. He was very interested in hearing of old mates.

Russ Blanch still coming down to earth and had a great time as did son John.

Jack Steen going along okay after cataract operations. In hindsight he could have made the WA trip. Beryl still waiting on the call for her heart operation and still on 24-hour notice.

Tom Yates and Jean are both well. Tom has fully recovered from his operation.

Eric Herd and Loraine are both well and as usual hitting the golf ball regularly and often says Eric.

Beryl Cullen is well but still no rain. Can't help you Beryl, as we've had none either!

You'll get a note from Ralph. Both he and Sheila copped a wog off the train on their way home, probably that air-con stuff.

Harry Handicott tells me that Amyce was a bit unwell too off the train so beware - walk!

Ken Jones and Edith can't blame the train. I think it was the Esperance air. Both had a touch of flu or something too. Probably can't take the excitement. Lovely to see their two sons at the Safari.

Dianne Cholerton and Julie coping very well and are considering going into a unit near the shopping etc. Be much more convenient for both.

I'm okay but missing the high life. Regards to all, it was wonderful to see you all, Merry Xmas. "Happy".

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## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **K. Press, Orange, N.S.W.**

Time is flying on. I write by way of explanation, with help of daughter-in-law Chris (from Perth) who was spending

time with me Sept. we worked out times etc. I fly over on the 4<sup>th</sup> November and have a week seeing family (3 g/ grandchildren) will then be at "the Good Earth" until Sat. 15<sup>th</sup> this being due to the 50<sup>th</sup> school anniversary over here to what suits family there etc. Sorry I feel sorry to have to miss the commemoration service. I have always enjoyed Lovekin Drive and Kings Park.

Thank you for your call re Jess. I will make sure I see her. So sad if she is confined, she was such a busy little bee. Bye, love Kath.

*Glad you made it to the service after all Kath. Ed.*

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### **Re School Reunion.**

I grew up in the western area of NSW, Gilgandra surrounds. Frank was managing a branch of Permawan Wright, (they had a general store in most country towns) when he drew a soldier settlement block in 1952. We had a lane with a boundary fence but lived in a cottage on the homestead block until we could reside on our own land. We had three sons, John then 8, Michael 6, and Paul 4.

During 1952 people of the district were called together re formation of a school. This was accomplished by the building of a school by the folk themselves who also engaged the teacher. Later a government school was built. A Govt. teacher was appointed and taught at one time 30 pupils. It is really amazing that it is still operating as most country schools close down and children catch buses. However the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is over the weekend of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Because I had what I term 'a spread out family' I had someone attending the school for 20 consecutive years. Michael is returning

with me, all the others are coming home. Anthony, who is director of the Australian Antarctic Division and lives in Hobart, is coming with his two children (11 & 8 yrs), having lost their mother, Annie to cancer. He is a wonderful dad.

Well I had better stop before I get carried away any more. We left the farm "Bobanaro" in 1972. Such a long way back in time.

Bye, God bless, Kath.

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A letter to:-

**His Excellency**

**Major General Michael Jeffery AC, CVO, MC.**

**Government House**

**Dunrossil Drive**

**Canberra. ACT**

Your Excellency:

We the remaining members of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association of Australia extend our warmest congratulations to you on your appointment to the Office of the Governor General of Australia.

We find it reassuring to know the reins of such an important high office are in your capable hands.

The service you have already given to your country during a distinguished military career and as a former Governor of Western Australia has been outstanding and one that has won for you the respect and gratitude of the Australian people.

May you and your good lady enjoy good health and good luck in the times ahead.

God bless.

R. Parry.

President.

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**His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd), Canberra.**

Thank you for your kindness in writing to me on my appointment as Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia; your good wishes and those of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association of Australia are much appreciated.

Marlena and I see this as very much a team effort and will do our best to meet the expectations of the Australian people.

With personal best wishes.

Yours sincerely

**Michael Jeffery.**

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**J. Chapman, Swansea, NSW.**

First let me thank you for sending me the "Courier". I enjoy reading how the boys are keeping healthwise especially the ones I knew from Eric, who came to his funeral whom I felt are good friends.

I was cleaning out old receipts (some 40 years old) a couple of weeks ago from our 'Dead Box' and came across some poems written by some of the boys that I thought may be of interest to some of you, who had not kept copies as Eric had. I had them photo copied so as to keep it for myself, but hope the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> will get pleasure from them.

I hope you are all keeping reasonable health as it leaves me. But I guess like me, age is taking its toll. All those aches and pains - ouch.

But we have to grin and bear it.

I hope your WA Safari is as great a success as it seems all the others have been. My thoughts will be with all the members and their wives.

I will have 3 more great grandchildren before Xmas - 15 in all, as Eric and I had 5 children, 3 girls and 2 boys. 15 grandchildren and now 15 greats, I feel

very proud to have done my best for old Aussie.

Best wishes to you all and your wives and families.

Yours sincerely, (Vera) Joyce Chapman.

P.S. Enclosed please find a cheque for \$50 to help in any way you decide is necessary.

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

I went to see Ron Hilliard and Alan Luby yesterday. Both patients very well following their respective surgery. Ron of course did not have as serious an op as Alan.

It was a skin graft to his foot, necessary as a result of his operation five or six weeks ago, namely the amputation of two toes. Ron is his usual self, cheerful and joking. Pat and Glen turned up whilst I was there, both well. This being a holiday weekend in NSW, Glen had his flexi day on Friday thus giving him a four day weekend. Pat has managed well during "Drips" operations.

Alan of course has had a far more serious operation. His left leg has been amputated below the knee, so there is a long period of dressings and adjusting to entirely new circumstances in mobility, balance etc. Alan was enduring a lot of pain even though he was on painkiller injections he would get constant pain spasms and the ulcers were not responding to treatment. Amputation was inevitable. Alan has handled all those problems well and is looking forward to a life without constant pain, in that area at least.

Edith had a fall as I told you, and is currently a patient in Mona Vale hospital with a broken rib. Maria, the youngest of the Luby children, turned up while I was there. She flew down from Mareeba, North Queensland to be with her mother and father. Maria is a walking advertisement of vibrant good health. Trim, and as attractive as ever with a radiant smile that

does away with gloom. She will bring a cheerful attitude to bear on a situation that has not been all that good for Edith and Alan.

Nora sends her best wishes; she is looking forward to Perth in November. Good luck. Paddy.

---

**D. Dixon, Jannali, NSW.**

Please use this cheque for the printing and the information that the Courier gives me as it keeps me up to date with what the rest of the blokes and girls are doing.

Best of luck to you,

Doug Dixon.

---

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

I'm sending you this old photo taken in Timor of the group names on the back of photo, up to look at. The men's names are from left to right.

I thought the photo may be okay for something, Commando news book, or someone may see the photo that is related or such, maybe history.

I enjoy your news copy each time. The photo I got enlarged a bit so if you use it may have to be reduced in size. If anyone wants it they can get it enlarged.

I'm still going with my stomach troubles and my hip and knee and walking stick, but as always a proud army man standing with shoulders back. The bones have crushed down in my back, but still fighting for 100% pension. Qld doesn't seem to think that there never was a war. I've written pages to Veterans Affairs at times.

Thank you for the address book.

Yours faithfully, Jack Hanson.

*NB. Thanks for the photo Jack, I'm sure it will be of great interest for our members. Ed.*

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

Would you please give our apologies to the President, Ray Parry and to the Unit members and their partners for not being there in person at the Safari, but as they say "Ill health will alter all plans"

May the weather be fair for the last great event and may all the Gods smile upon you all for the reunion and for the coming Christmas.

With best wishes, Jack & Beryl.

---

**R. Shenn, City Beach, WA.**

Regards to all. Enclosed find cheque for \$40 being Courier donation.

My apologies that circumstance do not allow me to attend the Commemoration Service.

Yours sincerely, Ross Shenn.

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**C. Marks, Walkerville, SA.**

I am writing to let you know how Howard Marks is dealing with his Alzheimers problems. He has had this terrible disease for over 9 years now but it is quite remarkable how he has not deteriorated so quickly as others have in Helping Hand. For instance he still laughs at birds and animals and grins at me when I visit; of course he does have off days. Every week if the weather is suitable I take him for a long walk in the wheel chair (about 1 1/2 hours) during this time he is quite interested in building activities etc. Helping Hand Aged Care is the best in Adelaide and there is a very caring staff. Howard was always a very active man, always outdoors or in the shed. He enjoyed TV and reading books and doing crosswords. However we got dealt a bad time on the land with apricots, oranges, dried fruit and canning fruit plus wine grapes getting the stick from world trade and government.

I would also like to say our youngest lives in Sydney and has been to New Guinea

twice on the Kokoda Track and meeting the Highlanders and old Commandos at the memorial. Her address is:- Gillian M. Marks

Unit 2 / 28A Darling Point Rd,

Darlingpoint. NSW 2027

She is keeping in touch with the affairs of the native people and arranged a visit to Sydney Swans for the leaders. She is not impressed with the logging of the forest by Malaysia and hopes something will be done to protect the people plus the reunification of Dutch New Guinea.

Enclosing a note left at Helping Hand by Bert Bache.

With best wishes to all in W.A.

Carmel Marks, wife of H.G. Marks.

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

Enclosed \$50 for the Courier. Received you recent news - I will be unable to attend "The Last Hurrah" in Perth. I always wanted to return to Perth for this reunion but because of a family members illness I am unable to do so.

Through the kindness of Alan Luby from Dee Why, I was able to acquire Colin Doig's book, also Bernard Calinans "Independent Company". Thank you Alan.

I am hoping to attend the Christmas get together with Mavis Broadhurst and other members I met on Anzac Day.

Do hope you have a wonderful Safari in November.

Good luck and best wishes, Elizabeth Prior.

---

**G. & G. Smith, Muswellbrook, NSW.**

We look forward to receiving the Courier but are sorry to read each time of so many grand people passing on. It is a privilege to reach such a great age, but the time does come when we have to accept the leaving is growing ever near.

Its looking nice and green here, but not far out is still needing lots of rain. We are luckily fed from Glenburn Dam on the head of the Hunter River and not short of water as is happening in so many places. The last nine years we have been driving up inland to the Sapphire Fields out from Emerald, Qld to spend the winter. They certainly need rain along the route. We try to very avoid the very bust roads these days as the traffic is getting thicker and quicker.

This could be our last year as health problems interfere with going so far.

Our best wishes to all and may you have a Happy Safari.

Please find enclosed our cheque to support the printing of the courier.

Thank you to those who put in so much time with its printing.

Yours faithfully, George and Gloria Smith.

---

**L. & V. Cranfield, Shoalwater, WA.**

Thank you so much to the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association for inviting us to the farewell dinner. Such a wonderful evening of meeting up with so many folk we have read about in the "Courier" and met personally over the past few years. With you two perfectionists at the helm, it could not have been anything else than the magic happy event that it was. We felt so honoured to be part of the occasion.

Please find enclosed cheque for the Courier. We just about read the print off from cover to cover.

We were very pleased to meet Ralph and Sheila Conley. They met Fr. Jose and Les at Brisbane airport and had made all motel and bus arrangements for them prior to their arrival re purchasing machinery for East Timor.

Fond regards and sincere "Thank you",  
Annie and Les.

---

**A. & G. Sprott, Lakes Entrance, Vic.**

A quick note at the airport, whilst waiting with Bluey & Mary for our flight home, just to say thank you for making us feel so welcome at the Safari.

Graham and I had a wonderful time and will have made some long term friendships with Norah, Paddy, and yourselves.

Fond regards, Anna & Graham.

---

**J. & D. Goodhew, Garbutt, Qld.**

Thanks for the lovely time at the Safari, we enjoyed every minute of it.

Enclosed is a little toward the cost of the Courier. We very seldom see any members as Townsville is too far North and the Courier keeps us in touch.

All the best.

Lucky & Doreen Goodhew.

---

**B. Sadler, Wongan Hills, WA.**

Just a note to say how much Mavis and I enjoyed the "Last Safari". Sadly all good things come to an end.

Rain has slowed things down work wise in this area, got started again on Thursday but more storms are forecast for late today.

Christmas is only a month away, may it be a happy time for you all with family and friends.

Best wishes, Blanche.

---

**M. & F. Broadhurst, Fairfield, Vic.**

Our last Safari over? Congratulations Jack & Delys for organising such a wonderful week. It was sad to say goodbye to members of the other States that we are unlikely to meet up with again, but hope to hear of them through the Courier. Fred said his legs were killing him but wouldn't have missed it for anything.



Perth 1983 was the first "Safari" Fred and I attended. Reading of the coming event in the Courier, Fred started thinking he would like to meet up with several of his section living in WA. One day we were going, the next "I don't think I'll bother. After a week or so I got fed up with this uncertainty. That night I told him I booked our seats on the plane. Tickets had to be picked up in two days. That settled the matter. As I knew nobody, I thought I would be roaming around Perth City while Fred was catching up with his mates. This was not to be.

The night of our arrival we gathered in a large room for the "Welcome". Chairs were placed around the room, occupied by the ladies. Of course the men in the centre of the floor greeting old mates. That night was something to remember always. The expression of surprise and pleasure on the men's faces was an experience in itself to watch. The W.A. ladies made sure us newcomers were not left out. We were introduced to other wives; the friendly atmosphere was there right from the beginning.

The "Safari" went for two weeks and in that time we made wonderful friendships and enjoyed meeting again in future years. So it is not only the men who will miss their old mates, but also the friends the wives and widows made. Looking back on old photos taken, many have passed on, but never forgotten.

We had a good trip home, somewhere between Perth and Melbourne airport I lost my voice for three days! Fred had a ball, with a stupid grin on his face claiming he had a hearing problem? Not so chirpy now, as we both ended up with head colds. Unfortunately our Unit Christmas Luncheon is cancelled, lowest response ever. 2 men, 6 women, mobility, and health have taken its toll on our members, which are very widely spread over long distances.

We wish you all a merry Xmas and Good health and Happiness for 2004.

Mavis & Fred.

### **M. Monk, Poowong, Vic.**

2/2<sup>nd</sup> friends everywhere, I am hoping this will arrive in time to reach the deadline for the Christmas Courier.

Having arrived home safely last Wednesday from that wonderful Safari in Perth, Don and I wish to thank Delys and Jack and all the organisers for a really wonderful week. It certainly was great and we enjoyed it immensely. The best part of course was meeting up with all the folk and remembering old times.

One highlight for me was when Bernie Langridge, Don and I visited Jack Fowler. It was great talking with him again. I had some old photos of Kew and others he knew so well and he seemed to know they belonged to his past. I thought he looked well and he praised the staff at the Hollywood Nursing Home saying that he was being very well cared for so that is very good.

It was nice to see Jess Epps and we hope she keeps well and able to keep up with family and friends.

Fay Campbell invited me to lunch on Saturday and Craig Roberts brought Cath so it was the 3 Musketeers together again. The three of us had a lovely time together. I left about 4 p.m. with my car full of plants. Fay has sold her home at Brandy Creek and is going to live at Benalla to be near one of her sisters. Craig was coming for Cath a little later. Cath said she is happy where she is in Malvern close to her daughter Sue.

The farmers are all busy harvesting. It is quite dry and it seems we may have another dry summer.

My garden is very colourful and resembled a jungle after ten days away. However after the lawns were mown and a few things cut back a bit it looks almost back to normal. The roses are just beautiful!

I felt honoured to be part of the march on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> at Kings Park, a first time for



me and I think some others too. I guess that is enough for this time, I am enclosing a cheque to help with the Courier. We look forward to its arrival with all the news.

Don and I send our very best wishes to all our 2/2<sup>nd</sup> friends near and far for Christmas and we hope 2004 is a good year for everyone.

With love, Margaret & Don.

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**J. Chatfield, Erskine, WA.**

At last I have settled down to put pen to paper after the very successful Safari. "Congratulations", a great gathering of many people, your work and effort must have been very rewarding to see how everyone appreciated and enjoyed being together. I know I felt happy and honoured to be part of it. Thank you very much.

I have received two books you posted to me. I thank you for those also. I am enclosing some photocopies of verse I've collected, thought they may help the Courier some time. Also a photo copy from Mary Grogan, a teacher who wrote from Timor. Mary is the age of my daughter and grew up in our country town; her father was my husband Allan's best friend for life. I know the date goes back to 2000. I did take this to our 2/2s at Mandurah, but after there I put it away and just came across it whilst moving and I think it still has some value of news, of course that is just my thoughts.

Once again many, many thanks for everything, a big task well done.

Yours truly, Joy Chatfield.

*Thanks for that Joy. Have put them aside for when we are short of copy. Ed.*

---

**E. & T. Smythe, Busselton. W.A.**

Congratulations on a wonderful week. I'm glad we didn't have to cope with organising a Safari in the city and it was wonderful to

see the camaraderie right through every day.

We have settled back into the day by day living and I am getting together my Christmas greetings for friends.

Hope you can relax for a bit. "Ha ha" I hear you say.

Thanks for everything, Twy and Eric.

---

**P. & S. Epps, Hillarys, W.A.**

First of all we would like to congratulate you and the other members of the committee on the success of "The Last Hurrah".

Whilst being sad as it was the last Safari, it was great to see many members/family who were able to attend whether it be one event or all of them.

Sue and I would like to thank you and the committee for asking us to be guests at the dinner, and whilst we were highly honoured, we enjoy helping the Association, and hope to continue doing so for many years.

As you all know there was no way my mother (Jess) was going to miss the official dinner or Commemorative Service. She had a great time catching up with people and having a quick chat.

Could you please mention in the next Courier that mum has moved back to Chrystal Halliday Homes, but now resides in the hostel section. She is in House 5, Room 1, and still has the same telephone number as before 9341 4744.

Wishing you all the very best.

Regards, Peter & Sue Epps.

---

**W. March, Attadale, W.A.**

Herewith a cheque being payment for Safari dinners for my family. They felt quite honoured to be able to attend and voted it an excellent night.

They were also in attendance and marched with the boys in my place. It was quite an experience to feel the importance of the occasion.

Sorry we weren't able to go to the Barracks afterwards but I was fortunate to last the afternoon out as it was.

Cheerio for now,

Wilf March.

*Glad you and you family could make it - it was great to have you all there. Ed.*

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### **P. Kenneally, Yagoona, NSW.**

May all you wish for Christmas come your way and may 2004 be a year of great happiness, good health, and contentment.

Thank you for a wonderful Safari. It was indeed a "Great Hurrah" and totally fitting that the West should stage it. You staged the first national reunion in 1954 appropriately you staged the last in 2003.

Congratulations to all the people who made it, and commiserations to our members and their families who unfortunately couldn't for reasons beyond their control.

I take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a joyous Christmas and may 2004 treat all of us kindly and gently.

Nora sends her love and best wishes to all,

Paddy.

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### **Pars On People.**

Gerry Green was looking forward to catching up with some of his old sapper mates during the Safari but it was not to be. A nasty leg ulcer put a stop to that. Gerry, who was always a tiger for punishment is having elective surgery on both, yes both, knees just as soon as

the ulcer heals and his specialist gives him the go ahead. This will probably be early in the new year. Gerry, who is now 87, is not looking forward to his op but is crippled at present and wants some relief from the pain. Good luck Gerry.

Stan & Barbara Payne were booked into the Good Earth for the Safari but had to cancel out when Stan's health deteriorated and he was forced to spend some time in the Merredin Hospital. Stan suffers from Emphysema and when he has a bad attack needs oxygen to get by. This made the trip to Perth impossible. Stan and Barbara have been wonderful supporters of the Association for many years and we missed them during the Safari. Stan has also lost a lot of weight, mind you he is no spring chicken and will be 88 in February.

On the brighter side Merredin has had a good season for their crops, which is keeping the Paynes and other long time farmers happy. God bless you both.

Ted Monk's health has taken a down turn that kept he and Peg away from the Safari functions. Still it was nice to see them at our Commemoration Service where Ted had a chance to catch up with Bluey Bone and Ed Bourke, old 7 Section mates. Ted was our president during our Busselton Safari in 1994 and was our treasurer for a number of years in the 90's.

Vice president Col Hodson, was another who could not make the Safari. Colin had a left knee operation recently and it was still too painful for him to participate in the Safari activities. Sorry about that Col but I'm sure you will come good in time.

Our popular committeeman Len Bagley was unable to handle his usual role as M.C. for the Safari. Len had a heart attack on the Sunday just three days prior to the start of the Safari and ignoring his doctors advice he and Betty

joined in and they took part in all the outings. Given time Len's health will improve. He gets great support from son Gavin and daughter-in-law Pam.

Don Murray who took over the reins when Len had to withdraw did an admirable job as M.C. at the Safari and we are grateful to Don for taking on the role without hesitation.

Jess Epps, who was able to attend our farewell dinner and Commemorative Service, is coming good albeit very slowly. She has been in the Osborne Hospital for many weeks and is looking forward to coming back to the Chrystal Halliday Village in the care section. Jess who was always doing good things when she was in her unit at the village is sure to get special attention there as she has a lot of good friends. Peter, Sue and her family have given Jess wonderful caring support throughout her illness.

Mark Jordan had a nasty fall at home on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November, which resulted in a fractured right wrist and a badly fractured right femur. Following operations on consecutive days, Mark suffered a severe heart attack on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, which very nearly cost him his life. Graham, his son flew out from England to be at his father's side. Mark must have a strong constitution as he rallied and had a good day on the following Sunday. The latest progress report is that Mark will continue to improve but faces at least three months in a wheel chair as his right leg will be too weak to stand on for at least that time.

Elsie too has been in the wars. The last straw was when she was bitten on the leg by the neighbour's dog, which she was feeding in their absence. I've heard of biting the hand that feeds you but biting the leg - no! Mark is at present in the Joondalup Hospital but will be home

by the time the Courier is sent out. So if you have the time give him a ring on (08) 9249 2689 and wish him well. Cheer up Elsie!

Kath Press is a remarkable little lady. Though able to stay only for a few days during the Safari, she still walked unaided from the Hotel to the Civic Reception at Council House which must have seemed a long way for her. She enjoyed catching up with her old friend Jess at the dinner where they had a good old chinwag. Kath still drives and enjoys life and always been a generous supporter of the Association.

Bluey Bone was determined to go to the Safari despite being under chemo treatment for cancer. Bluey was okay until the second last day on the Mandurah trip when he took ill but he and Mary still made the final night.

A rough trip home did not help things. Their plane was diverted to Canberra for a few hours because of a violent storm over Melbourne and they arrived there tired and worn out at 4 a.m. the next Thursday morning. Blue is now having more chemo treatment but is bearing up well. We should think too of Mary who has had a worrying time. God bless you both.

Two of our WA members Dick and Jim were in a generous frame of mind on the first morning at the Good Earth each paying \$15 for their breakfast. They eventually received a refund but it was still a generous gesture on their part. Enough said.

Lois Litchfield, Lyle's widow is an author. Her book "Marree and the Tracks Beyond in Black & White" commemorates the centenary of Marree 1883 - 1983 is very good reading. She presented an endorsed copy of her book to Col Doig when he met up with Lyle and Lois at our Safari in Nuriootpa in March 1990.

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**Sick Parade.**

As this Courier goes to press we can report that Olive Botterill is very seriously ill with pneumonia. Our thoughts and prayers are with Harry and his family. God bless you, Olive.

Tony Adams reports that Iris who for a time could not swallow and was being fed intravenously, is now able to consume soft foods again, which is good news. Iris is still far from well but is hanging in there. God bless.

To all those members who are not enjoying the best of health and we know there would be many, we wish you improved health in the coming year.

**Birthday Boys.**

Doug Dixon	Sept.	8 <sup>th</sup>	82
Tom Martin	Oct.	5 <sup>th</sup>	87
Bob Smyth	"	8 <sup>th</sup>	86
Len Bagley	"	13 <sup>th</sup>	80
John Lillie	"	19 <sup>th</sup>	87
John Chalwell	"	20 <sup>th</sup>	80
Jim Smith	"	28 <sup>th</sup>	83
Doc Wheatley	"	28 <sup>th</sup>	91
Clarrie Turner	"	30 <sup>th</sup>	86
Dick Darrington	"	31 <sup>st</sup>	81
Ray Aitken	Nov.	7 <sup>th</sup>	88
Jack Steen	"	16 <sup>th</sup>	80
Jack Fox	"	20 <sup>th</sup>	91
Ross Shenn	"	23 <sup>rd</sup>	81
Bulla Tait	"	29 <sup>th</sup>	81
Leith Cooper	Dec.	8 <sup>th</sup>	87
Don Young	"	8 <sup>th</sup>	86
Les Halse	"	8 <sup>th</sup>	84
Kel Carthew	"	12 <sup>th</sup>	81
Rolf Baldwin	"	16 <sup>th</sup>	94
Fred Stewart	"	18 <sup>th</sup>	91

**Love and Marriage.**

Celebrating my friend's Golden Wedding Anniversary, I asked him,

"Fifty years is a long time to spend with one woman, isn't it?"

"No," he replied "Half the time she was out shopping and the other half she was on the telephone!"

**Courier Donations.**

Joyce Chapman, Doug & Shirley Dixon, Elizabeth Prior, George & Gloria Smith, Ron Archer, Russ Blanch, Luck & Doreen Goodhew, Hazel Hollow, Ian Jones, Paddy & Nora Kenneally, Frank Park, Kath Press, Tex & Bridget Richards, Pat Sullivan & Marj Goodacre, John & Olive Chalwell, Terry & Ivy Paull, Vince Swann, Bob & Margaret Smyth, K. & M Carrott, Henry Sproxtton, Ross & Beth Shenn, Les & Verna Cranfield, Blanche Sadler, Ray Aitken, Margaret Monk.

If you made a donation at the Safari and your name is not on the above list please contact me on (08) 9332 7050. Some donors names may been overlooked due to an oversight during busy periods of the Safari. J. Carey, Sec/Treasurer.

**Trust Fund Donations.**

Hazel Hollow	\$25
Henry Sproxtton	\$50
Paddy & Nora Kenneally	\$100
Happy Greenhalgh	\$1000

**MISPRINTS**

Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.

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## **W.A. Members Please Note:**

The President of the S.A.S. Veterans Association, W.A. Branch,  
Mr Rube Shaw has invited our members and their families  
to join with them in their

### **Australia Day Celebrations**

**At "The House" at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne**

**On Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2004.11 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**

It is always a great day so come along, enjoy a barbecue lunch, and  
take part in a few raffles.

**Important:** For security reasons you must let the Careys  
know by no later than Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January if you intend to come.  
(Ph. 9332.7050) Don't forget now!

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## **Annual General Meeting.**

Members are reminded that our 58<sup>th</sup> AGM will be held at the  
Anzac Club on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004,**  
beginning at 10.30 a.m.

A few eats and refreshments are to follow.

As our numbers are thinning please try to make this meeting.

The S.A.S. Veteran's Association has available Special Air Service  
Australia 2004 desk and wall calendars for members who may be  
interested. The desk calendars cost \$5 plus postage approx. \$2  
and the wall calendars \$10 plus postage \$3.

Contact Bart Mavrack on (08) 9534 4018 or home address 2  
Tanamuna Drive, Falcon, WA 6210 if you would like either one.

### **Message from the Courier.**

Jack, Delys, and label expert Gavin Bagley, all wish members and their families  
all the very best for a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy and Healthy New  
Year. We would also like to thank you for all contributions to the Courier over the  
past year.



*Top: 'A fine body of men' waiting for the dismissal order after the march at our Commemoration Service.*

*Bottom: Ian & Margaret Ronald came from the U.K. to attend our 2003 Safari.*



That great signed group photo of members taken after our service in Lovekin Drive on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. should be available in about six weeks from now. If you would like one please contact me after the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2004 by which time the cost, including postage will be known. Ed.