



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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

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THE LAST HURRAH!

Our 19th and last Safari is now less than 8 weeks away and although we acknowledge that all good things must come to an end, the final night on the 18th November will surely be a nostalgic occasion. More than a few tears will be shed especially by those who have enjoyed participating in our Safaris.

Bert Tobin is accredited with coming up with the idea that members from all states should get together every now and then to renew wartime friendships. As a result of Bert's proposal the first reunion or Safari as Doigy preferred to call them, was held in Melbourne in 1956 when the Olympic Games were on. The second Safari was held in Perth to coincide with the Commonwealth Games. Both were successful and the Safaris really took off. Sydney was the 1968 venue, then followed Perth in 1971, Tassie/Melbourne 1973, Sydney 1976, Adelaide 1978, the Gold Coast, Qld 1981, Perth 1983, Canberra 1986, Phillip Island 1988, The Barossa Valley 1990, Port Macquarie 1992, Busselton 1994, Maroochydore, 1996, Canberra 1998, Hobart 2000, Mildura 2002 and yet to come Perth 2003.

Each had its highlights. The 44 Sandgroppers had a memorable Safari in 1968. Led by Colin Doig and travelling by train spending time at Kalgoorlie, Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra including a trip over the Snowies, finally arriving at Sydney. We were treated like lords at all stops; the hospitality was overwhelming. It culminated with our grandest Anzac Day march ever. Led by 'the Bull' with Sandy Eggleton and Tony Bowers proudly carrying our Double Diamond banner followed by 112 members on their very best behaviour, we did the old Unit and Association proud. We remember with gratitude all those members, families and friends, many who are no longer with us, who worked so hard to ensure the 18 Safaris were such great and happy events. Your W.A. committee will do all it can to ensure our last Safari will also be one to remember. See you in Perth on the 12th November.

God bless.

J. Carey.

**Vale ALBERT EDWARD FRIEND
(Russ) WX 12018_26/2/1919 - 26/5/
2003**

Albert was born in Kalgoorlie, W.A. on 26th February 1919 to parents William & Anna Friend. He was the fourth child of a family of 6, four sons and two daughters.

He grew up there until the age of eleven where his favourite pastime was "wagging school and following funerals!"

His father died from "Miner's Disease" when the family was all young. Shortly after Albert's 11th birthday, his mother brought the family to Perth where they lived in East Victoria Park where the children attended school. His two sisters went into domestic service to help their mother keep the family together. The boys took various jobs to do the same. The two youngest boys spent time in the Oddfellows Home in Mosman Park to ease the load.

Albert started his workdays with a paper round. Later he joined the Police Dept. as a cadet junior delivering messages on a bike. As he put it he got fed up being everybody's "gofer", made another change, and went North with a shearing team as a rouseabout. This brought him to 1936. By this time his mother had taken a housekeepers position for a man with an invalid wife, which helped the family stay together and the two young boys to join them all. This man later became their stepfather.

In Albert's late teens he became very interested in yachting and with several of his mates sailed in the Perth yacht Club and was a member of the crew on the racer "Miranda".

He had a lucky escape when this yacht capsized returning from Rottnest and left the crew in icy waters for hours before they were rescued and taken to Fremantle.

This did not stop his sailing days. His next move was to join the 10th Light

Horse with his sailing mates and with this and odd jobs in between he filled in his time until he joined the 2/2nd Commando Unit.

I cannot give any information from there, as I did not meet Albert until New Year's Eve 1942 after he had been sent home from Timor because of ill health.

We met at a New Years party in Como and very definitely clicked. At this time he was with the Search Light Unit on Garden Island.

Towards the end of 43 he spent time in Melville Rehab Hospital under observation for an unknown illness. This later was found to be peritonitis and a ruptured appendix.

The doctor had started to operate but decided not to go ahead as it was a hopeless case so he was left to die. After some hours when they found he was still breathing they worked fast with a happy result.

He was in Hollywood Hospital for many weeks, but fortunately we were living close by in Subiaco and I was able to walk down and see him every day. Good exercise for me as by then we were expecting our first child.

After recuperation from his operation Albert was posted to Sydney mid 1944 where for a brief leave period he stayed until the war ended in 1945. I shifted down to Kwinana Beach where his mother and stepfather were living and his stepfather had a horse and cart wood delivery business.

On discharge Albert took this business over and within two years had expanded to two trucks delivering wood, limestone and sand to a quickly growing Rockingham. He fitted in supplying and helped build the tennis court for the Ern Holliday Youth Camp at Pt. Peron, and also collected and delivered milk to Perth depots for Churcher's Milk, Rockingham.

In 1950 he became an apprentice butcher to his youngest brother who had

his own shop in South Street Hilton Park. He bought into this as a partner but decided to become a woolclasser. By this time we had built our first home in Melville Heights and had our 5 children. Woolclassing took him North for months at a time with brief visits home if it was too wet to shear.

His next "bug" was meat inspection, which meant night school to do English, Maths and Biology. It didn't worry him that he was in the same class as our eldest daughter doing the same subjects for her nursing entrance. With peace and quiet at home for study he got through with ease.

That diploma took him to Woorooloo, Robbs Jetty and Albany Meat Works. When the rock lobster industry took off Albert became a quality control officer for the Department of Primary Industry keeping a close check on the processing plants at Dongara, Geraldton, Carnarvon, Learmonth and Port Samson. A job he did very well.

When Albert was transferred permanently to Carnarvon and as our family had all married and left home I decided to go too. We sold our house in Melville Heights and built in Carnarvon. Here we both became very involved in the Bowling Club. Albert as secretary for 6 years, myself as kitchen convenor for 8 years. After his retirement at 65 we sold our house and moved into a park home as Albert had had his first heart attack and we could not cope with the large garden.

We shifted to Perth in 1995 to be closer to our family. It was a wise move as Albert had real heart trouble and needed to have a bypass when he was given only a 10% chance of getting through. He had a quadruple bypass and a valve implant.

While he remained his happy jovial self in many ways he couldn't do a lot. He regretted not being able to attend the 2/

2nd meetings and not going to football and social life was cut to nothing.

We knew he had an aneurism for 15 years and it could come at any time but when it did it was still a shock.

After he was admitted to Royal Perth the doctors asked if he would be prepared for an operation as a trial and being the person he was he agreed. It seemed to be a good decision but it was the first operation of its kind in WA and not everything was known. Unfortunately an infection set in and despite three weeks treatment and constant care by all at the hospital he lost the fight. Being aware until the last, he hoped the medical people were able to learn something for the future. He couldn't have survived without the operation without the trial.

He has only his youngest brother surviving who has a farming property in Darkan. His eldest brother was a pilot officer during the war in the Middle East. He became a lecturer in Psychology at the University of WA. His youngest brother a lecturer for apprentice butchers at Bentley and Rockingham TAFE. A learned family for sure.

We have a daughter who nursed for 35 years, her two daughters are nurses, and her only son is Director of Mental Nursing in Rockhampton. Our youngest son, a master mariner, his son a marine biologist at present managing a pearl farm in Burma. Another grandson is in his 9th year of army service in Queensland on Black Hawk maintenance.

A great family man, Albert was a very happy and proud father of 5 children, 14 grandchildren, and 18 great grandchildren. He was never too busy to listen and help anyone who needed help.

A wonderful man, he was my life for 61 years.

Daphne Friend.

A Quirk of Fate.

An unfortunate incident Albie was involved when on a stunt on the Promontory in July 1941 was to have a detrimental affect on his army career. When crossing Chinaman's Creek, which was about 30 metres wide, Albie who was rear man in a 10-man squad of 4 Section, led by Ray Aitken, became trapped in the quicksand. He called out for help to his mates who had crossed safely. By this time he was over waist high in the quicksand. Showing great initiative, under Ray, his men removed their rifle slings and quickly tied them in lengths and Geordie Smith waded out slipped a loop around Albie's chest and he was pulled out. Apart from the shock Albie was in a mess and in pain. The course quicksand had removed strips of skin from the waist down and he was red raw in parts. He finished up spending 3 weeks in the hospital at Foster but eventually came good and rejoined his section.

It was in East Timor in February 1942 that his problems began when he found it difficult to handle the hilly terrain. He suffered shortness of breath and chestpains. Tom Nisbet realising Albie was in trouble sent him back to Doc Dunkley our M.O. The Doc checked Albie thoroughly and diagnosed he had strained the muscles of the heart. He attributed it to the time he had been pulled out of the quicksand on the Prom. He was of the opinion he had been pulled out too quickly and recorded this in Albie's records which were unfortunately lost in the August push. The Doc had no other option than to declare Albie unfit for further service and he was sent back to Australia before the campaign ended. Albie was very upset at leaving his old section as were his section mates at losing him. He had many stints in hospital but recovered well enough to serve in units on the mainland before his discharge.

That he went on in civilian life to make such a success of every job he undertook as well as raising with Daphne a loving family of 5 children is a credit to his courage and will to overcome his army setback. Albie was a loyal and generous supporter and was made a life member in 1998.

Ray Aitken, Ray Parry, Keith & Val Hayes, Bernie & Babs Langridge and Jack & Delys Carey attended his funeral service at the Pinnaroo Crematorium on the 30th May and Ray Parry said the "Ode".

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Daphne and her loving family.

Lest We Forget.

VALE GEORGE ROBINSON VX 53846.

George passed away on the 17th June at the age of 85.

George was born in Burley, Victoria on the 29th October 1917. His parents Clarence and Kate had a tailoring business. He grew up in Highfield Road, Canterbury (Vic.)

With his younger brother Jack went to the Box Hill area High School as a foundation student. Due to the depression George had to leave high school early and became apprentice to a blacksmith. Most of his day was spent in picking up and shoeing horses. These were tough times.

He enlisted in the AIF early in 1941 and served with the 2/2nd in East Timor in 1942 in 9 Section. George was a good soldier and was highly respected by his section mates. He was involved in a humorous incident when the section who had spent the best part of a day on the move from Three Spurs entered Hatolia at about 9 o'clock at night. It would have been about the end of February 42. It was pitch black and the section was groping around in a small room someone had discovered, when a shot rang out.

Everyone got a helluva fright and a quick check around revealed that George had been the culprit. He must have had a bullet up the spout of his 303 and off it went. We all had a good laugh about it the next day.

In later life George was very passionate about the fate of Timorese because of the help and shelter they gave the Unit in those grim days. He left the 2/2nd after Timor, served with a few other units, and saw out the war with a docking company unloading ships at Moritua. He developed a liking for strong coffee, which he occasionally got from Timor.

George met Dot Robinson in November 1940. They fell in love and were married at the Canterbury Congregational Church in Canterbury on 30th January 1943 while George was on leave.

After his discharge he and Dot moved to Blackburn when Blackburn was still basically orchards and blackberries. They had four children, Anita, Brian, Les and Michael who in turn presented them with 8 grandchildren. Both George and Dot loved dancing and had an active social life. Tall and slim George looked good on the dance floor.

As the family grew up he and Dot moved to Launching Place, a small town in Melbourne's rural east. George loved the bushsetting but as he got older he found the upkeep of the house difficult and he and Dot moved once again to a small retirement village in Kilsyth.

George, an active Lodge member all his life, became the Master at the Masonic Lodge of Quest and later joined the daylight Eos lodge in Lilydale. He was also an active member of the RSL at Launching Place and often worked behind the bar and in any working bees that were on the go.

A handyman, he was always repairing things and was a keen gardener keeping the family and neighbours supplied with fresh vegetables, preserves and fresh

eggs. He was always willing to help anyone who needed advice. He was involved in the Nunawading Pipe Band with whom his son Michael learnt the bagpipes and he also went to night school to learn jewellery making. His pride and joy was his workshop in which he spent most of his spare time.

George never returned to his blacksmith job choosing to become a postie for 14 years, a job which he enjoyed. From there he went back to school to learn welding and after working for three other firms he called it a day and retired at 62.

Following his retirement he stayed active, helping with 'Meals on Wheels' until failing health forced him to sell up and move to Kirkbrae. Even there he was still active joining the residents committee, and being such a handy man his expertise was always in demand. Over his last six months he spent much of his time in hospital but was spared to celebrate his 60th anniversary with his beloved Dot and family. So passed a good man who was always considerate of others and lived life to the full. George was a loyal and generous member of the Association and was on the Courier mailing list for many years.

To Dot and all the family, the Association extends its deepest sympathy on the passing of George. May he rest in peace.

Lest We Forget.

A Tribute to George

I attended George's funeral on 10/6/2003 at the Lilydale Memorial Chapel, which is in the open country out from Lilydale. The other ex Commando there was Mark Miller of the 2/7th who lives locally.

In addition to friends and relatives, the funeral was attended by many RSL members from Launching Place where George was on the committee for many years and from Lilydale, and also by having masons from Lilydale and

Blackburn where George had been Master of the Lodge of Quest.

At the funeral I heard that when George left the 2/2nd after Timor he didn't leave the army but was later in an AIF unit working on the wharves at Moratai, so he gave and long service to his country.

Just before the funeral service I spotted a face the dead spit of George two generations ago - it was his youngest son Michael, a remarkable likeness but a bit better filled out than his dad who was always slim. I have since spoken on the phone to Michael and his wife Annabelle and was told that Dot seems to have recovered well from her loss and will stay on at the place where she and George had been for some time past. Michael calls in to see his mother nearly every day.

I wasn't with the Unit on Timor, so I didn't meet George and Dot and their family until after the war at the meetings of family get-togethers. I remember one very pleasant one at George's place at Blackburn. Later, when George moved out to Launching Place, up the Yarra Valley, we didn't see much of him and his family, as George didn't drive a car.

As you know we are thinning out here as exemplified by the fact that I was the only 2/2nd who marched on Anzac Day last year with the Victorian Commando Association. I missed this year's Anzac Day march due to the funeral of a close friend, ex RAAF, to whom I was best man at his wedding in 1949. Harry Botterill was the only 2/2 to march.

But age is a relative matter; I remember being at an army school with six of us in the tent. Five of us were 18 or 19 years old; we all went to different schools, but knew each other from playing sport against each other. The sixth in the tent was 29 years old and we young ones all felt sorry for him. He later became a Professor of Engineering!

I congratulate all that work to produce the truly remarkable Courier, particularly

of course Association Secretary and Courier Editor, Jack and Delys Carey, and enclose my cheque to help keep it going.

Regards to all

John Southwell.

VALE BRUCE McLAREN VX 124868

We regret to advise of the passing of Bruce who died in his sleep at the Yaralee Nursing Home, Kew on the 17th July.

Bruce was born on the 19th January 1925 at Whitfield in Victoria where his parents Robert and Georgina had a tobacco farm. Bruce had an older sister Nadia. Active from an early age he recalled the time he followed behind his father pulling out the tobacco plants as fast as his dad planted them.

Bruce was still a young boy when the family moved to Kew in Melbourne where his grandparents had a delicatessen. Later his grandparents bought a guesthouse know as "Rostrevor" at Sassafras. Bruce often spent his school holidays there and enjoyed the odd jobs which included collecting water from a spring for the tables, gathering chestnuts for the guests, red ochring the stoves and fireplaces and in the evening placing warm stone bottles in the guests beds. All good training for his future years.

Bruce went to the Deepdene State School until 1935, then he moved onto Carey Grammar until 1941 where he enjoyed his football and made the first grade team. He was also a keen Hawthorn supporter. Later on in life he became a keen golfer.

Later whilst working for an accountant in Collins Street he and a friend jumped onto a recruiting platform with a band and dancing girls and promptly joined the army. This was early in 1942 three months after he left school and had just turned seventeen.

He eventually joined the 2/2nd serving in New Guinea and New Britain in No. 1 Section. He was a good soldier and was well liked and respected by his section mates.

Following his discharge in 1946 his natural business acumen came to the fore, he quickly built up a fleet of 7 or 8 private hire cars in Cotham Rd, Kew. He then joined his father who ran a wholesale dairy produce business in Flinders lane. One of his first jobs was to drive a truck twice a day to Geelong and back.

Robert, his father, became interested in producing dry pet food and would often feed the local dogs with different batches on his way home to Kew. He became ill leaving Bruce with the choice of promoting the pet food or taking over the dairy business. Choosing the former, Bruce bought premises in Whitehorse Road, Mont Albert and later in Blackburn and by sheer hard work made a great success of the dry pet food and later canning venture. However the big event in his life was when he met an attractive 19-year-old lass Lorraine Redding at a 21st birthday party in March 1947. It was a case of love at first sight. Bruce won her hand and she became an Easter bride when they married in April 1949. The couple shared 54 happy years together and had two sons Stuart and Campbell who now run the family business.

In 1972 Bruce decided to move to sunny Queensland where he bought a motel, a block of apartments and a licensed restaurant which proved a profitable investment. The family moved back to Melbourne in 1977 where Bruce decided to buy yet another business finally selecting Jalna Dairy Foods. Stuart and Campbell were given the job of turning a run down business into a going concern which they worked very hard on to eventually succeed.

With his sons doing well Bruce had more time to relax but still held the reins. In 1981 he suffered severe chest pains at work which worsened when he drove home. He was rushed by ambulance to the nearest hospital. He had a ruptured aorta, which burst on the operating table. It was touch and go as to whether he survived but somehow he did. The ordeal he went through left him completely drained and from that point on he needed a walking stick to move about. Lorraine, who was always by his side. With her love and devotion coupled with the support of the family, Bruce's health slowly improved. So from 1981 although life was liveable it meant working full time was out. Bruce continued to drop in a couple of times a week to the office. His sons, both very capable executives saw to it that the business was well run so Bruce had no worries in that respect.

Bruce and Lorraine enjoyed the happy time spent with their four grandchildren, two boys and two girls, and their great-granddaughter Samia.

About five years ago his health began to fail and in 2001 he underwent a triple bypass operation and although this was a success he sustained a stroke during the operation, and as a result he spent the last two years of his life in a nursing home in Kew. Bruce was 78 when he died.

Bruce was a tower of strength in the formative years of the Victorian branch. He was vice president from 1958-60, president from 1961-63 and treasurer from 1966 - 71 and was made a life member for his service to the Association.

A considerate and generous man, Bruce made many good friends in the course of his lifetime. To Lorraine, Stuart, Campbell, and their families and to his sister Nadia, who lives in Malta, the Association extends its deepest sympathy. May he rest in peace.

Lest We Forget.

A Tribute to Bruce.

We lost a real stalwart when Bruce McLaren peacefully passed away on 19/7/03 aged 78 years, after a lengthy illness.

His funeral was at Epping Funeral Parlour, Burke Rd, Camberwell on 21st July at 2.30 p.m. Bruce was a very valued member of our Association and was instrumental in the forming of this Association back in the early 1950 s. Our first meeting was held in his father's produce business in Collins St, Melbourne and from there it went from strength to strength.

His father was a World War I veteran and was very interested in our show.

Bruce held quite a few positions in the Association and I took over the treasurers position from him when his own business Jalna Dairy Foods, which he had built up with his two sons Stuart and Campbell, took up all his time. Bruce supported the Association right to the end. He was very popular with all he became associated with and the large attendance at his service showed this. Our members who attended were Leith and Marj Cooper, Margaret Monk, Don Thompson, Eddie and Dot Bourke, John Southwell, Harry and Olive Botterill. The Association extends its deepest sympathies to Lorraine and family.

Harry Botterill.

Vale THOMAS EDWARD CHOLERTON NX 69311.

Ted Cholerton was born in Manly, N.S.W. on November 24th 1915 and died in Evans Head on the N.S.W. North Coast on July 28th 2003.

In between was the varied life of a tall lean friendly man.

Ted never knew his father. His father died of wounds in an English hospital.

He was fatally wounded in action serving with the first A.I.F. in France during World War One. His (Ted's) mother never remarried. Life could not have been easy for her, she did however succeed in rearing and moulding the character of the fine man we knew.

Ted received his primary education at Manly Preparatory School from where he went on to Newington College, Sydney to complete his education. Newington was, and still is one of the seven Greater Public School Colleges in Sydney, apart from the academic sphere, rowing, rugby union, and cricket would all have been part of his school life.

On leaving school he obtained a clerical position with the Hospital Fund, no mean feat during the worldwide depression of the 1930s. That's where he was when he walked out, joined the A.I.F. on March 10th 1941, and became part of the 2/1st Medium Artillery Regiment. He served in the Middle East returned to Australia about May 1942 when they were bringing the A.I.F. back home to fight the Japanese. He was in a camp on the Eske River in Queensland when a call from volunteers for the paratroops and Independent companies was announced.

The men of the 2/1st mediums responded in force. They were tired of travelling from place to place and nothing at the end of the road. His contingent entered Canungra jungle-training camp in February 1943, did a three-month intensive training course, and 132 of them were allotted to the 2/2nd Independent Company on May 15th 1943. The 2/2nd were lucky no unit could have been allotted better reinforcements. They were magnificent. Ted served in No. 5 section "B" Platoon under Lieut. Colin Doig in New Guinea and New Britain.

The war over he sailed from Rabaul, New Britain on January 8th 1946 with a

big batch of men. The Unit was disbanded after their departure. The M.V. Salamau arrived in Sydney on January 18th 1946. Ted was discharged on January 29th 1946.

Returning to "Civvy Street" he resumed work in his former position with the Hospital Fund. Five years of army life had changed his attitude to clerical work. He had been doing an accountancy course so he chose a new career.

"Bundermar" one of the foremost merino studs in Australia was looking for a bookkeeper. Ted applied and was chosen for the position. He left the seaside for the inland. Spent three years with "Bundermar" in the Trangie district, changed jobs once more in 1949. Got a job on a station in the Nevertire district as a jackeroo. He married Dianne Small on August 19th 1950, then moved to a sheep property as an overseer up in Dirranbandi in South West Queensland. Eighteen months later he drew a soldier settlement block in the Carcoar district of N.S.W. and moved on to his property, which he named "Bookra" in February 1952. For thirty eight years Ted and Dianne were sheep farmers, good seasons, bad seasons, Ted worked that property with Dianne giving birth to and rearing two children, Julie and Patrick.

In 1990 Ted sold out and retired to Evans Head, a beautiful place on the N.S.W. North Coast. He, Dianne, Patrick and Julie attended some of our safaris in that time. The ever ready smile and deep chuckle that all of us remember so well was still there, in the tall, easy going friendly man all of us knew and liked.

Ted had a great passion for music and loved listening to it at every opportunity and he also loved reading. The family home was stocked with a good collection of both music and books.

Ted was a member of the RSL for over 50 years and a Legatee for over 25 years. Ted's family was his great joy throughout his life - he was a lovely man.

I am sitting here now, a beautiful warm winter sunshine day. Thinking of Ted and the last time I saw him. It was at Evans head, and for some reason I had gone walkabout up North, Bill Walsh, Noel Buckman, "Happy" Greenhalgh and finally Ted. He wasn't driving the car anymore; his legs were not to good either, but the man himself, unchanged, cheerful and smiling. That big broad smile will stay with us, that will always be our memory of long lean Ted Cholerton.

He will be sorely missed by Dianne, Julie and Patrick, a gentle husband and father.

Our sympathy to you Dianne and the children.

May time ease the pain and all the happy memories remain. Farewell Ted.

Paddy Kenneally.

The Association also extends its sincere sympathy to Dianne and family. We mourn the passing of a loyal and generous member. Lest We Forget.

VALE VINCENT ARTHUR WALSH NX
73291. 24.6.1919 - 18.8.2003

Vince Walsh was born in Waverley, Sydney. He spent a short period in Orange. He then returned to Maroubra, a beach suburb of Sydney that's where he grew up. Surf and sandhills was part of his early boyhood.

He received his primary education at Maroubra Primary Public School from where he went to Cleveland Street High School. He left school at fourteen and got his first job as a truckdriver's offsider, so Vince must have been a husky fourteen-year-old.

He joined the AIF on the 28th November 1941 and volunteered for the Independent Companies and finished up down on Wilson's Promontory to do his training.

He was selected as reinforcement for No.2 Independent Company, which had landed in Dili, Portuguese Timor on December 17th 1941.

I can assure you Vince and the other 49 men had scant Independent Company training, I was one of them! He left Foster on 31st December 1941, proceeded on the long overland trip to Darwin via the "Ghan" railway to Alice Springs. Road transport to Larrimah, rail again to Winnellie camp near Darwin.

He boarded the W.A. state ship "Koolama" for the trip to Koepang, thence the "Canopus" to Dili where he landed on the 20th January 1942.

The reos camped with 'C' Platoon at Three Spurs for a few days then moved to Railaco where the men set up camp and prepared it for Company HQ

The Japanese landed on the night of February 19th/ 20th taking Dili and after clashing with the gallant No. 2 Section.

When word of the Japanese invasion reached Railaco things and men commenced to move. The reinforcements were scattered around amongst the Sigs, Sappers, and 'A', 'B' and 'C' Platoons. That was the last I saw of Vince and many of the other reinforcements I had arrived with in Timor.

Vince went to the Sigs. He in mentioned among the Sigs. In Col Doig's History of the 2/2nd Independent Company on page 108. I did not see him again until we returned to Australia in December 1942.

Vince left the Unit in Canungra, Queensland after his return from leave. I was in Greenslopes Hospital in Brisbane at the time so was not with the Unit, when many men had left it.

I visited Vince twice in hospital before he died. Though in a weak condition he knew me and wanted to know how Don Turton and Percy McPhee (who died in January last) were getting on. I presume

he had known them on Timor back in 1942. Don or any of his "D" Platoon men who are still around may be able to shed more light on Vince's service in East Timor.

I attended his funeral service in funeral parlours chapel in Kingsgrove. It was conducted by a Buddhist monk. There was a further service at the Eastern Suburbs crematorium, Botany cemetery.

To his wife Yvonne we extend our sincere sympathy in the loss of her beloved husband. May happy memories ease the pain of her loss.

Paddy Kenneally.

Vince accomplished much in civilian life. In 1948/49 he took his old Dodge truck to Lightening Ridge in search of opals, returning to Sydney in 1950 exporting rough opals to the USA and importing French, Swiss and German watches and clocks and this continued until 1959 until he became very ill which resulted in him being laid up in 1959/60. When his health improved he attended uni part time graduating with a BA in 1964 when he was 44. After graduating he joined the Dept. of labour and National Service. He also became involved in the Productivity Promotion Council of Australia (PPCA for short), becoming an executive officer in the NSW branch. In 1973 he was promoted to Assistant Director of the Working Environment Branch eventually retiring as Director in the Dept. of Science & Technology in the Commonwealth Government in 1978 at the age off 59.

Vince was a great sportsman playing tennis, cricket, golf, bowls, hockey and excelled at fencing. He was also a top chess player.

He was very active in his retirement years and became involved in Legacy, Rotary, and other community affairs. A man of great talents he was a good communicator and helped many people during his busy working life.

Vince was on our Courier list for many years and due to pressure of work we saw little of him which was a great pity. To his wife Yvonne we extend our deepest sympathy. May he rest in peace. Lest We Forget.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Warwick and Gillian Tobin on the loss of their beloved mother Wilma, the widow of Bert, who passed away in August.

NORMA HASSON DAY.

Our 16th Norma Hasson luncheon was held at the Good Earth Hotel on Friday 4th July. The attendance of 40 was very good considering the time of the year. The Hasson family was present in strength for what has become a special day on our social calendar. Kaye, as charming as ever, presented the ladies with a lovely corsage, a gift that I'm sure they all appreciated - thank you Kaye.

Prior to lunch, our very capable, and long serving chairman, Len Bagley read out the apologies and President Ray Parry extended a warm welcome to all in attendance. A nice meal was followed by the presentation of associate life membership medallions by President Ray to Elvie Howell (widow of Bill) and Paddy King, (son of Charlie).

Prior to the presentation of Associate life membership badges Bernie Langridge and Len paid a tribute to the contribution both Elvie and Paddy had made to the Association, in particular their service to Mandurah 2/2s over many years. In reply Elvie and Paddy said they were pleasantly surprised and honoured to have been made a life member. It was something they would treasure.

It was nice to see the Fosters down from Geraldton and Vince and Andrew Swann from Esperance, while Mary King in her wheelchair received plenty of hugs and kisses. The lucky raffle winners were

Keith Hayes, Len Bagley, Rhonda Hasson and Laurie Harrington.

The function wound up about 2.30 p.m. and so passed another happy Norma Hasson Day.

Present were:- Ray Aitken, Jenny Beahan, Len & Betty Bagley, Jack & Delys Carey, John & Olive Chalwell, Joy Chatfield, Dick Darrington, Tom & Mary Foster, Beverley Frankee, Laurie & Sheryle Harrington, Ken & Rhonda Hasson, Fred & Robyn Hasson, Roy & Kaye Hanson, Elvie Howell, Jean Holland, Keith & Val Hayes, Mary & Paddy King, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Jim Lines, Ted & Peg Monk, Nellie Mullins, Ray Parry, Colleen Strickland, Vince & Andrew Swann, Don Turton, Clare West and Doc Wheatley.

NEW SOUTH WALES NEWS.

This news from the North Coast is tinged with sadness, as I have to report the death of Ted Cholerton. When Dianne rang to inform me she said that Ted had been suffering towards the last so it was perhaps a blessed relief.

I believe Paddy will supply a eulogy and I will forward the minister's eulogy for you to see and add anything if necessary to Paddy's.

Ted's service was held at the Lismore Crematorium and Tom Yates, Jim Smith and I attended from the 2/2nd. Both Russ Blanch and Jack Steen were unable to attend because of illness. Russ having had a recurrence of his slight epileptic fits and Jack having been in and out of Greenslopes several times in the last fortnight or so. Jack is currently home awaiting results of several tests, scans etc.

Beryl Steen is to see a specialist for further advice on her heart condition in early October.

Tom Yates home after a recent operation and fighting fit. Good news! Jean is

coping with her arthritis and bingo according to Tom.

Better news from out West where Ken and Edith Jones are OK and looking forward to some warmer weather. Last time I spoke to Ken I complained about our cold nights getting down to three or four degrees. He acknowledged that by saying it had been minus 8 at his place that morning so I didn't continue on the subject!

Still on Western news I spoke to Nola Wilson who is well and enjoying the good rains. We got none of that stuff here at all.

Eric and Lorraine Herd are both very well and playing golf as usual in the Seniors Comp every week.

Beryl Cullen is also well but like us here can't get any rain. Some of the cane growers in this area don't want rain of course while the cane is being cut, and anyway we aren't really a winter rainfall area.

I had a yarn on the phone to Ralph Conley and both he and Sheila are well. He must be as he's playing bowls three times a week. Both are looking forward to being in Perth in November.

Also had a quick talk with Tony Adams who is well and sends his regards to all.

Bill Walsh is gradually improving and speaking well. He is having therapy daily and it's good to know Bill is on the road to getting well.

I had my last check-up on my hip last week and everything was okay. I'm looking forward to seeing you all in November.

Regards to all, "Happy"

Alan Reports From Sick Bed. (N.S.W.)

At least we still have some days more lively than others so we don't get bored with what happens day by day. For instance; recently one morning at 9 am. the nurse dropped in to put new

dressings on my left foot (the old foot in mouth disease - skin-cracks) as she was about to leave, Dr Vacy Vlazna (who has had a long stint in Timor) and a young Timorese who was heading back to Dili) dropped in. After a short stay we had a visit from a Physio to see Edith for a regular check, and as they were about to leave the people delivering 'Meals on Wheels' arrived, so overall our unit was like a mid-city street with folks coming and going - never a dull moment!

QUEENSLAND BRANCH REPORT.

The Branch held their last official function titled "Xmas in July" at the Geebung R.S.L. on Monday 7th July.

Present were: Gordon & Joan Stanley, Jack & Beryl Steen, John & Margaret Evans (friends of Jack & Beryl), Fred Otway, Ralph & Sheila Conley, Paddy Wilby, Col & Jeanette Andrew, Ron Archer & Lyn Love, Pat Barnier, Margaret Hooper, Bettye Coulson, Paul Thompson, Tom & Jean Yates from Kyogle and their two granddaughters Emma & Elizabeth, and Greg Tyerman. Quite a good roll up!

The apologies were numerous - Edna Vandeleur, Alex & Esse Veovodin, Sheila Forsyth, Genevieve Isbell, Bulla & Vicky Tait, Happy Greenhalgh, Russ Blanch, George & Margo Shiels, Lucky Goodhew, Jim Smith, Allan & Joan Mitchell, Lois Davies, Bill & Irma Connell, Tony Adams, Win McLachlan, Peter Kraus, Jeanette Parkin (Angus McLachlan's daughter) and Andrea Butler (Pat Barnier's daughter).

Those present had a nice lunch and it was a very happy occasion with everyone making the most of the last official function. Ron Archer was made a life member in recognition of his long and loyal service to the Association. Ron responded suitably and thanked members for the great honour bestowed upon him.

Other news Sheila Conley had a fall in May and went through a painful time with strained ligaments of the right arm. Just when it was coming good she had the bad luck to injure her arm again. Life can be trying at times. We hope you are fit and well now Sheila. Ralph loves his bowls, which he is pretty good at.

Col & Jeanette Andrew and their son Peter are all working hard to make a success of their caravan park venture at Laidley. About half of their clients are permanent which is a good base to work on. We wish these good people every success in their venture.

Jim Smith is another bowling fan and is enjoying life at his retirement village in sunny Southport.

Fred Otway, a real live wire, enjoys his tennis twice weekly and is looking forward to the Perth Safari, the West being his old stamping ground.

Tony Adams may make it to the West to catch up with his old mate Don Turton. Ted Monk too, would like to see Basher again.

Bill & Irma Connell were involved in a very bad car accident earlier on in the year, both finished up in hospital, and their car was a write off. Bill has no driver's license now and has got used to public transport.

Pat Barnier's granddaughter has won a scholarship to do her masters degree at Cambridge University - congratulations Michelle!

Margaret Hooper is back to her old self again after a tough time with health problems and is looking forward to the Safari.

Ron Archer.

TRUST FUND.

Sister Guilhermina Marcal FdCC
Canossian Sisters' Convent
Balide RAI-HUN DILI
EAST TIMOR
Dear Sister Guilhermina

RE: 94 Cartons of goods - delayed shipment

Some of the earlier cartons were ready for shipment to you in time for Christmas but Lions International could not send them until Dili Control returned the MT Containers of previous shipments. Lion refused to pay the unfair demands of Border Control. Then the Shipping Company did not have free space for Dili.

A few days ago we decided to withdraw the cartons (which had grown to 94) from the container and forward by pallet (loose shipment). The Shipping Company then offered space for the whole 20-foot container.

Whereas our 94 Cartons occupy about 30% of the container, the balance being goods collected by Lions Clubs, is comprised of hospital equipment, beds, fans etc.

To protect safe delivery of the 2/2nd Commando Association's 94 cartons it has been decided to address the 20-foot container and all contents to you, Canossian Sisters Convent whereby you can dispose to someone who could use them, those items the Sisters cannot use.

Since Independence there has been very poor control of containers contents by Dili Port Administration. Theft, misappropriation of goods and corrupt demands has affected the willingness of people to donate goods which can then fail delivery.

Distrust of Dili Border Control is unfortunately resulting in increasing amounts of gifted goods from Australia now being directed to other countries eg. Burma, Vietnam and Africa.

It is therefore imperative that you and you representatives, maybe Mike Gallagher, be present when the container is opened to take possession of all 94 cartons each of which is addressed to Canossian Sisters

Convent Dili. The container of goods is a blue coloured 20-foot container No. 085241 [7]. We will endeavour to monitor movements of the Container and advise via Mike Gallagher.

Best wishes,
Bob Smyth.

Good News!

To Bob's relief the 94 cartons arrived in Dili in the container on Tuesday 9th September.

Sister Guilhermina will no doubt be there to pounce on the Border Control Authorities to make sure there is no hold up in obtaining them. Bob's perseverance is to be commended in his super effort to get the cartons to their destination.

The carton contain computers, typewriters, a sewing machine, leather carry bags, school bags, sewing materials, a multi-colour printer, children's clothing and toys, science books, handbags, shoes and more.

Well done Bob and Keith. *Ed.*

History of the Museum.

The Army Museum of Western Australia was established at the instigation of the Commander 5th Military District, Brigadier W.D. Jamieson. Originally located at "Dilhorn", an army owned 19th century home situated on Bulwer and Lord Street, Perth, the museum was officially opened on 18th December 1977. The museum's collection steadily grew throughout the 1980's and 1990s.

Following a rationalisation of Defence properties, the Army Museum was released to Artillery Barracks in Fremantle. It was formally re-opened on 15th August 1995 as part of the State's Australia Remembers celebration.

The museum now boasts seven galleries and numerous outdoor exhibits.

In early 2000 the Artillery Barracks was threatened with being sold; potentially requiring a further relocation of the museum. The threat initiated a strong response by the museum's voluntary staff who mounted an active campaign against the proposal to sell the Barracks.

Receiving wide community and political support the campaign culminated in the Commonwealth Government agreeing in 2001 to hand over the Barracks, and the majority of the Cantonment Hill precinct to the W.A. Government. Under new management, to be finalised in 2003, the Department of Defence will lease back part of the Barracks site. As a result the museum will go on serving the Community from the longest continually occupied military establishment in Western Australia.

A New Venture - The Silk Road to Success.

The people of Triloka village Baucau are hard at work on one of East Timor's most innovative development projects.

On a remote mountain in a tiny village in a shed made of palm fronds, strange creatures begin to stir.

For three weeks now they have gorged themselves on mulberry leaves three times daily. Today, the relentless process of eating and growing ends. They wrap their glistening bodies in strands of pure silk and settle down for their final sleep.

Five days later the people of the village remove the silk cocoons. The cocoons are dried in an oven to kill the larva within and the silk is removed. The village women have been trained to weave the raw silk into traditional scarves, bags and purses, to be sold in the surrounding towns.

The silkworm's slow growth and ultimate transformation is the perfect metaphor for the grand venture that the people of Triloka Baucau have embarked on. This small coastal district is working with a

Catholic missionary and two Australian volunteers to create a new industry for East Timor.

The story begins in 1999, shortly after the referendum. When the Indonesian Army left Baucau, they left behind an army base, formerly used by their parachute unit.

Father Pat MacAnally OMI, an Irish born missionary priest from the Australian province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate congregation while working with Catholic Relief Services, was assigned to deliver rice and corn to mountain districts. He noticed that the army base was located on fertile flat land. Before coming to East Timor, Father Pat had helped set up a successful silkworm farm in Central Java. He felt that a similar venture could provide employment and a long-term income generation project for the people of Triloka.

The army base was also used as an ID checkpoint and an interrogation centre,' says Fr Pat. 'There was a lot of trauma associated with the place, and when people saw that something positive could come from it, they were very supportive of the idea.'

With funding from AusAid Fr Pat and the villagers began to transform the base. Teams of villagers tilled the land while carpenters built an office, dormitories and hatching sheds. Fr Pat named the project LAHO (Loron Aban Hahu Ohin, 'The Future Starts Today') I wanted to instil in the young East Timorese that to rebuild their country, they had to start now and start small,' he says.

All that was missing was a horticulturist to prepare a mulberry tree plantation to feed the silkworms. Fr Pat approached Australian Volunteers International and Kym Hall, a plant nursery manager from Adelaide, answered the challenge.

'I'd been wanting to do something that didn't have a financial objective for some,' says Kym. "I realised that my

skills could be useful in community development work. At a basic level we all eat food, so someone has to grow it. Horticulture is the foundation of building a community.'

When Kym arrived at LAHO one and a half hectares of mulberry trees had been planted and more plants and silkworm eggs were arriving from Indonesia. "There was a great excitement when the first batch of eggs came through," says Kym. One hectare of mulberry trees will feed about 20,000 silkworms. Under our agreement with AusAID, we had to have seven hectares planted by the end of the year. We had to run like crazy, but we got it mostly done."

The village chiefs would nominate people to work on the farm - mostly widows or young men without skills. Workers were initially paid in rice, supplied by the World Food Program. Each worker received three kilos of rice per day, to feed his or her entire household.

As the silkworm farm progressed, Kym turned his attention to a new venture suggested for the site - a fruit tree nursery. "There was a mixed reaction to the silkworm farm - some people thought it might have been better to produce something they could eat. The fruit trees were easier to accept."

Kym obtained a funding from AusAID and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation to purchase fruit trees from Darwin. He returned with over 25 varieties, including mangoes, starfruit, longans and citrus fruits. "I wanted as many different varieties as I could get, so that we could have superior mother stock and produce fruit the whole year round."

Kym completed his assignment in August 2001. He left LAHO with a shadehouse and arboretum for growing and propagating the mulberry and fruit crops, and a solid infrastructure to continue the business.

...continued at top page 18

W.A. SAFARI 2003

Where: Perth.
When: Wednesday **12th** until Tuesday **18th**
Accommodation: **The Good Earth Hotel**
195 Adelaide Terrace
Phone No. (08) 9492 7749
E-mail stay@goodearthhotel.com.au

Room rates: Twin-double \$85 per night per room including breakfast.
(These are discounted rates)

A deposit of \$100 per room is required, payment by cheque or credit card.

If you wish to make a reservation, ring and provide a credit card number.

You are welcome to call 1800 098 863 toll free, if you require further information.

Mention you are a member of the 2/2nd Commando group.

Some rooms have a river view; all have a kitchenette.

The Good Earth is about 1 km from the city centre but buses pass the entrance at regular intervals.

The Safari is now less than two months away.

Safari Bookings at "The Good Earth Hotel" as at 31/8/03.

New South Wales. George Greenhalgh, Russ & John Blanch, Betty Devlin, Pat Sullivan, Paddy & Nora Kenneally, Bill & Coral Coker, Chris Hartley, John Park, Keith Wilson, Ken & Edith Jones, Harry & Amyce Handicott, Sarah Reynolds, Kath Press, (18)

Alan & Edith Luby (if well enough)

Queensland. Ralph & Sheila Conley, Gordon & Joan Stanley, Ron Archer, Fred Otway, Margaret Hooper, Margo O'Brien, Bettye Coulson, Lucky & Doreen Goodhew, Mr & Mrs Chris Thompson, Greg Tyerman. (14)

Jack & Beryl Steen (if well enough).

Victoria. Ed & Dot Bourke, Fred & Mavis Broadhurst, Margaret Monk, Don Thomson, Pat Petersen, Miriam Van Dyk. (8)

South Aust. Bert & Sylvia Bache, Hazel Hollow, Mark Hollow, Anne Gooley, Frank & Muriel Shaw. (7)

Tasmania. Bert Price, Tex & Bridget Richards. (3)

United Kingdom. Ian & Margaret Ronald. (2)

Western Australia. Ray Aitken, Len & Betty Bagley, Tony Bowers, Peter & Pat Campbell, Jack & Delys Carey, John & Olive Chalwell, Joy Chatfield, Dick Darrington, Tom & Mary Foster, Elvie Howell, Mary & Paddy King, Jim Lines, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Joe & Helen Poynton, Blanche & Mavis Sadler, Eric & Twy Smyth, Don Turton, Terry Paul, Ray Parry and Billie {Perry (30) Total 82

If those people requiring transport from the airport give us their arrival details we will try to arrange transport where possible. There is a shuttle service into the city.

*If you have booked in for the Safari and your name is
not on the above list please contact Jack or me on (08) 9332.7050. Ed*

Proposed Itinerary Safari 2003.**November.****Wednesday 12th Welcome Party at the Good Earth Hotel**

6.30 pm - 9.30 pm.

Thursday 13th Civic Reception at Council House

By invitation of the Lord Mayor.

10.30 am (Jacket & Tie - Neat dress)

Afternoon Free.**Official Dinner at Novotel Langley Hotel**

6.30 for 7 pm. (Jacket & Tie -Semi-formal)

Friday 14th 'A day at Fremantle.'

10 am River trip to Fremantle

Visit Maritime Museum

Lunch at Fremantle Club.

Visit Army Museum. (Neat casual)

Saturday 15th Free day

Various suggestions will be made.

Sunday 16th Morning Free.

Commemoration Service in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park.

3 pm. Followed by Barbecue tea at "The House", courtesy S.A.S. Veterans Assoc. (Jacket & Tie with Medals -Neat casual for ladies)

Monday 17th Trip to Mandurah by bus.

Boat trip on the Estuary

Lunch at Ravenswood. (Casual)

Tuesday 18th Final day - General meeting at 10.am

Afternoon Visit Mint/ Parliament House.

Evening Farewell Party at Goodearth Hotel

Members are asked to bring their medals to be worn at the Commemoration Service.

The average daily temperature for November - High 28°, Low 14°.

The committee will assess what the levy will be to cover the cost of the functions as set out in the itinerary. A charge per head will then be set. Members are guaranteed good value for their money as the committee has agreed to subsidise part of the costs involved from general funds. Members will be advised on fees on arrival and can pay the treasurer the next day.

W.A. Members Please Note.

Members who are not staying at the Good Earth during the Safari are asked to carefully study the itinerary as appears in this Courier and let Jack or Delys Carey know what functions or outings they will be attending. It is essential your committee knows this for catering and transport purposes.

Please let us know your intentions by no later than Friday 31st October.

Chris Walsh, a botanical research scientist and experienced farmhand has taken over the assignment. Chris is working to expand the mulberry plantation and propagate the fruit trees. It's a job that requires a lot of hard labour.

The workforce at LAHO greatly decreased after the World Food Program withdrew from East Timor. "When the farm started, we had about 128 workers," says Chris. "Now we can only afford eight people, so we had to find eight good ones!"

LAHO has now taken the silkworm farm to the villages, with the enthusiastic support of the village chiefs. Surplus land in each village is used to cultivate mulberry trees, and the village is supplied with week-old silkworms. Local families tend the plantations and feed the silkworms. LAHO then buys the cocoons from the villagers at US\$2 per kilogram.

"Each farmer produces about 20 kilos of cocoons per cycle, and there are about six cycles each year," says Chris. "As the trees develop, the number of caterpillars they can raise will increase. Eventually each farmer will earn around US\$700 per year from the silkworms."

LAHO claims to eventually export silk to Australia and Europe, and also expand its fruit tree business. It's an ambitious aim for a project still in its infancy. Its success depends on tiny insects that require constant care; on tropical plants that must be pruned and nurtured. But, most of all, it depends on the active input of the people of BAUCAU, from the village chiefs to the children, working together to provide a secure future for themselves.

"It's certainly not easy," says Chris. "Every day is a task, but at the end of the day we all feel pretty good. We're not just running a farm here - we're generating an income for the people of East Timor."

Latest reports are that things are going extremely well. The Timorese are working hard to ensure its success and international aid is no longer required. Funding is still being provided by AUS AID. Ed.

An Old Soldier's Memories.

New Guinea 1943.

Down the Ramu, a big New Guinea river, I forgot the actual place; the Japs had cut our telephone line to 3 section during the night. The telephone was army style, just laid on top of the ground. Dave Dexter sent our No. 1 section down to see what was going on, anyway we were due to relieve them. When we got closer we saw Jap footprints, and expected trouble. We met up with 3 Section and we saw a dead Jap lieutenant, whom Arthur Marshall had shot during the night. It was thought that the Japs had retreated, so we put our gear down and relaxed. Jack Maley (Cpl) said to me lets go up to the O.Pip (observation post) as we wanted to get the lay of the land, as we were relieving 3 section. I was behind Jack both unarmed, all hell broke loose, we had walked into a machine gun. Jack was killed instantly, an Angau officer was wounded, I went to the ground, and then was below the enemy fire on the steep little hillock. I was knocked over in the rush by some New Guinea militia, and at one stage I was lying on my back, while bullets were flying around everywhere. Tom Foster saved the day; he jumped into a trench and killed a sergeant. That finished the Japs, they cleared out. We organised ourselves, I took a rifle off one of the militia but gave it back, we were all taken by surprise. Afterwards I took a party back along the track that the Japs had cut through the Kunai. They had bypassed the normal track, running in panic, having lost their lieutenant and sergeant, I know this because they threw away their equipment, water bottles, haversacks

and all army gear, they kept their rifles. This was the first time I had seen the Japs do this. They must have been inferior troops.

A few weeks later I was on patrol again this time four of us. 2 days and 2 days back. We had attacked the Japs that often and persistently that we had to travel further to get at them, and the Ramu River was like a boundary between us. There was Jake (Jacobs) our lieutenant, Jim Dent, me and either Ernie Nichols or Geordie Smith and four native carriers, if we got wounded. On the second day out I think after midday, we came to a lovely little knoll. The area was not jungle, partly trees, and some kunai. The kunai is flat bladed grass that cuts your skin when you have to walk through it. The natives use it for thatching their huts. We stopped at this place, where there were coconut palms, put our gear down and rested a couple of minutes. I asked one of our carriers to go up the tree to get some coconuts; he got half way up and stopped. Looking further up the knoll, I said 'what's up?' he said "native boy", and then went up and got some coconuts. I was just kneeling down ready to cut open the coconut; anyway we were all sitting down, native boys as well, when they opened up with machine guns at us. It only takes a second and we were all gone over the knoll about six feet high at this point. I grabbed my rifle, but lost my hat and haversack, you just do it instinctively. Jake lost his rifle, and wanted to have a go at getting it back. I said no you might keep it company, for the Japs had their sights on the machine guns too high and kept firing for about ten minutes which was useless and a waste of ammunition.

In a similar situation if 4 Australians could not have done the job with 1 bullet each, you would have to put them on kitchen duties. Six machine guns blazing away, the leaves dropped down on us like confetti. We just sat there unperturbed;

we had the track covered. The natives had bolted and left a clear path like a bulldozer. We decided to move off eventually and joined the main track and eventually across the Ramu and back home to camp. A week or so later Dave Dexter who had recovered from his wounds and was now in "Z" Special had written over asking for volunteers. I thought I might not be so lucky next time with these machine guns, so I joined "Z" Special. *To be continued.*

F. Otway.

OPERATION JAYWICK.

(N.S.Wales Members please note)

The 1st Commando Regiment at Randwick N.S.W. is celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Operation Jaywick combined with commemorating the 63 years of Australian Special Operations (A.S.O.)

The commemorative period is from 26th September to 5th October this year primarily being held at Australia's National Maritime Museum (ANMM) Darling Harbour.

There will also be daily presentations covering the 63-year history of ASO. A pictorial video of the History will be projected as a backdrop for these presentations and the 2/2nd has been invited to contribute to this pictorial history. On the evening of Friday 26th September the celebrations will be launched with a formal cocktail party to be held at the ANMM. Tickets for this event, which will be limited and can be applied for from the N S Wales Commando Association.

There will also be two other formal dinners on Saturday 27th September and Saturday 4th October. These dinners will be a great opportunity to reunite with soldiers and their partners spanning 63 years of Special Operations.

Over the period 27th- 28th September soldiers from the 1 Commando regiment

will conduct a demonstration of small scale seaborne raids on a target ship in Darling Harbour. Other demonstrations will follow between 29th September and 5th October.

Further information on the project can be obtained by contacting

Major Rick O'Hare

Project Chairmen

1st Commando Regiment Randwick

Phone Home 03 5157 6375

Mobile 0419 516 513

Or

W O2 Graham Spoule Project Secretary
02 9349 0384 or 02 9587 2879.

CORRESPONDENCE.

M. Monk, Poowong, Victoria.

I thought it was time I got busy and sent a letter to the Courier. It is always good to hear news of friends near and far in our great little paper.

We have been enjoying beautiful autumn weather. The countryside is lovely and green but rainfall is still well below normal.

Don and I travelled to Melbourne for the Anzac Day lunch after the march. It was held at Eden-on-the-Park in Queen's Road and there was a good attendance of the Combined Commando Association. We were lucky in that one of our tickets was drawn first in the raffle and so we got first pick of the many prizes on offer. We chose a beautiful clock made by the son of one of the commandos. It is of round polished wood. The centre part has all the colour patches and campaigns recorded and LEST WE FORGET in place of the 12 numbers. We are thrilled with it and will treasure it always.

We visited Leith and Marg Cooper recently and spent a very pleasant few hours with them. Marg was slowly recovering from a broken arm.

We spent time with Harry and Olive Botterill on Anzac day too. It was nice to see Mavis and Fred Broadhurst at the luncheon also Cath Roberts who has moved from Neerim South and is living in a retirement home near her daughter Sue in Malvern.

We see Fay Campbell fairly often and enjoy talking gardens and exchanging plants.

I haven't seen Pat Petersen for a while but have spoken with her on the phone. She has a very busy life with family and farm.

Our garden has expanded somewhat lately as we had some big cypress trees removed that Ken had planted 54 years ago. Don has just built a lovely pergola for me and renewed a fence and it all looks very nice.

Tomorrow we are going to my great-grand-daughters 1st birthday party.

She is Colin and Joan's grand-daughter - their elder Tenille is Zali Rose's mother.

Don has three great grandies, Brody 6, Harry 3, & Chloe 2. I will soon catch him as Barbara's eldest is expecting twins in August.

I will enclose a cheque for the Courier and send greetings and best wishes to all the readers.

Margaret Monk and Don Thomson.

F. Cameron-Smith, Wodonga, Vic.

Thank you for the kind words written in the Courier on Bruce's death.

Would there be any chance of getting a 2/2nd Commando transfer, I have badly damaged the one Bruce put on our car and I would so like to replace it.

Incidentally please note my change of address. I found my health problems too great to maintain our home so sold the house for a smaller area to maintain.

Thanking you all once again.

Sincerely, Faith Cameron-Smith.

W. Brown, Fairfield Heights, NSW.

Please find enclosed cheque towards "Courier" costs or whatever.

I do enjoy receiving and reading this magazine although, apart from Maria Hartley and Paddy Kenneally, I don't know anyone personally (although I have spoken to Alan Luby on the "phone"). However, after reading all the editions over the years, I feel I have had some contact.

May I take this opportunity to thank Paddy for his account of his most recent trip to Timor ("Courier" Nos. 141 and 142).

My best wishes to all,
Yours sincerely,
Win Brown.

J. & B. Steen, Thornlands, Queensland.

Herewith cheque to do with as you deem best.

At the moment our trip to Perth is in limbo as Beryl is waiting for notification when she has to report to "Prince Charles' Hospital" for a bypass and a valve capped or replaced. I am waiting to go into "Greenslopes" to get cataracts removed so things are in the lap of the Gods at the moment, anyhow here's hoping.

Best wishes to everybody and may they all have a Happy Xmas.

Beryl & Jack.

K. Press, Orange, NSW.

Thank you Jack, for your call re Jess. Dear Jess, she is such a vital person - please God she will make a good recovery. Over the years we became pals (shared Safari accommodation etc) and she spent time with me last year. I rang Joyce Smith (Newcastle) another pal of Jess. She has been in touch with

Peter and Sue and then called me so we are informing each other. She has rung several folk and I have spoken with the Lubys, they seemed much better than when we last spoke.

I call my unit "my little nest", actually it is quite a good size. (Built before the economy crisis) So I am sitting in my little nest, dull cold showers now, again, temperature 8, which is all it has been all this week. So far the winter has been kind to me.

I enjoy the Courier and congratulate you both on producing it so beautifully, feel sad about all the vales. Read the Morris's account of their bush fire experience (I will write to them) pleased they escaped. On the other hand my family (John & Carol) had all their possessions reduced to ashes (Lincoln Place, Chapman) fortunately, or so I feel, they were both in Sydney. It was featured on the ABC. They are coping okay, had insurance.

Space running out. I hope the body is cooperating late October and that I will be there. I am fortunate in having family over there.

Affectionately,
Kath Press.

D. B. Cole, Gordon, NSW.

Enclosed cheque for \$50 - with thanks for sending the Courier on to me.

Regards, Diana Cole.

N. Timms, Como, WA.

Please find enclosed cheque to the value of \$50 towards the Courier which I enjoy receiving and reading.

I still live independently, very stiff with arthritis but just able to walk, play bridge at the South Perth Bridge Club twice a week.

I would like the new book when completed.

Sincerely, Nancy Timms.

J. Chatfield, Pinjarra, WA.

Please find enclosed thirty dollars this being my donation for the 2/2nd Commando Courier.

I am hoping this finds you both well and in good health. Thank you very much for the kindness and understanding you have given me during my recent illness. I am happy to report my condition has improved immensely and although not fully recovered I am able to face the daily routines of life. Being out of hospital is a great bonus, nothing like a cuppa in your own home. Best and fond regards to all.

Joy Chatfield.

N. Grachan, Wheelers Hill, Victoria.

Sincerely trust all are well.

To all those who have lost dearly loved ones, my prayers, heart, and condolences reach out to you one and all.

We too here in Victoria have lost loved ones; the passing of Tom Nisbet was a time of great sadness.

Tom's funeral was of great sentiment and love. Tom adored his gardening hence "Flowers of the Field" was played. A Scotsman welcomed him into the Niocropolis playing the bagpipes, a most touching and sad service followed before a private cremation. He and I shared so many outings, though due to recent ill health I had not seen him for sometime.

Tom was paid a great tribute by all Commandos who attended, a most touching ceremony attended by so many.

My thoughts and prayers reach out to you one and all.

May every blessing come your way.

Sincerely Nina Grachan.

I.G. Nisbet, 1 St Johns Pde, Kew, Victoria.

Thank you for the copies of the 2/2nd Courier. I think between our combined

contributions we pretty well covered Dad's life. Thanks also to Ray for his tribute.

There was certainly a lot of history covered in the June issue from my point of view. I can recall the regular working bees in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park, with 'Blue' installing the reticulation system for watering the lawn.

I never met Allan Hollow but he was "well known" to me. When I commenced growing a beard Dad related to me the horrific injury Allan suffered and how from that day on he had a great aversion to beards. I have had a beard for thirty plus years. Even Dad relented and grew one in his final years as shaving became more than a daily habit.

In a strange quirk of fate I am a long-standing friend of Mary (Rank) Gray, both of us having studied Agricultural Science at University of Melbourne. Mary is the youngest daughter of Sir Benjamin Rank. Sir Benjamin died in January 2002 and an obituary in The Age made specific reference to 'Happy', who although suffering severe injuries, had "unbroken spirit".

Thanks once again. I would be pleased to receive future issues of the 2/2nd Courier.

Yours sincerely, Ian Nisbet.

I. Rowan-Robinson, Bridgetown, WA.

Please find enclosed my cheque for \$50 for the Courier or whatever.

Hoping to see you all in November.

Best wishes ,

Iris.

I. Ronald, Kent, U.K.

A word from London.

Thank you for the regular arrival of the '2/2nd Commando Courier'.

I am now reading the June copy, which is full of interest, but sadly, records the lives and deaths of several of the old comrades.

The well-written account of the Canberra Bush Fires vividly brought home to us the story of that tragic event.

We are going well here. Our flat, only a mile from our former home, suits us well.

I no longer drive, and shops, facilities, and bus stops of several routes are only a quarter of a mile away. It is peaceful, and the other residents, many in our age group, are very agreeable.

Margaret and I still have our garden allotment, which is now in full production of soft fruits, vegetables and weeds.

Thank goodness we are both well. The National Health Service doctors and staff keep working away to keep me on deck.

We have booked into the hotel for the W.A. Safari, and have booked our flights as well, being optimists.

I am looking forward to the event, and meeting again the men I remember.

I enclose a cheque for 'The Courier', and wish you good luck and good health.

Ian.

J. Scott, Bentley, WA.

The enclosed cheque is a donation towards the Courier Fund. I enjoy receiving this very special little paper very much and trust that we will receive many more issues to come.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Scott.

H. & A. Handicott, Hamilton.

Just a short note.

I subscribe to the Army newspaper, and this July issue featured, the enclosed. You may have seen it already.

A couple of little bits for the Courier. Spoke to Joyce Smith last week, she's looking better.

We have booked and paid for our fares to and from Perth, so heres hoping is well enough. Split the cheque for the Timor Fund and the Courier.

Was 5 degrees this morning - roll on summer!

Hoping to see you all in November.

Cheers, Amyce & Harry.

D. Laing, Bruce, ACT.

Please find enclosed a cheque as a contribution to the continuing production of the 2/2nd Commando Courier.

During a recent visit to WA I visited the Museum in the old Artillery Barracks in Fremantle. I was delighted to find the section dedicated to the 2/2nd Commandos.

All good wishes.

Dawn Laing.

R. G. Conley, Albany Creek, Qld.

On Monday 7th July the Queensland members had lunch together at Geebung RSL Club. Twenty-five turned up and a good time was had by all considering this was our last organised function. Ron Archer will be writing details of those present so I will not cover that aspect in this note.

After reconciling our Bank Statement and paying a few incidentals I put to the meeting that we should decide what to do with the balance and after some discussion it was agreed we should forward the closing amount to you for use in production of the Courier. The work you two good people do in that regard will really be the means of communication among us in future as age, health, and distance has ruled out formal get togethers.

Enclosed is a cheque for \$386.26 with our best wishes for the future of the Courier.

On behalf of the Queensland contingent,
Ralph Conley.

Warmest regards to you both, Ralph & Sheila.

H. & A. Handicott, Hamilton,

Excuse the writing, I belong to the wobbly handwriters and there are no

lines to follow and the typewriter can't spell so that's good enough excuse.

The sun is shining today, I think the second day for weeks, no wonder its dry over the range, it's all fallen here!

Anyhow herewith is the photo I spoke of on the plane. I'm not sure of some of the boys but I noticed a few empty basic pouches. I'm going to send the paper on the Alan. The four of us, Paddy, Alan, Ron & myself on the ferry on Anzac Day, took a grandson, now a couple more want to come next year. Ron Archer and Lionel Newton marched with us. We missed Col Holley this year. Jack Hartley's son Chris joined us on the ferry.

I'm hoping like hell to make Perth. Amyce's health is not too good. She had a fall last week and landed on her crook arm, so now its really crook, but here's hoping but if not, get the \$100 deposit we put on the deluxe suite and buy a few drinks.

I rang Beryl Walsh last night and she said Bill is progressing slowly, can take a bit of weight on his crook leg. He looked much better in the face when I saw him after Buck's funeral.

Well folks heres hoping you all keep well in the West and that we see you in November.

Cheers and best wishes,

Amyce and Harry.

M. Monk, Poowong, Vic.

I hope this finds you both well as we are here.

I just wanted to bring you up to date with our news -.

I sent a letter for the Courier back on the 1st June and as it wasn't in the last one I realise I must have missed the deadline.

On 17th July my grand-daughter Angela had identical twins and they are just beautiful. Grace Maree was 5 lb and Emily Louise was 5 lb 2 oz. They were a month premature but are doing well.

Barbara, my eldest and her husband are very proud grandparents, so are the two aunties. I now have three great -grandies and have caught up to Don. His eldest great grandie is 6 and is at school.

Don and I are looking forward to the Safari and have booked our trip over on the train and back by plane.

We send our best wishes to our 2/2nd friends all around Australia.

All for this time,

Margaret and Don.

M. Broadhurst, Fairfield, Vic.

We had a phone call from Keith Richards's nephew inquiring about his uncle. As Fred is hard of hearing on the phone I asked him to send a letter of his requirements for the Courier.

As Keith was involved with "Winnie the War Winner", I have put him onto Harry Botterill who would probably know Keith, also sent copies of old paper clippings and extracts from books. I hope this will help him in some small way. (Keith Richards VX 50708).

Regards to all,

Mavis.

J. P. Kenneally, Yagoona, N.S.W.

Hope this arrives in time for the Courier. If it's full (the Courier not the Editor!) the letter can wait, but get Ted Cholerton's vale in if possible.

Ted Cholerton was one of the finest men I knew, much in the mould of Ron Gurr, but not as serious, so many of them have passed on, but still their memory stays evergreen in my mind.

Well come the "devil" or high water Nora and I will be in Perth come November 2003. We have optimistically paid our airfare so our guardian angels are in for a busy time.

Our family is all well, Sean happy with life and a low paid job (ie. in comparison to what he got in the Territory) in

Gundagai. Helen O.K. as is Peter and the children. Gerald expanding, literally as well as figuratively physically. Still there are no dull moments when he is around. His family are well also, his stepdaughter will be doing her high school exams in October, depending on the pass will be her future. Michael is wandering about the Northern Territory at present. I know he is going to Broome some time and don't know which way he will go afterwards.

Some of the men probably remember Vince Walsh. He was a sig, a neo like me; he landed in Dili January 20th 1942. I went to see him in Prince of Wales Hospital Randwick. He had a stroke some months ago, is however in good condition mentally and not too bad physically, mobile, but tires easily. I knew him well, but I would not have recognised him when I saw him a couple of weeks ago. I will remember the last time I saw him it was in Troutvins Pub, corner King & George Streets Sydney and it was when we were on leave after Timor in February 1943. I suppose being the last time in 60 odd years kept it in my mind. He was asking after Don Turton and Percy McPhee. I'd forgotten Percy had died and had him in the land of the living. I'll be seeing Vince on the 12th so I'll set the record straight.

Another bloke who was in hospital was Ron "Drip" Hilliard, the complaint was serious, but Drip wasn't. If the Harbour Bridge fell on Drip he'd bob up in the water with a grin on his face. As far as Drip is concerned life was made for laughter and Drip keeps the world laughing with him. Seriously I was present when the doctor came to see him in the ward. The doctor said "Probably Friday" quick as a flash Drip grinned and said, "From the neck". The doctor was referring to Drip's foot; it was in awful condition, jet black and painful. The doctor was referring to the amputation of two or three toes. Drip didn't turn a hair, just a grin and "from the neck!"

Drip was in a lot of pain but no one would know it. I've known Ron Hilliard since he came to Four Section in 1943. I've seen

him take some hard knocks during his life. I've never heard him complain or even refer to them, just a grin, and a joke. He is home now and getting to walk without a big toe and the second last one and if there is any hassle or pain you won't hear of it from Ron Hilliard. He's a grand man to know, so here's to a quick successful recovery drip. I'll go over to Arncliffe and see him on Sunday. It will be a bit unusual going to Arncliffe and not be sitting in the RSL with a beer, a laugh, and a view of the park, plus a drinking mate who refuses to be serious.

Little news of 2/2nd here and truth to tell only a mere handful of 2/2nd men, so little wonder news is in short supply.

Best of luck to all in W.A.

Paddy Kenneally.

A. & D. Claney, Wangaratta, Vic.

As Arch and I have moved to a retirement village, I am including our new address, as well please find enclosed cheque to be used as required by you.

We hope this finds you and family well, thank you all for a wonderful newsletter "The Courier". We find ourselves looking forward to each edition so much.

Our new address: -

10 Wren Court
St. John's Terrace
Wangaratta 3677 Ph. 5721.6679

Yours sincerely,
Dawn & Arch Claney.

Those of you who intend writing with Christmas greetings to be included in the December Courier, please make the 1st December deadline. Ed

Pars on People.

Dorothy Maley and her daughter Lee left Perth on the 1st September to meet up with her other daughter Vanessa who is living in Stockholm. It promises to be an interesting six weeks for them. Vanessa's

partner owns a tall ship formerly an old English sailing boat and they intend spending a good part of their time sailing around the Swedish Archipelago in the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Bothnia visiting the small islands in those waters. Lets hope its smooth sailing for them and the crew.

Dot, who still works four days a week at home, was quite excited at the prospects of a good break - one she richly deserves.

Maria Hartley is another one who has been tripping around. Maria spent ten weeks in May, June and part of July in Austria and Slovenia where she grew up before migrating to Australia some 60 years ago. Maria said she soon picked up the languages, which she was a bit rusty on and enjoyed the experience of visiting the places she knew as a young girl.

Slovenia is now a separate republic and along with Croatia and Serbia was once part of Yugoslavia. Back home in Sydney, Maria still does not enjoy the best of health but takes a keen interest in the Association, as does her son Chris.

The imitable Dusty Studdy experienced an unusual occurrence back in late June one which he didn't enjoy although many of his old 2/2nd mates couldn't help smiling about. He was in the kitchen when he heard a loud crashing sound. Being hard of hearing he thought it might have been a plane flying low overhead or the sound of thunder. When he opened the door into his lounge room he found the ceiling and part of the side wall had collapsed and the room was one helluva mess. The good thing was that Dusty was not in the room when it happened. He had to move out for a few weeks but is now settled in again none the worse for the experience. Lucky for you Dusty!

Doc. Wheatley who will be 91 in October recently decided to get a dog for company. A friend took him to the RSPCA to choose one. They decided on a medium sized 18-month-old dog that looked through the wire

so appealingly that they couldn't resist. (Doc said he looked all the world like a dingo!)

In the short time Doc had the dog, it proved to be a real ripper. Ripping into everything it could get its teeth into! Off went all of his pot plants and what was a neatly laid out backyard turned into a real mess. Suffice to say Doc no longer has a dog. Things are peaceful once again.

Doc said he had a beautiful Father's Day, scoring two bottles of Scotch and a bottle of brandy and of all things a 4'6" windmill for his garden. Doc is looking forward to meeting up with members at the Safari.

Keith and Val Hayes are enjoying a well-earned holiday in Albany for a few weeks. Keith assisted by Val has been a tireless worker on our Trust Fund Committee for many years. We are fortunate to have such a great couple. Both are life members and rightly so.

Clarrie Turner despite having pneumonia twice and bronchitis managed to survive the winter. Normally he would welcome the summer weather but the medication he is on prevents him from enjoying basking in the sun, he even got sunburnt on an 18 degree day in June and finished up losing a lot of his skin. He has also given up driving. Grace is coping well, which is good to hear. Clarrie and Grace celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary earlier this year.

Sick Parade.

Members will be sorry to hear that Jess Epps had a stroke late in June and spent 8 weeks in hospital. Apparently Jess got up early to go to the bathroom when she collapsed and lay exposed to the cold until her son Peter found her 3-4 hours later. As a result she caught pneumonia and was a pretty sick lady for the next 10 days, but Jess has a great spirit and is now back in her unit making a slow

but steady recovery. She continues to have daily therapy and is able to move around with the help of a frame. She is getting plenty of love and support from Peter and Sue and others in the family and her many friends. Jess, who is determined to make the Safari, would like to thank all those have sent in cards and flowers. God bless you Jess.

Alan Luby, who was 88 on the 6th September, has been up in the Peninsula Private Hospital, Manly for a number of weeks. Besides being run down Alan is suffering from ulcerated feet which take a long time to heal. He also has a serious problem with poor circulation in his legs, which makes moving about difficult and painful. He has met with his specialist to see if he can get something done to make life more amenable. I'm sure all members wish Alan improved health in the future. Alan has given outstanding service to the Association since its formation and has done a lot for other members in that time.

Edith continues to battle on and is still trying to get her driving licence renewed. God bless you both.

Blue Bone is another who is having a tough time battling against the 'Big C'. Blue has been on chemotherapy treatment for over three months now and his treatment will continue until at least the end of the year. Blue is handling pretty well but has his downers and gets very tired at times. Mary and the family are giving him plenty of loving support. Blue was a handy country footballer in his younger days and took up coaching with success. He has always been a Hawthorn supporter and looks forward to the Hawks returning to their great years of the 70's & 90's when they won 8 flags in 22 years. Blue and Mary still hope they will make the Safari.

Wilf March spent a week in hospital in September with a problem but is now back home. Wilf needs a walking stick to move about. He can still drive but does little of it.

Wilf & Lorraine celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary next year. He has had a pretty rough time of it for over five years now but is bearing up well.

Henry Sproxton is another who is restricted in his movements with angina and a left lung that isn't functioning all that well. He is to be admired the way he manages on his own. His keen sense of humour helps. Henry has been a great member for many years and is enjoying preparing the photos for our forthcoming Unit History.

Late news is that Peter Alexander who now lives in Kalgoorlie, had a severe stroke on Sunday 7th Sept. and is not expected to recover.

BIRTHDAY BOYS.

Harry Handicott	July 4	81
George Greenhalgh	8	83
Peter Barden	11	82
Tom Yates	21	83
John Southwell	27	80
Tom Foster	Aug.1	83
Jack Hanson	9	82
Dusty Studdy	15	85
Andy Beveridge	15	87
Russ Blanch	23	82
Fred OtwaySept.→	3	83
Alan Luby "	6	88
Bill Tomasetti	11	85
Bob Williamson	13	85
Tony Adams	18	85
Alex Veovodin	26	82

If you are not included on the list please ring me on (08) 9332 7050. Ed.

Courier Donations.

Margaret Monk, Win Brown, Iris Rowan-Robinson, Diana Cole, Nina Grachan, Nancy Timms, Ray Aitken, Dick Darrington, Joy Chatfield, Roy & Kaye Hanson, Fred & Robyn Hasson, Elvie Howell, Jim Lines, Ted & Peg Monk, Nellie Mullins, Colleen Strickland, Doc. Wheatley, Clare West, Keith & Val Hayes, Ian & Margaret Ronald, Joan

Scott, John & Shirley Southwell, Dawn Laing, Harry & Amyce Handicott, Ralph & Sheila Conley, Queensland Branch of 2/2nd, Jim Smith, Jack & Beryl Steen, Daphne Friend & family, Alan & Edith Luby, Fred Otway, Tom Pulliene, Yvonne Walsh, Arch & Dawn Claney.

Trust Fund Donations.

Harry & Amyce Handicott	\$ 25
Jim Smith	\$ 50
Jack & Beryl Steen	\$ 50
Alan & Edith Luby	\$100
Daphne Friend & family	\$100
Ron Archer	\$100
Arch Dawn Claney	\$100

*Thank you all for your kind donations.
Ed.*

Roll Call as at 31/8/03

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Widows.</u>
W.A.	41	41
N.S.W.	28	38
Vic.	15	24
Qld.	18	12
S.A.	8	6
Tas.	2	6
ACT	-	3
U.K.	1	--
	113	130

339 Couriers are issued quarterly

243 to members and widows

96 to relatives and friends

H. Sproston, Statistician.

RAKING UP THE LEAVES.

'Twas peaceful and quiet that day in the park

As I raked up the leaves and the pieces of bark. When I gazed up and down that long line of trees

And memories stirred with thoughts that can please

To recall the 50 and 2 men honoured there

Who proudly the double red diamond did wear

I thought of my mates, those splendid young men

There were Charlie and Bill, Scotty, Paddy and Ben

The memory lingered on how they looked then

As along with the leaves the heart had been stirred

For memory lasts; it cannot be blurred.

Jerry Haire

October 1953.

RALPH REMINISCES

A Second O'Seas Posting!

Following evacuation from Timor the unit eventually found itself at Canungra for further training in Jungle Warfare, which at the time seemed a bit unusual if not outright funny. Some days after settling in Major Laidlaw sent me to Bde. HQ at Ascot racecourse in Brisbane with a letter. I later learned was seeking arrangements to leave for the Unit.

This entailed a ride in the back of a three-ton truck over a fairly rough road and a travel time of about two hours. Having delivered the letter I was about to cross the road the Transport Pool for a ride back to Canungra when a staff car flying a blue pennant suddenly stopped beside me. To my amazement out stepped a Brigadier who immediately said "What are you doing here Conley? I thought you were either dead or a prisoner of war." It was Alan Mainwaring my original CO who had been responsible for granting my request for overseas service in what he described as a secret mission. This followed his refusal to release me to the RAAF I had with two friends passed the necessary tests in October 1939 to join the RAAF and had in January 1940 received official advice to proceed to Woolloomooloo Dept for onward movement to Richmond for Aircrew training.

I never returned to Canungra. He was adamant that I was to join his staff and

against my protestations that I had to return to my unit took me to his HQ in South Brisbane. He called Major Laidlaw, obviously obtained my release, had my personal equipment replaced and two days later armed with a leave pass for three weeks was on a passenger train to Sydney.

On the expiry of my leave I was to report to the School of Military Engineering. If successfully graduating I was to join the Brigadier's staff. I understand he was the CRE Northern Command. In due course I managed to meet the course requirements as was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the RAE. During my leave prior to beginning the course my wife Sheila had managed a transfer from the 2/11 Field Hospital at Warwick, Queensland to AMWAS HQ at Victoria Barracks, Sydney. Our reunion after some 18 months could be the subject of another story.

I never joined the Brigadier's staff. He had moved on to New Guinea and my first posting was Adjutant at North Sydney.

At the time I was serving in Timor, my best friend Ken Ward from my original unit, married my wife's sister. This was a complete surprise to me on my return and even more so when he was also nominated to attend the same course at the School of Military Engineering. We were commissioned on the same day as Lieutenants. Ken was posted to Scratchley Battery at Newcastle and it was convenient to share a unit at Manly.

Our wives were company for each other and when occasionally our leave days coincided the four of us had pleasant times together. Imagine my surprise when I was advised was to be posted overseas again with another officer his name being Ken Ward! The fun part was that he did not know about this at the time.

Being first home with the news of our new posting gave me an opportunity to take a rise out of Joan, Sheila's sister. By this time both girls were the proud mums of boys aged 7 or 8 months and had become used to Ken and myself being home for a few days at regular intervals. The shock and horror on Joan's face when I told her Ken and I were being posted overseas had to be seen to be believed! Sheila was also surprised to say the least. Great was the relief when the overseas posting was revealed as Tasmania!

Two weeks later we were on our way. The movement order had indicated some urgency and it was to travel to Melbourne by train and by air to Launceston and again by train to Hobart. Even the best-laid plans go astray and we found ourselves in charge of a troop train carrying troops on leave from New Guinea. What a trip! Confiscating grog including spirits, settling disputes, and organising meals on the run, trying to snatch an hour or two of sleep made for an eventful and exhausting tour of duty. On arrival St Spencer Street Station and handing over the troops we were advised to transport ourselves to Royal Park where being Sunday the tented camp was virtually deserted. Finally a Duty officer was located. He suggested we should find a tent and make ourselves at home. Melbourne in mid winter is cool to say the least and we were decidedly unhappy with the lack of interest in our welfare. There were no mess facilities and we were told Royal Park was a transit camp only.

Initiative came to the fore. We found the tramline and headed for the city. I recall we had a good meal somewhere and returned to Royal Park determined to have a few words to the powers that be when they surfaced on the following morning.

This we did and for our efforts were advised our next duty was to undertake Draft Conducting Officer duties aboard the SS Tarooma transporting troops to Launceston. You picked it in one, yes, the same lads we had got to know so well from Sydney. The trouble now was that we had to wait in Melbourne for the next sailing three days hence. We made the point that there were no facilities for Officers at Royal Park and eventually arrangements were made for us to be accommodated at the Federal Hotel. We were beginning to believe now that our cause had not been lost but not for long. On arrival at the hotel we found ourselves sharing a large room with several others in similar circumstances, lost in the system. At least we had a bed, use of a bathroom and the chance of a reasonable meal, all at army expense.

Eventually we boarded the vessel at Princess Wharf, found our berths, and settled down for what had been described as the normal crossing, rough. Briefing of emergency action, blackout requirements, meal times etc. followed and the opportunity taken to adjourn to the lounge area for a beer. Here we met a character wearing three stars. He impressed on us that we would certainly experience a very rough passage across Bass Strait and suggested a number of ways which we might combat the dreaded Mal de Mer.

The only pain we were to have was with him, in the neck! We delighted in learning that his unit was the War Graves Commission. A great piece of casting on the part of the Military Secretary. Ken and I had a good dinner during which we crossed the notorious Port Phillip rip. Suddenly the old tub reared up and fell off the top of a swell with a crash of the wide sponson as it hit the water and a rattling of hatch covers. We thought fresh air was a good idea and putting on our

great coats and gloves climbed to the boat deck to experience the wild wind and spray. It was great. Came bedtime and we sought our respective cabins. I was fortunate to have sole occupancy. Ken found himself sharing with our newfound friend. It was a rough crossing. I secured myself in the bunk with pillows behind my shoulders and one under my knees and had a good nights sleep. Ken had a wretched time listening to the retching and moaning of our travelling companion. At one stage he asked ken if he was not using the Strawberry basket provided might he have it because his was full!

At breakfast our friendly adviser of the night before was rather subdued and pallid and probably felt worse watching us put away a healthy serve of bacon and eggs. Shortly after the ship entered the Tamar River, we had an interesting time on deck watching it negotiating the tight turns in the river and appreciating the countryside. In due course, we tied up at Launceston Wharf where we were introduced to a gentleman who invited us to travel by road to Hobart. This was a bonus as it saved travel time compared to the train and gave us the opportunity to see something of the country. The trip was uneventful and some three hours later our new friend delivered us to Anglesea Barracks in Hobart.

Ralph Conley.

To be continued.

An Englishman was boasting to an Irishman that London had a larger population than Dublin.

The Irishman replied, "Yes, but Dublin's population is much denser."

W.A. MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE.

**Our 54th Commemoration Service, Lovekin Drive, Kings Park
Sunday 16th November (during the Safari) 2003.**

Service commences at 3 pm.

LEST WE FORGET.

Our Christmas Luncheon

Will be held at "The Good Earth" Hotel.

195 Adelaide Terrace

on Friday 12th December 2003.

Refreshments from 11 am. Lunch at 12.30 pm

Mark this date on your calendar

It will be a great day!

New South Wales Xmas Lunch.

2/2nd and Fellow Commando Members

Our Xmas Social Luncheon will be held at

The Dee Why R. & S. League Club

Pittwater Road

On Saturday 6th December, 2003

11.30 am drinks - Lunch to follow.

Don't forget now it will be a good show!

An elderly couple settling into bed for the night.

He said, "Shall I nibble on your ear like I used to?"

She said, "By the time you find your teeth I'll be sound asleep!"



Top photo:- Members at the final Queensland reunion, when Ron Archer was presented with a Life Membership badge.

Back - Col Andrews, Ron Archer, Ralph Conley, Gordon Stanley, & Jack Steen.

Front - Tom Yates, Fred Otway & Paddy Wilby.

Bottom:- Paddy King and Elvie Howell at the Norma Hasson Social, WA when each was presented with an Associate Life Membership badge.

