

2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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“Joy to the World”

It is very early morning. Sunshine just emerging in the east is causing a dewy lawn to be covered with diamonds. Small birds, busily fossicking for an early breakfast among the flowers, are adding their songs to an awakening day – and what a glorious day it is going to be! For me, the final lines of a very old poem by Robert Browning come to mind

“God’s in His heaven - All’s right with the world.”

Unfortunately, in an uncertain world racked by natural and man-made disasters, for many suffering people, their world is not all right, and as much as we agonise with them in their misery there is so little we can do to help them personally. As we get older, suffer pain and the loss of loved ones and friends, it is sometimes hard to remember words like Peace, - Goodwill, - Happiness – all words that symbolize the Christmas and New Year Season. So now is the time to reach deep down within ourselves and bring the feeling and meaning of those words to the surface so that in our own small way, we generate the joy of Christmas to those around us. We must make our own world of happiness and goodwill, and we have so much to be happy about. We live in the finest country in the world – we have freedom, shelter – we do not hunger or thirst and best of all we have each other and love. We may no longer to do very much but we just do the best we can. So while we have all these things we can truly say –

“Happy Christmas to you all, have a wonderful time with your loved ones and may the New Year 2006 bring you good health and peace’.

At the risk of boring you with another quote – this time from a song –

“And I say to myself - What a wonderful world”.

God bless you all.

Elsie Jordan

Vale Alfred Edward HARPER VX 28379

The following eulogy was kindly provided by his son Doug:

Alfred Edward Harper, known to all as Alf, was born in Coburg Melbourne on 28th October 1919 to William and Amy Harper. His schooling days were spent in Coburg where he attended the Coburg Primary School and Coburg High School. Alf had three brothers and three sisters, Gordon, Amy, Kay, Bob, Dorothy and Bert. Alf was the second youngest.

Alf's father was a prison officer and sometime in the mid 1930's he was transferred to Castlemaine Jail. Alf and Bert went with their father to Castlemaine. His mother stayed with the rest of the family in Coburg but would go by train to Castlemaine perhaps once every second week or so. It is believed that Alf started work at the Castlemaine Woollen Mills until his twentieth birthday when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF. He entered recruit training on 3rd July 1940 going on to serve with the 3rd Independent Company in New Caledonia from December 1941 to August 1942 and in its Wau to Salamaua campaign in 1943 which was tough going from start to finish. He transferred to the 2/2nd Squadron late in 1943 serving in New Guinea and New Britain until his discharge in 1945.

Sometime during this period Alf met Gwenda and the two fell in love. On 1st July 1944, while Alf was still in the Army the couple married. After he was discharged from the Army in October, Alf returned to Castlemaine and recommenced work at the woollen mills. In 1946 the couples first son Robert was born and in early 1947 Alf moved the

family to Geelong when he secured work at the "Soldier's Mill" or its official title "The Returned Soldiers, Sailors and Airman's Woollen Mills" in Pakington Street, Chilwell. The family had moved into Humble Street, in East Geelong but later moved to Seaview Parade in Belmont in 1951. Roberts Road was to become Alf's home for the next 50 years. Also in 1951 the couple's second son Doug was born.

Alf was a worker. Robert and Doug were telling me how when the family moved to Roberts Road Alf continued to operate the poultry farm and commenced breeding chickens, selling the eggs at the Geelong markets while still working from 7.30 in the morning till 4.30 in the afternoon at the woollen mill. At its peak the business housed 3000 birds. This went on for about six years. He also kept a small garden of vegetables and fruit trees.

In the first few years in Geelong Alf studied textiles at the Gordon Institute in Textiles. His job at the mill involved the blending of different textiles and dye lots to create new and exciting weaves for the material produced. When the mill closed Alf went to work for the Geelong Port Authority as a storeman and remained there until his retirement.

For the first couple of years at Roberts Road., while Alf was operating the poultry farm and working at the mill, he rode a bike everywhere. His first car was a 1939 Fiat that he was able to drive when he obtained his license in 1953. Robert recalled how he managed to knock over the lemon tree at Roberts Road while practicing to drive. The car became handy when delivering the eggs to market and other places like

Castlemaine. Can you imagine four people, cases of eggs and chooks going to Castlemaine in a little Fiat?

After the "chooks" Alf took to breeding Dachshund dogs. He called the kennel "Highbell" as it was on the border of Highton and Belmont. The boys recalled a number of dogs especially Mindy, Mandy and Cindy who were the family favourites. The Harper family was one of the first to have a television when it was introduced in 1956. Robert and Doug recalled the many neighbours who came through the house at that time to see this new marvel. The house was always a welcoming place.

Alf had always been an active man and during his younger days played football at Coburg and Castlemaine. He may have played at a higher level if the war hadn't intervened. His younger brother Bert played for Essendon and the family were all passionate Essendon supporters. Alf was very proud of his brothers and sisters and their achievements in several sporting activities.

When Alf moved to Geelong he played football with East Geelong as a ruckman for several seasons.

As the family had grown and more responsibilities came along Alf's sports changed and took up golf. Firstly at Queens Park where he hit his first 'hole in one', although he never actually saw it because of a fog. He spent many years playing golf at Queens Park, East Geelong and Curlewis. Robert believed that his lowest handicap was about ten.

To keep himself fit after retirement Alf swam at the Belmont Pool. He also enjoyed playing snooker at the RSL in Brougham Street and tenpin bowling. Doug was telling me how proud he was

of the 200 point pin presented to him during his bowling career.

Alf and Gwen enjoyed the social side of these activities and attended dances on Saturday nights especially before they moved to Geelong. Alf also kept in touch with other members of the Commando Unit and attended reunions whenever possible.

Alf was very involved in life. He was there for the boys in their activities and had a keen interest in what they did. He supported others at work and at his many activities and was a generous man, never ignoring others in need. He loved his four grandchildren and is survived by two great grandchildren.

Alf had been supported in all his activities by Gwen and found life a little harder when she died in 1995.

Robert and Doug were telling me how he insisted into his late seventies on being independent to the extent of painting the house himself. He would also be up the ladder picking fruit and helping the neighbours wherever possible.

A fall in 2001 in the house that resulted in a broken leg led to him spending a couple of months in hospital. There an assessment was made that Alf needed more care and he was admitted to the Homestead at Wallington where he has spent the last four years very comfortably.

Alf died on 11th April 2005.

* * *

Alf and Gwenda were loyal supporters of the association and attended a number of our Safaris prior to Gwen's passing in 1995.

Alf was a good soldier. When the transport section, led by Kevin Curran, was attacked by a strong Japanese force

at Topopo in New Guinea early in January 1944, Roy Beardman was badly wounded and he and Alf became separated from the main group. Alf showed great courage staying with Roy and caring for him until he died two days later. Alf buried Roy, then eventually found his way back to the main track and was rescued by a party lead by Dave Dexter.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the Harper family. 'Lest We Forget',

Vale Donald Claude YOUNG WX13749

Don passed away peacefully at the Moonya Nursing Home, Manjimup on 4th September at the age of 87.

Don was born at the Jardanup Hospital (now Jardee) on the 8th December 1917.

He was the third child of Percy and Dora Young from a large family of seven boys and four girls. Don's grandfather was a pioneer of the Manjimup district and Manji has been the home of the Young family for generations.

He attended the Upper Warren School and spent most of his boyhood years on the Mount Royal farm at Upper Warren. According to his younger brother Colin (now 80) Don was not too keen on school as was the case with his other brothers.

Don enjoyed a game of tennis and also became a very good horseman at an early age. He left school at fourteen beginning his working life as a farmhand then spent a number of years working for Leo Wheatley who had an orchard and ran cattle at Bridgetown- Gerry Wheatley spoke highly of Don at his funeral.

Don then worked as a mill hand at the Nyamup and Palgarup timber mills for a

time before enlisting in the AIF on 29th May 1941. Don went on to become an original member of the 2nd Independent Company serving in 5 Section under Colin Doig in Timor and New Guinea. Doigy had a fine section with good men like Dud Tapper, Ted Loud, George Lewis, Ray Parry, Harold Brooker, Les Halse and Don just to name a few. Harold and Don were great mates although they were always pummelling one another and played around in their spare time. Gerry Touhy took over the section in New Britain.

Don was discharged in May 1946 and the following year headed North West joining his brother Colin who was head stockman at the Ethel Creek Station which at the time ran twelve thousand cattle. Later he worked on other pastoral stations in the Carnarvon area during which time he met Barbara Walton whom he married in 1965. Married life brought more responsibility and Don's roving days were over. His last job was with Co-operative Bulk Handling loading grain at Wyalkatchem and other wheat sidings. He and Barbara bought a home at Minnivale a small town about 20 kms west of Wyalkatchem. They enjoyed the country life and Don stayed with CBH until he retired in 1982. They then moved to Perth, buying a house in Graylands Road, Claremont where they lived quietly but happily until Barbara's death in 2002. Don lived alone for the next two years but finally decided to move back to his old home town of Manjimup where he had the company and support of his four remaining brothers and two sisters until his death in September 2005.

Don's funeral was held in the new section of the Manjimup Cemetery on the 7th September attended by the Young family and many of his old friends in the district.

The local R. & S. League provided a guard of honour. Some nice tributes were paid followed by the "Last Post", 'The Ode' and the 'Rouse'.

Eric & Twy Smyth and Jack & Delys Carey represented the Association.

So passed Don, a life member, good soldier and a likeable character and a proud Australian.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to all the Young families.

Vale John (Jack) Henry STEEN VX52362

Jack's Vale was kindly provided by his family.

We have been brought together today to share in the celebration of the life journey of John Henry Steen or Jack to all who knew and loved him.

Jack was born in Narrabri, Northern New South Wales on 16th November 1923 to Barney and Florence (Flo) Stafford.

The first 7—8 years of his life was spent with his elder sister Betty, on his grandparent's sheep property at Narrabri as his parents had divorced and his mother Flo, who was later re-married to Fred Steen, was involved in the Hotel industry, which in her mind was not the ideal environment to raise young children.

Jack's education in those early years could possibly be termed "seasonal" - it depended on the weather and whether his grandfather would drive him to the local school in the sulky. If his grandfather did he would promptly drop Henry, as he was called then, off at the front door drive around the back and pick him up again under the rear window and off they'd go fishing and generally have a whale of a time.

His mother, Flo, arranged for Jack to come to Sydney where he continued his "UM" "education" along with helping out in the hotels that Fred & Flo bought and managed.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 found Jack almost sixteen and longing for adventure which was typical of the youth of the time, he wanted to enlist in the Army, without any regard for the horrors that war brings. Obviously Flo, his mother, was not favourable to the idea and as any good parent would, forbade him to enlist.

Jack's solution was to hop a train to Melbourne and enlist in the Army under his original father's surname of Stafford which made it harder for his mother (Flo) to track him down, but track him down she did and offered him a "bribe" of a new watch if he would wait until the age of 18 to enlist. Unfortunately it was probably one of the few times Flo was conned in her long life, as Jack, new watch and all, celebrated his 16th birthday on a troop ship in the Red Sea on his way to the Middle East.

Obviously a major part of his life was the Army — after serving in the Middle East his battalion was recalled to Australia with the fall of Singapore and he ended up in the 2/2nd Commando Squadron and saw service in New Guinea and New Britain for the remainder of the war.

Many long and enduring friendships were given life which has stood the test of time to this day. He was foremost a soldier but also a bit of a boxer and was in the Australian Armed Forces Boxing troop and fought for the *lightweight championship* of the South Pacific. His opponent, one "Spider" Laws was an American. "Why did they call him Spider?" he was asked one day? — Jack

replied "because his arms were bloody eight feet long and they punched my head around the ring more times than I like to admit even after pulling every trick (both clean and some not so clean) that he knew — that solved any idea he had of turning professional, and by the way he lost! But like everything he did he put up a good effort.

1945 saw the end of the war and Jack working in the White Bay Hotel at Rozelle in Sydney. He was cellar man, bouncer, and with a name like Jack - "JACK of all trades".

Beryl won Jack's heart in 1946 and they married in November of the same year. His eldest son Wayne was born in 1949 and around the same time there was the Korean conflict so Jack not really comfortable out of the Army, got back into the Army and off to Korea he went to serve in Australia's contribution to the UN forces.

He was decorated with the American Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and believed to be the first Australian of ordinary rank to be awarded such a medal.

He returned from Korea and settled down to a reasonably normal family life given to family get-togethers generally of a Sunday. However, his earlier exploits had come back to bite not him but Wayne on the bum so to speak — he was suffering an identity crisis — he didn't know if he was a Steen or a Stafford depending on which side of the family was gathering on any occasion!

1959 saw the birth of John, his second son and 1961 saw the birth of his daughter Debbie. That was in the February so she was 6 months old and John 2 years old when he gladly announced to Beryl that we were all off

to Malaysia and had 5-6 weeks to get ready. Beryl was 'over the moon' — yeah right!!!

After 2 years in Malaysia with 2RAR it was back to Australia in 1963. 1964 found him once again doing the GI Joe routine in Vietnam with the Australian advisors, thanks to his Old CO and weekly poker school stand-in, Stan Maisey. He was a professional soldier, employed by the Government of the Day and damn proud of it.

He was just as proud of his family and their individual achievements as well as how they also dealt with their individual tribulations. He was a disciplinarian which was obviously from his regimented background and he was constantly reminding his children in subtle and sometimes not so subtle ways that to be successful in any endeavour you had to give it 100% otherwise there was little point.

The late 60's saw Jack "retire" from active Army service and take up a new direction with Mayne Nicholas Security particularly their Armoured Car division. It was more a 9-5 job which gave him the pleasures of a more routine family life.

He'd attend school and sporting functions providing both vocal and moral support. He'd ensure that girls attending parties at Jack and Beryl's home at Alfred Street, Rozelle were home by midnight — chivalry was not dead — the blokes could suit themselves!

Jack and Beryl's door was always open to family and friends to call in for a chat, a drink, a feed — it didn't matter and that policy remains today. On a good Saturday you would even get given a good tip for the next race!

Wayne left home in 1970 and moved to

Brisbane in 1974, (*Interesting that it took Wayne 4 years to find Brisbane — Jack taught Wayne a lot but obviously not how to read a map!*)

John had followed in Jack's footsteps and joined the Army (*no doubt a proud day for Jack*) and Debbie had improved her status and married a sailor (*and / am not biased Beryl*) and gone to in Darwin. So with no immediate family in Sydney except Flo his mother, Jack and Beryl moved to Brisbane in 1985, firstly to Fitzroy St. Cleveland and for the last 14 years at Chateau St., Thornlands.

While it is always sad to loose great friends, Jack would not want us to leave here today with heads hung low — he would want: —

His children, Wayne, John and Debbie to look after their mother, his wife (and best mate), Beryl - who he was devoted to for almost 60 years.

That his friends provide the support his family requires and that we raise our next glass to Jack!

There aren't enough words or paper to encapsulate the essence of the man Jack is.

A man who instilled in his children the concepts of what was acceptable to society and what was not.

A man who was an avid reader and a visionary and predicted that man would land on the moon 10 years before the event as well as colonising the sea — watch this space!

A man whose word was his bond.

A man who would risk his life and limb for a friend. A man that was a loyal servant to his Country and never shirked his responsibility when the Call to Arms came. Farewell old Digger, Australia is the poorer with your passing but richer

from your presence.

Jack passed away on 29th September after suffering severe health problems over the past three years.

LEST WE FORGET

A thanksgiving mass to celebrate Jack's life was held in the Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Cleveland on Wednesday 5th October. The Association was represented by Russ Blanch, Paddy & Josie Wilby and Ron Archer.

Jack was a soldier and half. The story is told that during the Vietnam War, Jack boarded a plane at Tokyo in civilian clothes and stepped off the plane in Army garb ready for action!

Jack and Beryl were loyal and generous supporters of the Association and attended a number of Safaris. Jack was a life member of the Association.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Beryl and the family on the passing of Jack.

May he 'Rest in Peace.'

Jack Stafford (Steen) by "Happy" Greenhalgh

Jack was a great friend of mine.

Jack joined us at Larrimah to meet us on our return from Timor. He came up there with Jack Fox, Peter Hearle, 'Darky' Anderson, Jack Peattie and others, about a dozen or so I think. Jack had been in the Middle East and had been sent home underage. His mum told him she'd get him out of the army. No good he said — I'll only join up again so he stayed in.

Jack loved to gamble. I remember being in the same tent at Canungra, Jack had sent home for some money and his mum had sent him forty pounds. He paid me back ten pounds he had borrowed and proceeded down to the gully to the two-

up game. He was back half an hour later and said, "Have you still got that ten quid?" I hadn't been out of the tent – that was Jack! You wouldn't get a better bloke.

In December 1944 while at Strathpine, we were given four days leave for Xmas. Jack and I decided we'd go to Southport so Jack says "I know what we'll do for grog; I'll get a job in the Officer's Mess and knock off some." He got two bottles of Johnny Walker and six bottles of beer! So that helped a lot.

We got to the boarding house at Southport and sat on the front steps and drank a bottle of Johnny Walker then went to bed in a dormitory sort of room converted from a verandah. In the morning when we woke, next to us was an old bloke (well old to us in those days) who said, "Was that you two blokes on the front step last night?" We admitted to it and he said, "I'm a whisky traveler", and opened up a small case in which he had amongst others a couple of bottles of Sparkling Burgundy. "Would you like a drink?" Well I ask you, can a duck swim? After which he said he was going for a swim and how about it. Off we went down to Southport Baths. Then the old bloke said, "I was Queensland Champion at I forget what yardage." Jack and I looked at this little old fellow built like one of those Kewpie dolls – belly over all! We didn't laugh but said later we both felt like it. The little so and so dived off the board and all our smiles went off our dials. The little joker could swim like a fish alright - so much for looks. But we had a good four days.

Jack and Beryl have had some great get-togethers since they came to Brisbane to live twenty years ago. They loved to come down to my area fishing at Iluka

and sometimes Russ Blanch and I would make it up to their place, where needless to say we were made most welcome. Jack was a very good cook and could present a meal better than most restaurants, this did not disappoint Beryl I bet. They were a great couple and marvelous hosts.

I'll miss an old mate.

"Happy".

Vale Frederick John Otway (Bluey) BONE VX111583

'Bluey,' as we all knew him was born in Colac, Victoria, on the 19th September 1924, the only child of Hector and Hilda Bone. He did his schooling at Irrewillipe, about 20 kms from Colac. He left school at 13 getting a job on a dairy farm milking cows.

He enlisted in AIF on 1st October 1942, two weeks after his 18th birthday. Bluey joined the 2/2nd Commando Squadron early in 1943 when the Unit regrouped after returning from Timor. He was a member of 7 Section and being a big strong lad became a Bren-gunner. Blue went on to serve in New Guinea and New Britain and was a good soldier and popular with his mates. Under Tony 'Basher' Adams, 7 was moulded into a very good Section. Max Davies, Ted Monk, Lyle Litchfield, Tom O'Brien, 'Snow' Went, Blue and others made up a great team.

Following his discharge in February 1946, he returned to his parent's farm at Carlisle River, a town about 50 kms South West of Colac. He then got a job working for the railways.

In September 1946 he met Mary Dunne at a dance at Colac. Blue was a beautiful dancer, a pastime he enjoyed for the rest

of his life. Blue and Mary married twelve months late in September 1947. Blue's next job was at a butter factory at Carlisle River. He worked hard becoming a boiler maker and later a fully qualified operator in the factory.

Daryl was born in 1949 and Dianne followed in 1952. In 1958 Bluey and Mary moved to his father's farm at Ruby, a small town just out of Leongatha. Blue took over the responsibility of running the farm when his father retired. Bluey and Mary had the task of milking 120 cows a day. Those who have worked in the dairy industry know what a demanding job this is.

Blue, a tough hard worker, eventually acquired a neighbour's property running beef and sheep. They still found for their Saturday night dancing and Blue became M.C. at many a local dance. He also loved his football, and besides playing himself for years, had great success coaching junior teams to many premierships in the Leongatha district. He was a devoted follower of Hawthorn enjoying their great years when they won eight flags in the 1971/91 period. He was a good judge of the game and lamented Hawthorn's lack of success in recent years.

After thirty years on the farm, Bluey and Mary called it a day, sold out and moved to a comfortable home at Lakes Entrance, a beautiful spot on the east coast of Victoria. Blue enjoyed his fishing and Mary her garden producing some prize winning orchids much to her delight.

Blue had a massive heart attack in the mid nineties which he survived and was gradually getting back to his old self when he developed cancer in 2000. Over the next five years Blue battled

courageously against the big 'C' by undergoing intense treatment, however it beat him in the end and he passed away peacefully in the Leongatha Hospital on the 5th November 2005 in the presence of Mary and the family.

Blue was devoted to his family, especially his grandchildren, Darren, Ashley, Bradley (dec.), Brett and great granddaughters Rylee and Darcy.

Bluey, a life member, and Mary were staunch and active supporters of the Association attending a number of Safaris. In May 2002 Blue and Ed Bourke assisted by Mary and Dorothy, organized the Mildura Safari. They traveled up to Mildura on a number of occasions at their own expense and Blue and Mary attended our final Safari in Perth in November 2003. Blue, though far from well, to his credit, battled on bravely with Mary's support.

Blue's funeral, held at Leongatha on 10th November, was attended by a large group of his family and friends. Leith & Marj Cooper, Ed & Dorothy Bourke, Margaret Monk, Don Thomson, Pat Petersen and Harry Botterill represented the Association.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Mary, Daryl, Dianne, Dawn and family.

Lest We Forget.

Vale William Paton (Pat) MOODIE VX112950

A very brief note was received in mid November from an E. Dellar, the executor of Pat's affairs which simply stated quote – "Please do not send this publication (the Courier) any more," and advised that Pat Moodie died on 17th May 2005, six months previously. Pat's

address was 15 Gloster Crescent, Shepparton, Victoria, so I contacted Harry Botterill who said he was not aware of Pat's death and he, Pat never bothered to contact the Victorian branch over the years.

Mavis Broadhurst and Ed Bourke made enquiries at Shepparton to obtain information on Pat for me and as a result I was able to get in touch with Peter Cox & Sons, Funeral Directors who handled the funeral at Numurkah, which is North of Shepparton. I spoke to a Mr. John Wright and asked could he give me the address or phone number of any next of kin so I could get in touch with them. He refused my request but promised to contact the person or people involved and ask them to contact me. This was on November 14 but nothing has come of it.

Army records show that Pat Moodie was born at Benalla in Victoria on 22nd December 1912 which means he was ninety two years of age when he passed away.

He enlisted in the army in Parramatta, NSW on the 28th September 1942 going on to serve with 2/2nd in New Guinea and New Britain and was discharged on 2nd January 1946.

Lionel Newton and Pat went on a patrol in the Bismarcks in July 1943 on which Lionel gave an interesting account in the September 2002 Courier. Henry Sproxtton recalls meeting a son of Pats years ago. Pat was on our mailing list for over forty years and to my recollection never contacted us. If any member knows anything about Pat would you please let me know?

J. Carey.

The following have also passed away since our last Courier.

Jim Menzies – of 2/3rd Company on 2nd October after a long illness. John Burrige paid a nice tribute to Jim in our September Courier.

Ken Glover of the 2/4th on the 11th November. Ken was a good mate of Alan Luby and was on our Courier list for many years.

Beryl Boast widow of Alec, passed away on the 14th October. Beryl was a good member and retained a keen interest in the Association.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the families of the above.

May they rest in peace.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE.

Our 56th commemoration service was held on Sunday 20th November in Honour Avenue in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park. It was a warm sunny afternoon of 28c, tempered by a light sea breeze which drew an attendance of between 70 – 80 people, a pleasing number considering we are now down to 31 members in W.A.

The service began at 3 p.m. with the catafalque party under Sergeant Peter Arnell taking up their positions around our memorial. President Ray Parry invited Mrs. Dorothy Maley to lay a lovely red carnation wreath, which Dorothy did with grace and dignity. Len Bagley followed reading the Remembrance Day prayers including one for Australia. Doug Hasson, a son of the late Jack & Norma Hasson then delivered the main address. This was the first occasion a person other than the President has given the address. The committee

considered that as our time was limited, sons and daughters of members should be invited to speak on this special occasion. It worked out well as Doug gave an excellent address which was a pleasure to listen to. Well done Doug.

The president, Ray Parry, then read the list of our "Fallen" after which all joined in saying "The Ode".

The bugler, David Scott, played Reveille followed by a minutes silence and the Rouse, with the catafalque party presenting arms. This was followed by the singing of our national anthem, "Advance Australia Fair", after which the marshal, Doug Hasson conducted the march led by 3 veterans with many others following on. The eyes right salute was taken by our President and Captain Wilton of the SAS Regiment.

Before closing, President Ray extended thanks to the catafalque party, comprising Sgt. P. Arnell, Cpl. A. Mills, L/C M. McAvoy, L/C A. Perry and Tpr. J. Hoffman. Cpl. H. Walder (who set up the speaker system) D. Scott – the bugler, the Botanic Gardens & Parks Authority and to Doug Hasson our marshal, for their contribution on the day.

It was pleasing to see Geoff Payne and son Andrew from Merredin, Mavis and the Sadler family from Wongan Hills, Elvie Howell and her clan of thirteen, the Hasson and Hanson families in strength, Laurie & Sheryle Harrington, Ross Shenn and daughter Denise, Greg Tyerman from Queensland, Bill Maley, Terry Paul with daughter Sandra Mack and granddaughter Leili. There also was Helen Poynton & Julie-Ann, Don & Ida Murray, Tony Bowers, Jim Lines, Len & Betty Bagley all up from Mandurah, Ted & Peg Monk and many other good people.

About thirty made their way to 'The House' and enjoyed a nice afternoon tea provided by Shirley and her staff and a few drinks. Ray Parry cut the special cake kindly made by Shirley. Our thanks go out to Nigel Spitz, the President and his committee for looking after us so well.

So passed another commemoration service, just how long they will continue depends mainly now on the sons and daughters, grandchildren and friends of the Association. God bless.

2/2ND ADDRESS by Doug Hasson

The president and members of the 2/2nd Commando Association, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

It is my great honour to be the first non-unit member to make this address to you today. It is both exhilarating and humbling to be addressing you.

The departure from the traditional address follows several considerations or reasons but the change allows far more options for the future. Certainly the change marks yet another level of maturity to which the Association has achieved.

I am cognisant that since end of the war, 420 commandos have died. Such attrition of so many good men deserves remembrance today also.

Let me reemphasise that today we meet, not to celebrate battle or glorify war, but to remember those who served our country in an elite unit and made the ultimate sacrifice. For me, the need to commemorate those who fell during 1942-45 remains paramount. However with the change of presenters making this address it allows greater recognition to be given to those who survived.

A warm childhood memory of mine is

standing in the presence of men after the working bees that used to be conducted here. Those working mornings made this area of Lovekin Drive what it is today. While I realized that I was in the presence of brave survivors I was too young to realize the significance of this area of commemoration and reflection. So to, I was unaware of the significance of this commemoration service. The compliment paid by unit members and families gathering each year is fitting. A march past the symbols of fallen comrades is a salute to the memory of soldiers who do not grow old, who do not grow weary and who do not get to experience the growth of future generations.

In addition to remembering those who didn't come back, we also get to thank them for their sacrifice. By giving a new generation to make this address, it gives us a chance to say thank you to all of you for your part in securing this country of ours and the freedom that we enjoy and sometimes take for granted.

Many young people today have difficulty in understanding why you went to war; there are many reasons from patriotism through to bravery. History, of which you are part, has shown that for a peace loving people, Australians have been formidable adversaries when stirred to action.

While it is not a reason for going to war, certainly it is accepted that you were in good company while you were there. Comradeship helped you through the dark times and has held the association together for so long. I contend that some of your values that have been passed on to your offspring benefit society in this lucky country of ours and I hope that this

would make those not with us proud.

It is with respect that I offer a vote of commemoration to fallen members of the 2/2nd Independent Company. I also offer all members of the Association a vote of thanks for your part in the security of our nation so long ago.

I think that is appropriate that I offer our thanks to the Special Air Service regiment for their continued fostership of the Association and providing the catafalque party today we are aware that the unit is extremely busy and that extra duties are exactly that.

Could I also make mention of W.O.2 David Nary, SASR, who was killed two weeks ago. His funeral was last Wednesday. Our condolences go out to his family and also to his comrades.

Within this changing world, Australia remains a country in which we are free to choose our future and establish our place in the world. It remains a place where the harsh reality and even the thought of war can be far away. However, the terrorist attacks over the last couple of years and the fact that we have forces deployed on operations overseas are reminders to us that we cannot take our freedom and way of life for granted.

We should look outward, be ever vigilant and continue to build on the achievements of our predecessors. In the face of future uncertainty, we all need to display the characteristics of the commando spirit and sense of humour. It also should remind us that when necessary we must stand up and fight for our values.

On behalf of the friends and families of the 2/2nd Commando Association, I would like to express our appreciation to all members who fought for our

country when our country needed you. For the members who did not come back, I would like to say – Lest We Forget.

Christmas Social 2005.

Our traditional Christmas social was held once again at The Goodearth Hotel on Friday, 2nd Dec. The attendance of 34 was pleasing and everyone soon settled in to enjoy themselves. Before commencing lunch President Ray Parry extended a welcome to all present especially to our Queensland visitors Ron Archer and Greg Tyerman, also to Michael Press, Barbara Payne and her son Bruce Palmer.

After Ray wished all a Happy Xmas and a peaceful New Year we settled down to our meal. The tables were nicely decorated; crisp white tablecloths and serviettes and a golden tree centerpiece on each table, plus red and gold Xmas bon-bons at each setting. The room was complemented by several well decorated Xmas trees. After the main course our evergreen competent M.C. Mr. Len Bagley read out a list of apologies and also extended a welcome to all. Michael Press, son of Kath, kindly provided some interesting photos, via a TV screen, taken on his recent trip to East Timor. There was a good selection of the current Timor scene which the veterans viewed with appreciation.

All the ladies looked their very best – what would we do without them?! Len and Del conducted the free raffle; among the lucky winners were Ron Archer, Vera Watson, Betty Bagley, Doug Hasson, Barbara Payne, Bruce Palmer and Ida Murray.

Present were:- Ron Archer, Len & Betty Bagley, Tony Bowers, Jack & Delys

Carey, Dick Darrington, Beverley Frankee, Kaye & Julie Hanson, Keith & Val Hayes, Jean Holland, Elsie Jordan, Bernie & Babs Langridge, Bart & Loris Mavrick, Don & Ida Murray, Nellie Mullins, Ray Parry, Barbara Payne, Bruce Palmer, Michael Press, Vince & Andrew Swann, Bob & Margaret Smyth, Greg Tyerman, Clare West, Vera Watson and Doc. Wheatley.

Our thanks go to the staff who could not do enough for us. A good day was had by all.

Northern New South Wales News.

I've had a ring around of my constituents and these are the results:

Tom Gates – Not at home so no result.

Beryl Cullen from the same area so I can inform you they've had no rain. Beryl is well and I can report the same weather here. (Don't laugh Dely; you should know that the weather is the main topic in the bush!)

Nola Wilson an old mate of Beryl's – time of acquaintance not age – reports getting a bit shy of rain at Gilgandra too. She has settle in quite nicely in town now. It's quite convenient actually.

From Evan's Head, **Dianne Cholerton** and daughter Julie have also settled in after their move. Right on the coast, Evan's Head cops their share of rain which I seem to miss although I'm only four miles away in a straight line from the ocean.

Edith Jones is back home after having a short stay with son Chris at the Gold Coast. Chris had sent me a really nice photo of Ken with Geordie Smith and Ken Monk. I took it to W.A. on my recent trip. It's a really good one.

Beryl Walsh is well. She relates a story

to me. She was at the cemetery checking on Bill's new headstone and spoke to a chap there. Mentioned having been at Maclean and he asked her had she known a man named Wann as he had gone to university with a girl of that name. Beryl said – 'I used to work with her father who was the town clerk at the time'. Small world! I think I mentioned it before but in the clerk's absence she had written the license for Slim Dusty for a performance in the local shire hall. Apparently this was his first show after his home town of Kempsey. Beryl got to know Slim well as he was a Kempsey bloke and Bill was also a Kempsey boy.

Eric Herd and wife Lorraine are both well and it's about time I got over and had a cuppa mate.

Russ Blanch is pretty well and as usual is organising the local RSL Christmas party. He's been doing this for about forty years so I reckon it'd time the young blokes had a go. Russ keeps having his little turns but because of his bits of shrapnel can't be put in one of those hollow logs for a check up; it doesn't stop him having a lovely garden though.

I've slowed down a bit since having a bit of a turn while over at Harry's, But am taking it pretty easy. My yard's like the back paddock but can wait a while.

I have a yarn to Alan Luby quite regularly and Harry Handicott keeps me informed of things in his neck of the woods – they're both pretty well. I think Amyce keeps them toeing the line. I hope so.

Keep well and as John Laws says 'Be kind to each other!'

Happy Greenhalgh.

New South Wales Notes.

Alan Luby reports that Paddy Kenneally

is still in Randwick Hospital and may be there for another couple of weeks. As reported in 'Pars on People', Paddy has had a rough six weeks and is far from his genial self.

The luncheon for the 2/2nd and Fellow Commando members held at the Dee Why R & S. League Club on 3rd December attendance wise was a fizzer. Only nine attended of whom seven were from the 2/2nd, they being Slim & Valerie Holley, Jean & Pauline English, June Bennett and her daughter Marilyn and Alan Luby. Alan said though age was catching up on Jean and June both were wearing well. Pauline, Jean's daughter is still in a wheelchair but retains her bright and happy disposition.

Others who attended were Ted Workman (2/10th) and Don Newport (2/12th). Keith Wilson and "Snow" Went tendered their apologies. Despite the disappointing roll-up the luncheon was most enjoyable.

Alan said Joan Fenwick survived the violent storm which Canberra experienced on 2nd December. Ron Morris, who is suffering from a serious case of oedema, is having a tough time and Hazel is not all that well. We hope and pray that Ron & Hazel's health will improve given time.

Alan, who is enjoying life, has circled Friday 16th December on his calendar to ensure he doesn't forget to ring 'Baldy', who will be 96 on that day.

On behalf of all the 2/2nd in NSW, Alan sends best wishes to all for a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Queensland News.

George and Margo Shiels came to Brisbane for three weeks in September to visit three of their daughters and their

families. Whilst here they had morning tea with Lyn and I in addition to the exchange of news. On behalf of our Association George was made a Life member and his badge was placed on him as a member of our Unit and as a long time member of our Association. He suitably replied and was very honoured.

Despite the drought their mango crop this year looks very good.

Sadly we have lost Jack Steen. His funeral was at Cleveland on the 5th October and Russ Blanch (Bangalow), Paddy & Josie Wilby and Ron Archer attended and conveyed our Association's condolences to Beryl and her family. Happy of course wanted to attend but unfortunately he had pre-booked his ticket to W.A. for that day, so he couldn't come.

A local get-together was arranged for the 25th October – morning tea at the Chermside Library at 10.00 a.m. Those present were Margaret Hooper, Pat Barnier, Lois Davies (Caloundra), Ralph & Sheila Conley, Lyn Love and Ron Archer.

We had a minute silence for the loss of Jack Steen. The apologies were Beryl Steen, John & Margaret Evans (close friends of the Steens), Tony Adams, Gordon & Joan Stanley, Bettye Coulson and Fred Otway. Paddy Wilby said he would come and in fact came but went to the Kedron – Waverley Services Club which is just behind the library, so we missed one another! Tony Adams was terribly keen to come but on the day he wasn't well enough after a late visit to his doctor on the afternoon before and he didn't get home until 9.00 p.m. that night! He recently visited Melbourne mainly to spend time with his son but was able to have contact with Bluey Bone, Leith Cooper and Harry Botterill.

We presently seem keen to try to have an annual get-together each year – about October, for a few more years.

With best wishes and Seasonal Greetings to all of our many mates.

Ron Archer.

Victorian News

I'm afraid there is much unhappy news – **Alf Harper** passed away on April 11th - he died after a massive stroke.

Beryl Boast passed away on October 14th. She had two heart attacks. Our condolences to both families.

'**Bluey**' **Bone** passed away on November 5th after a very brave battle with cancer. The funeral was held at the Grandstand Complex, Leongatha Recreation Reserve, Leongatha on Thursday 10th November at 11.30 a.m.

"Bluey" must have been a very popular person as about 200 attended the service. He had been a coach of Leongatha Junior Football Club in earlier years and they had won four premierships. Also Bluey was a respected member of Leongatha and Lakes Entrance RSL Clubs.

It was a wonderful service and Mary and family can be very proud of Bluey and the wonderful way he was respected by all. Leith & Marj Cooper, Ed & Dot Bourke, Margaret Monk and Don Thomson, Pat Petersen and Harry Botterill represented the Unit at the service. Vale "Bluey" – a great soldier and wonderful member of the 2/2nd Commando Association. Lest We Forget.

I spent a great week with **Margaret Monk and Don Thomson** recently and traveled about a lot. The countryside is looking great now and very green after

the good rains we been having.

I have sent life membership badges to **Alan Adams** of Steel Creek and **Arch Claney** as suggested. We hadn't heard anything of Alan for ages but he is keeping well and was pleased to have the badge. Arch Claney was also pleased to be getting the badge. He and Dawn are still coping pretty well. **Mavis and Fred Broadhurst** are both well also, got a joke from Fred so he is still on the ball!

I would like to wish all members a Happy Xmas and a Wonderful New Year.

Harry Botterill.

Independent Trust

An order has been placed and paid for to Yates Australia for 4 X 5000 packets of vegetable seeds, the varieties being carrots, lettuce, egg plant and Chinese greens. Each of the 20,000 small packets of seed will bear our red double diamond insignia.

The parcel is consigned to Sister Guilhermina Marcal of the Cannossian Sisters College, Dili, who will be responsible for the delivery of the seeds to the villagers in East Timor.

The consignment will be sent to the good sister per the TNT door to door courier system in mid January 2006.

Seasons greetings to all.

Bob Smyth, Chairman.

Report on Visit to East Timor September - October 2005. by Patsy Thatcher.

This annual visit was meant to be spent primarily in Oecussi as in the last year Oan Kiak Trust has awarded scholarships to a number of Timorese

orphans there (and it was the one district in Timor I had never visited!). I did not go because of the unreliability of the ferry that provides transport between Oecussi and Dili. Nor was I willing to go to Kupang and hire a car to take me to Oecussi by road. Instead I spent seven full days touring the rural districts.

Costs in Timor continue to be more expensive than in Australia - Hire of a 4wheel drive and driver is US\$200 a day and you are also up for the petrol and living costs of the driver as well! Buying anything in the several large supermarkets in Dili is like visiting Ned Kelly on a bad day. In the markets a two price system applies - one for the locals and one 3-4 times more expensive for the 'malais' (pale skins). No supermarkets in the main towns in each of the districts, but food prices in well stocked market is much cheaper. Once you leave the large towns in the districts (e.g. Suai, Bobonaro, Same etc) the small village markets are poorly stocked, which is a worry given that late summer there is usually much more evidence of food about. It is in the mountains that begin to see extreme poverty and signs of malnourishment, as opposed to malnutrition - I saw no swollen bellies, which is the usual sign of kids starving. One thing I learnt on this trip is that reports about people in Timor complaining of starvation need to be treated cautiously. These days rural Timorese seem to have an obsession with rice in the sense that if they don't eat rice once a day they believe they are starving, when objectively one can see they are still getting a reasonable amount of vegetables, fruit and even a little protein, usually in the form of peanuts.

The quality of the government schools

in the outer reaches of the districts is abysmal (they aren't all that crash hot in the main towns, or Dili, either). By comparison the quality of the Catholic schools is much better, but they charge high fees (by Timorese standards) and have some (not much) access to help from outside. Class sizes in the government schools are in the order of 50-56 kids to a teacher (during the UN time it was set at 25 and adhered to), whereas in the Catholic schools there are never more than 25. The problem isn't simply a question of money (Education was 20% of the 2004-5 budget expenditures), but more importantly all Ministries in Timor hugely underspent their budgets in the last fiscal year, with education being one of the worst. This, it seems to me, is due to two major reasons; firstly there is an extreme shortage of people with the capacity to process the paper-work required; and secondly the arcane and cumbersome bureaucratic procedures that have been adopted to provide accountability (Portuguese legacy alive and well in this respect!). There are another couple of reasons that should get a mention: i] very few people in Timor bust a gut at work, the salaries are poor and nutrition is not good (also Man-yan-a is alive and well!) ii] There is some evidence that political cronyism is rampant - majority of government employees are members of FRETILIN, those that are not believe they have insecure employment futures.

I was there for the local government elections that FRETILIN won by a landslide in terms of people elected. However, their overall vote was down from 72+% to 49+%. There were voting irregularities in all Districts except Maliana and Oecussi; in both of these

districts FRETILIN did not win a majority of positions. There is much dissatisfaction in the Districts with the performance of the Government, some of it justified and some not. However, this latest poll result maybe a blessing in disguise because there is some evidence that the politicians in Dili are beginning to take the sentiment of the rural electorates into account. Three days after the election results the Government dropped the fees for children attending government schools. This is a two edged sword though, because the collected school fees were the only 'real' money that the school administrations ever saw. Government paid teachers salaries and footed the bill when schools were built or repaired, but did not fund schools for anything else. Not clear yet whether government will take over that funding. Nor is it clear if the government will employ more teachers.

Roads east of Dili in the main are fairly good, especially both roads to Manatuto and the coast road through Baucau as far as Lospalos. The road south from Baucau going to Venilale in the south is reasonably good but beyond that it's a bit of a shocker. The roads from both Ainaro and Same to Dili are almost completely resealed and a lot of work was in progress. The road to Maliana is also fairly good, but from Maliana to Bobonaro and to Zumalai it's a shocker. It is to be upgraded during the next dry season. We took Rufino (Tom Nisbet's criado now 87 years old), up to Bazatete and that road, although sealed, was almost impassable in many sections, again what I call a sore BTM road!

The same criticisms made of the education sector above can be made of the health sector, but that Ministry is

doing a better job than all of the others. There are mobile health clinics going into the mountain areas from the large towns in the Districts during the dry and there is a concerted effort to have a health professional stationed in remote areas during the wet (sometimes these people are cut off for periods up to five months, so there isn't a huge number of people applying for these jobs). The main complaint from the health workers in the rural areas was that they were short of medications. Again with everything centralised (although there is good consultation with District staff) it is the clerical processing of orders, requests etc that is a major problem. Again lack of money was not an issue raised by anyone I spoke to.

Dili was cleaner than at any other time I have been there, possibly because Princess Anne was visiting, but it's still a great place to leave. The Districts as always are the place to be. Anyone thinking of going up I would advise July as the best month, the heat and humidity at this time of the year (October) is rough and of course constant interruptions to the electricity supply in Dili and the provincial towns makes life for us 'soft' Melbournians difficult.

There are positives in Timor that shouldn't be overlooked. The Government is managing to have written and to enact legislation that conforms to all the various international treaties Timor has signed. Political dissent and freedom of the press in Timor is the freest in Southeast Asia, as borne out by a recent international study that looked at a number of indices and placed East Timor first. This was related by Jose Ramos Horta so I assume it is true. Certainly the people I spoke with, most of them from opposition parties to

FRETILIN, all remarked on the freedom they have to comment publicly. They pointed out that they have more opportunity for critical outspokenness than members of the ruling party; however, one should keep in mind that Prime Minister Alkatiri often has to lobby his own members to get government bills through. Crossing the floor in Timor happens much more frequently than it does in Australia.

OAN KIAK TRUST REPORT

My guess is that Col Doig would be happy with the progress of this scheme. There were 214 orphans (113 female and 101 male) continuing on scholarships from last year. School year in Timor commences in September and at that time we had 87 kids at Primary School, 66 at Junior High School and 61 at Senior High School continuing on from last year. Quite literally none of these children would have been obtaining education without support from the Trust. In addition the 54 kids on the waiting list from last year have been commenced on scholarships for this year 2005-2006. Because of the Oan Kiak Trust policy of carrying an awarded scholarship through to the end of a child's schooling (excluding University) we have to be now very careful when awarding new scholarships because of the possibility of lean fiscal years ahead (interest on investments already dropping a little). Our scholarships are spread all over Timor (I visited many of them) Dili, Ainaro, Aileu, Maubara, Ermera, Same, Suai, Lauten, Bacau, Viqueque and Oecussi.

East Timor Development Agency (ETDA) continues to administer the Trust and does an excellent job. Out of our budget for 2004-2005 (\$19,000) we paid

\$700 for administrative costs. Again this was for fuel, office supplies, etc. One of the set-backs for this year was that the benefactor who had been paying the salaries of two of the three Timorese staff who look after the orphans (the third is a full-time volunteer) suddenly withdrew his support without giving a reason. Fortunately we received some unexpected extra money from Portugal (royalties from a book written by a Portuguese man) and we used this to pay the salaries.

The school results for our Oan Kiaks again showed that two thirds of the kids do better than the average. This includes kids who are 'triers' as opposed to 'stars' and this reassures us that our contract system with the kids is working.

**Department of Defence
Defence Cooperation Program – East
Timor**

**c/- Australian Embassy, Dili, East
Timor.**

Mr. Jack Carey,
Secretary 2/2nd Commando Assoc.
Perth. WA.

Dear Sir,

It has been my honour to serve with the Defence Cooperation Program, East Timor as a Senior Military Advisor in 2003 and presently as the Commanding Officer. After the decades of suffering by the people of East Timor there is much to rebuild and is fitting that the Australian military play a part in this. The efforts that you and your comrades made in East Timor are an enduring example for Australian soldiers of resilience, courage, honour, initiative and compassion.

A key aim of our program is to ensure all unit members understand the rich history that they are building on by their

service in East Timor. To achieve this we recently conducted a five-day expedition throughout the central and western regions of the country. Each unit member prepared and delivered briefs on significant locations from WWII and the FALINTIL resistance period. We were privileged to have a number of key FALINTIL veterans escort us on the trip, including Major Ular, whose father was a criado throughout the war. The experience helped us appreciate the extreme challenges you and your comrades faced and the sacrifices that Timorese people made supporting Sparrow and Lancer forces. To be even loosely associated with such an inspiring legacy is a great privilege.

The unit is currently in a period of transition where we are changing our structure, operations and programs so that they can be more effective over the future decades we intend to remain in East Timor. One of these changes is to move away from the UN inspired baseball cap headdress to the traditional Australian slouch hat. I would be honoured if your members would consider DCP-EM being allowed to adopt the 2/2nd double red diamonds as our official unit patch. Not only would it honour us but I believe it would stand as a testament to the ongoing bond between Australian Military Forces, both past and present, and the people of East Timor.

If you and your members are supportive of this idea I will submit a request to the Chief of the Army for official approval. I look forward to strengthening our relationship and working closely on Future projects and activities.

Yours faithfully,

Grant Sanderson,
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

Defence Cooperation Program.
August 2005.

LIEUT. Col. Grant Sanderson
Commanding Officer
Defence Cooperation Program
c/o Australian Embassy, Dili, East Timor.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your very interesting letter dated 31st August which we received mid October.

Your request that our Association members approve of the DCP-EM being allowed to adopt the 2/2nd double red diamond insignia as your official unit colour patch, was discussed at length by our committee when they met on Tuesday 8th November.

Their unanimous decision was that we would have no objection to granting your request. To have the double red diamond patch on the move around East Timor again after 63 years appealed to members as I'm sure it would to our remaining members in other states.

The only proviso is that the wearing of the colour patch is worn only by members of your unit. You could also write and let us know of your unit strength and tell us a little more on your role in East Timor.

We trust the Chief of the Army will also approve of your unit wearing the double red diamond patch.

About 320 2/2nd members served in East Timor in 1941/42. Our number is now down to 45. Although we have left it far too late, a book "All the Bull's Men" on our war history should be on the market by March 2006.

Good luck to all your members.

Yours sincerely,
J.W. Carey OAM

Hon. Secretary
10 November 2005

S. M. Seers OAM JP
State Secretary

The R. & S. League of Australia WA.
Branch Inc.

28 St George's Terrace, Perth.

Dear Sir

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
FOOTBALL COMMISSION 'CONCEPT'
ANZAC FIELD.

We did not attend the Unit & Kindred meeting held on the 2nd August but discussed the Football Commissions Anzac Field Concept at our committee meeting yesterday 9th August.

The committee unanimously agreed on their opposition to the proposal and that it should not be supported by your League.

We are of the opinion that the word ANZAC is something very special and is a name which should not be desecrated by the W. A. F. C. who surely must have any number of avenues to choose a name from.

The men of the first AIF and their New Zealand comrades in arms were the original Anzacs. The hardships they endured and sacrifices they made so bravely in World War I are legendary and hold a special place in our history.

Our Association recommends to the League to take no part in the renaming of Subiaco Oval to Anzac Field. To do so would be nothing short of sacrilege.

Yours sincerely,

J. W. Carey OAM

Hon. Secretary

10/8/2005

More of Dick Darrington's Trip to England.

My last three weeks of my holidays were spent with my cousins Audrey & Colin in North Harrow in London – very close to

Heathrow Airport and the Wembley soccer and football stadiums being built by the West Australian Multiplex Building Co.

Colin kindly took a week's holiday from his work so he drove Audrey and me to tourist attractions. We chose to see Dover Castle and the Secret Tunnels used during World War II for operational planning of the Dunkirk Evacuations and 'D' Day landings. Churchill was a regular visitor there, a close guarded secret over the years. Mainly women's army was employed throughout the war. They slept and lived in the White Cliffs, operating the centre Communications offices and coastal artillery, anti-aircraft guns ops rooms.

Dover Castle was next on our sight seeing tour. The castle has a history of being attacked by invaders, mainly the French troops. Though partly destroyed, Dover Castle still remains a popular English Heritage attraction.

We spent a very pleasant day climbing up the steps of the tower and wandering through the tunnels. It was very tiring on the legs. We spent five hours there but there was still a lot we didn't see. We had a meal in the new 'Keeps Restaurant'. We had the English Special – baked potato and tuna, ricotta cheese and yoghurt and a pint of beer – an excellent meal.

We took photos of everything on the white cliffs overlooking Dover Harbour. We watched with interest the ferries loading and unloading their cargo of trucks and buses and passengers in a quick one hour turnaround and back across the English Channel. Of course a lot of transport uses the tunnel.

The next day we decided to visit Portsmouth Historic Dockyard for the

International Festival of Sea Week where the Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar Fleet Review was being celebrated.

We had the H.M.S. Victory in mind. We stood waiting in the rain for a couple of hours before being allowed aboard the ship. There were plenty of people with the same idea. School children and sailors from visiting 52 nation's warships and the old tall ships made up a large crowd all having a look over the HMS Victory - a spectacular timber ship. I was glad to have the experience to climb below the decks and see how tough the sailors lived in the past

In the afternoon we took a boat trip to view all the warships and tall ships anchored in Portsmouth Harbour – a wonderful cruise to end the day on Royal Navy Week.

After two days sightseeing, we settled down to help Audrey do some gardening. Later we had a couple of pints of Decks beer at the local pub with an excellent meal of codfish and chips.

Some time was spent visiting Panta Church and Museum which is in a very old village part of London. It was established hundreds of years ago and is being reconstructed through a heritage programme.

The Panta Church parishioners tell the unique tale of a wealthy parishioner who had himself interned in a rock mound twelve feet above the ground as he was scared of being buried deep, deep underground.

The Museum has an old moat around it which is presently being cleaned and renovated.

Another popular tourist attraction, especially for children, is the Beckonset

Historic Model Village constructed in 1929. It has all facilities, buildings, railways, lakes and yachts.

One Saturday we were invited by friends of Audrey and Colin to the Mayhew Animal Home and Humane Education Centre. Audrey calls it the 'Pussy Cat Farm' as she got her two cats from there eighteen years ago! The cats are very well looked after having five special meals a day.

We spent the afternoon having a barbecue and refreshments. As it was season open day admission was only two pounds and Fred, the host, did all the cooking. He had prepared plenty of food. About two hundred people attended. I got to speak to many of the people some of whom had been on holidays in Australia, mostly Melbourne, Sydney and New Zealand. A few were booked to visit Perth.

I had a chat with the Bishop of Zazabwa who is Australian born and educated in Adelaide. As a young man he was a missionary in South Africa and then a small nation in Central Africa. He preached religion for over fifty years before retiring. He, like me, is also eighty three years old.

The Bishop's great experience of having known most of the African leaders including Secretary General Kofi Annan who has asked him and his wife to take a trip back to Uganda and the Congo nations to help with the mighty problem sorting out the World Food Relief in Central Africa. With his own six ship containers filled with donations organized in England of medical supplies and household implements badly needed in those nations, he would be away for six months or more. Most of the danger is over, knowing the people

and cultures so well I wish him luck on his mission.

Audrey is a member of the North Harrow Anglican Church choir, has been for well over thirty years. I went along with her for the Sunday morning service. The church is celebrating its one hundredth years anniversary. The very first church service was held in a tent so two tent marquees were erected for the event this year.

Sunday afternoon we traveled out in the countryside. It was very beautiful driving along the narrow lanes with all corn and different crops ready for harvesting. We then booked into a hotel to have a lovely meal.

England still has something special in the historic castles and home museums, the great bird life and even foxes around the area.

Audrey and I decided to take a trip on the underground train, only forty minutes to travel to the Westminster Station in Central London close to the Thames River, this being my first time on an underground train. After negotiating up and down escalators, going from platform to platform we reached our objective that being the H.M.S. Belfast, 14,000 ton light battle cruiser anchored in the Thames.

The Belfast, which is open every day to visitors, has a proud history of war service from 1938 to 1953, protecting convoys through the Arctic seas, with supplies to Russia, D.Day landing, bombardment of France and the Korean War.

They have facilities for young Sea Scouts, Girl Guides to sleep aboard the ship and hold parties. I enjoyed the two hours spent wandering around. We were standing on the quarter deck when the

Red Arrows Aerobatic Jets flew over spraying red, white and blue smoke. We were told that London had been granted the Olympic Games at which time everyone started clapping and cheering. A huge crowd gathered at Trafalgar Square to celebrate.

We decided against that idea and instead took a boat trip along the Thames, just relaxing enjoying the scenery and listening to the accompanying commentary.

By this time we were pretty tired and the legs were giving up and fortunately we were only a hundred yards from Westminster Station and then home.

The next day, July 7th, we had intended to go into Black Friar Station in London to tour Sandringham Castle but Audrey and I both felt very tired so decided to have a rest day. But by ten o'clock the grim news of the bombs in the underground reached us. Everyone was stunned but after the initial shock everyone carried on regardless.

The last week of my holiday was spent rather quietly as Audrey's back was worrying her. She still cooked a good meal every night except Saturday when she went on strike and then we would go out for Chinese or Indian meals.

The date of my departure came around too soon. I have enjoyed the English summer but it is time to make tracks home. I may make it back here for the Olympics. I have had a really beautiful holiday though.

May I wish you all a Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year 2006

Ed: Thanks Dick for a very interesting account of your visit to the 'Old Dart'. You did pretty well for an 83 year old.

P. Campbell, Esperance, WA.

I am sending you an exploit of Ken Jones as we all know was a great friend of mine.

Pat and I have both been a bit sick but are well looked after by my granddaughter Marli-Jane and my daughter Julie.

Hope to see you sometime soon.

Peter.

We were camped at Ritabow in Bobonaro district at the foothills of the Cailaco Mountains approximately 1st Aug 1942 - 'A' Platoon Headquarters.

We were doing a night patrol when Captain Dexter called us up and told us that the Japs were coming down in force. Our job was to keep them under observation. Ken Jones was nominated to contact Number 1 Section which was based at Cailaco Mountain under the command of Lt Doug Fullerton. Captain Dexter then turned to runner Ken Jones and said to him 'No. 1 section will have to be told to withdraw to the Atsabe Saddle.'

The job of being runner is enormous, the reason being, if the runner does not succeed they could be surrounded and possibly destroyed.

Ken knew the way down to Marobo alright, it was a bugger of a track but. He got around Marobo before daylight and onto the Cailaco track.

It was about six miles from Ritabow to Marobo and about twelve miles on to Cailaco. As he was going along he could hear all sorts of bloody things, but just on dawn he knew he was pretty close to the camp on No. 1 section.

He was passed the tricky part, passed

all the nips and now to contact the section. He was sneaking along very quietly and lucky for him he recognised a voice, ole Roddy Dhu,

“Who goes there?”

“Ken Jones, Runner, ‘A’ Platoon Headquarters,” and so the contact was made and a job well done.

To me personally, as a runner, it was one of the toughest assignments carried out by Ken Jones.

Peter Campbell.

Domingos Remembers.

When “A” Section of the 2/2nd Company arrived at Fato-Maquerec where my father was the Chief of the “Suco” I was then six years old. I remember seeing them arriving earlier in the morning from either Turiscau or Caimauc. They talked to my father who welcomed them and they stayed at our village.

My family and the residents later moved to a nearby small village from where my father, uncles and other elders of Fato-Maquerec used to visit the Australians and help them to get food. I always followed my father and the Australian soldiers were very friendly. At that time my father had goats, pigs and buffalo. From time to time he supplied them with whatever they needed.

In recognition for what my father had done the Australians wanted to bring me to be educated in Australia. My father agreed but my mother didn't.

Another section was stationed at Funar Suco which lies some thirty kilometres off Fato-Maquerec. The chief of that suco invited them to stay at his village but they refused because they preferred to stay among the trees of a nearby coffee plantation.

Months later the Japanese and the “black columns,” mostly from the then Dutch Timor, invaded Fato-Maquerec and Funar. They burnt all the houses there, looted everything and were looking for my father and other people who had helped the Australians. One Australian soldier was killed there.

My family hid in the jungle for a few months but all of us had to surrender and the Japanese imprisoned my father and other elders of Fato-Maquerec.

We lived under very much hardship under the control of the Japanese. There was no food, medicine or clothing and many Timorese died as a result of this.

We lived in constant fear of being killed without trial.

It was really a very hard time which I cannot describe.

Domingos Oliveira.

Domingos de Oliveira was born on the 30th November 1936 at Laclubar – Manatuto, East Timor.

Domingos came to Australia in 1980. His wife and two children came here in September 1975 just prior to the Indonesian invasion and Domingos was in Dili when the invasion began. He said everyone took to the mountains much the same as we had.

Domingos now acts as a guide to special groups who visit East Timor.

6

Teething Problems

by Bob Williamson.

Some months after the Japanese landing, around about July 1942, the sappers were at Atsabe where they were given the task of patrolling a large area gathering intelligence, watching the Japanese at all times and planning ambushes.

During one of these patrols I developed a very painful toothache in one of my double teeth. As we had no equipment or any method of removing it and after enquiring around, I was told that Fred Sparkman, who was the RAP man for 'A' Platoon, had a pair of pliers and could fix my problem. Fred was located at Same so I pointed my self in the direction of Same and took off.

I travelled for a day and a half on my own, wending my way up and over mountains, sliding up and down and eventually arriving at Same just about buggered. I had little trouble locating 'Sparky' and told him I had a bad toothache and asked him did he have a pair of pliers. Sparky said "Yes, I have and I'll have a go at removing it". He got a member of 'A' Platoon to hold my head in a vice like grip and said, "Open your mouth wide," and proceeded to remove the troublesome tooth. After a lot of wrenching and twisting out came the double tooth.

I thanked Fred, had a meal and started on my way back to Atsabe to rejoin my group which took another day and a half. I had no sooner got there when I developed another severe toothache. It turned out that Fred had removed the wrong tooth! Some of my sapper mates treated it as big joke and I didn't receive much sympathy. So off I went back to Same, got on to Sparky again and this time he extracted the right one. As he was wrenching back and forth he split my lower lip so I was in a bit of a mess. However I was grateful to Sparky for his effort. Fred may not looked like a dental man and he certainly did not approach it in that way but that pair of pliers of his did a bloody good job. I had no more trouble with my teeth on Timor and still

retain most of them to this day.

N.B. Forty eight years later in March 1990 at the Nuriootpa Safari in the Barossa Valley over a few beers, Bob and Fred had a good laugh recalling 'the wrong tooth' incident. Fred passed away in December 1993. Bob turned 87 on the 13th September.

Pars on People

Olive Chalwell has been having a bad time lately with a drawn out case of viral bronchitis and has had to use a nebuliser three times a day. We missed both John and Olive at the commemoration service and the Christmas luncheon. We hope Olive's health improves for the Festive Season.

Clarrie Turner was just beginning to feel like his old self when he suffered a stroke in September. It was a cruel blow as Clarrie has been through hell in the past twelve months. With Grace's and the family's support Clarrie is slowly rallying. Clarrie had his 88th birthday on October 30th and celebrated with family and friends. God bless you Clarrie.

Terry Paull who lived on his own at Kalgoorlie had a stroke about the same time as Clarrie, and after spending a couple of weeks in hospital he was transferred to Hollywood Hospital. He was there for over six weeks. Sandra, his devoted daughter, saw him almost daily and when Terry was ready to be discharged, after much searching, found a suitable hostel for Terry at Hamilton Hill not that far from where Sandra lives at Kardinya. He is pretty tough and should settle in given time. His phone number is (08) 9434 6446 and he would appreciate a call from any of his old mates.

Lionel and Elsie Newton were lucky when a typhoon like wind hit Broken Hill recently. Fortunately it missed where they were but did extensive damage in other parts of the Hill. Lionel said things are picking up, the workforce is growing and a bright future is predicted for this famous mining city, which was founded in 1883 with mining of lead and silver commencing in 1885.

The one and only Paddy Kenneally was involved in a traffic accident on 19th October. He finished up in Liverpool hospital in a state of shock with five broken ribs and cuts and bruises. He was in the Intensive Care Ward for ten days as the hospital, staff were afraid he might get pneumonia and as Paddy is eighty nine anything could have happened. After three weeks in Liverpool he was transferred to Bankstown hospital which suited Nora, being closer to home. Paddy was making slow progress when he caught a severe viral infection. He had been on antibiotics all the time but his condition remained unchanged. It was then decided to transfer him to Randwick Hospital where he had his pacemaker removed and his antibiotics increased. Now after seven weeks in hospital Paddy is starting to come good and take more interest in life. He is to get a new pacemaker soon and had a blood transfusion (hopefully good Irish blood) on the 6th December. The doctor said he wants Paddy to be discharged as soon as possible before he catches any more viruses, which sounds a bit Irish!

Anyway Nora and the family, who have been seeing him daily without fail, are feeling a lot happier. It takes Nora two hours to get from Yagoona to Randwick and two hours back, which makes for a long tiring day.

All members wish you a speedy recovery Paddy, God bless both you and Nora.

Our matriarch, Jess Epps, sends her best wishes to all for Christmas. Jess takes things quietly and thinks back on the times she was always on the go doing someone a good turn. A visit or phone call on (08) 9341 4744 would be appreciated. God bless.

Barbara Payne who attended our Christmas function had a cataract removed recently. Barbara who lives alone in a nice unit in Merredin would like to hear from her old friends.

Surprise! Surprise! Who should turn up for our Christmas luncheon than none other than Ron Archer from Queensland. It appears it was a well kept secret.

You can't tell us that Ron doesn't have, 'Somebody up there!' Firstly he won a bottle of wine in the raffle at the Christmas luncheon, then when we took him out to lunch, on the Monday, to busy Oxford Street, Leederville, there was a parking spot (the one and only) right outside the front door of the restaurant!

We ordered our meal and Ron had brought the raffle bottle – still in Xmas wrap – with him. Even though it was a licensed restaurant they served it for us. We knew it was only a cheap bottle of wine as we had had a budget to stick to. Well it turned out to be the best bottle of wine we'd tasted for some time!

We enjoyed a good meal and then tackled the traffic back to The Goodearth where he was staying. Of course, once again, there was a parking spot right outside the front door! They do say good things happen to good people!

CORRESPONDENCE.**A. Mitchell, Caloundra, Qld.**

I received the Courier thank you, and I want to thank Ralph and the Association for including me in the Life Members list. I have just had a hip replacement and it went awfully wrong. I caught a bug and they had to operate again. I'm now out of hospital and home taking it easy. Please excuse the print as it is the only way I can see to drop a line.

I have forwarded a cheque for the Courier; please give all members my kindest regards. I am able to see a little but what I miss out on Joan reads to me. Well the big question here in South East Queensland is when is it going to rain? Our catchment dams are getting mighty low; they have brought in very strong water restrictions in the Brisbane area. We are not too badly off yet. All the best from Allan & Joan.

R. Moar, Haberfield, NSW.

I am sending you some photos which may be of use for the Unit history. I wasn't sure if they would be returned, so I have put my address on the back in case.

We'd love to have one of Dad (Babe Teague) in it if at all possible.

Also please find cheque enclosed from my mother Nancy for the Courier and the Independent Trust Fund.

Kindest regards, Rosslyn Moar.

T. Adams, Toowong, Qld.

Thanks once more for the interesting September Courier. I was able to read it in the plane on my way to Melbourne.

I have just had two weeks with my son Paul and daughter-in-law Pam which was a wonderful break.

On the Saturday after the AFL Grand Final, Paul drove me down to Leongatha

where we had a delightful couple of hours with Bluey and Mary Bone.

They had invited Leith and Marj Cooper over so we had a great chinwag and I was able to catch up on news of the VX personnel. Bluey as you know is not at all well but puts on a very front and is ably supported by Mary.

He spent last week in hospital as he was having problems with his breathing. I spoke to him on the weekend and as usual was putting on a very brave front. I subsequently spoke to Harry Botterill, Margaret Monk, Fred Broadhurst and tried several others without success. Maybe Telstra had decided enough was enough after listening in to the yarn Fred told me! He burned up the wires!!

All in all I had a wonderful two weeks; saw lots of old friends and of course my three grandchildren. Pam had an art exhibition while I was there – very successful. She is very talented (watercolours) and sold quite a few paintings.

Coming home to an empty unit was a blow and lonely but I count myself lucky to have had the time away.

I finished a second lot of radiotherapy with the oncologist not long before I left and have to see him again in a couple of weeks – so far so good – no pain.

Please use the enclosed cheque to cover Courier costs – you do a tremendous job and it is great to hear what others are doing.

My very best wishes to you both and one and all.

Tony Adams.

V. Paust, Bindoon, WA.

Thanks for your efforts with the Association. It is good to be in touch via the Courier. Enclosed is a contribution to the same.

Unfortunately we will be away again this

year and will miss the Lovekin Drive commemoration service.

Our thoughts are with you.

Viv & Verna Paust.

L.C. Nicklason, Newstead, Tas.

Dear friends of the 2/2nd Bn, my health is only just – I've got a bad heart and a very crook knee.

My wife Jean is not so well either. At present she is in hospital with stomach problems.

We have a meeting on Tuesday but I am unable to go because of Jean being in hospital. I want to be with her as much as possible

I don't like this batching. I don't think I am cut out to be very good at it.

I am eighty five years old and too old to do much gardening. When I retired from telegraph work with a bad heart I could not do much light work. I live in a Masonic home that is where I think I will die.

We have had a very wet spring - a big flood two weeks ago.

Thank you for the 2/2nd Commando Courier news. I am enclosing a cheque – I hope it will help out.

With kind regards, L.C. Nicklason.

E. Prior, Wantirna, Vic.

Enclosed a cheque for the Courier. Thank you.

I was unable to attend the Anzac Day luncheon this year. All being well I will catch up with Mavis and Fred in 2006.

Hope you and yours are well. Best Wishes.

Yours sincerely, Elizabeth Prior.

M. Hartley, Fairfield West, NSW.

I am sorry for not keeping in more regular contact with you, but I find it hard to put pen to paper. Yet I am always thinking

of you and all those wonderful people of the 2/2 family.

I can honestly say that the friendships of the 2/2nd community have always been an inspiration to me, because I think it is wonderful how people who were brought together in times of threat and adversity so many years ago, have been able to live through those experiences and then maintain a continuing friendship which has endure for over sixty years.

It reminds me of my own background, having been a child during the Nazi occupation of my homeland Slovenia from 1941 until 1945, and then displaced after the war in camps in Austria before I came to Australia in 1950.

There were people there that I met in the Displaced Persons camps and on the boat to Australia who have remained the closest of friends with me throughout the years. Even though we had witnessed so many terrible things, I thank God for the kindness and friendships that I also found in so many people of those times. It is something very remarkable for people of our generation, and somehow I fear that it is being lost in today's world, as I don't see such bonds existing in the current generation.

The world has changed so much, and even though all these modern gadgets in communications and transport make it so easy to bring people closer together, it seems to do the opposite and drive people apart.

I get the feeling that people are so busy doing their own thing that they forgot about the others around them. But still the 2/2nd commando association continues, despite the dwindling roll-call. Even though the men have been fading away fast, there are still many wives and

loved family members, and I hope that the 2/2nd can survive through our children who should be encouraged to remember and honour the legacy of their fathers.

I still regret that I did not come with my son Chris and John's brother Frank to the Perth Safari in November 2003, but I was simply not feeling well enough at the time. Unfortunately I also had to miss ANZAC DAY in Sydney this year due to illness, but hopefully I will make it in 2006 with my son Chris.

Since John passed away in June 2000, our oldest boy Chris (50) has attended ANZAC DAY in Sydney for his Dad. I am proud that he does this in memory of his father, and I know he feels very deeply about honouring John and his comrades.

Throughout the years, John always insisted that ANZAC DAY was absolutely only for the living veterans, and that only when a member passed on, then it was OK for another family member to take their place in the March. It seemed to be the common feeling among the men, and we always respected and understood those sentiments.

Our family has been doing reasonably well this year. Oldest son Chris has turned 50 on 3rd August, and serves as a Sub-Lieutenant with the Australian Navy Cadets. His most recent appointment has been at HMAS PENGUIN as the NSW & ACT HQ Staff Officer (Administration and Personnel). He spent some time at TS KANIMBLA, based at Holsworthy Camp, as Admin Officer, training Navy Cadets.

Philip still lives in Melbourne and works in a Mike Walsh Theatre. David has returned from Kempsey to Sydney and taken up a bus driver's job with the State Transit Authority, while Andrew remains on the 25 acres at Kempsey, doing his

bit of farming and some part-time work in the town. Janine remains with the National Australia Bank and is doing fine.

The grandchildren are thriving. Chris' two - Martin and Kim Mai - are busy with education. Martin (19) is studying at TAFE as a Library Technician, while Kim (18 next January) has just started her HSC exams and hopes to go on to Dentistry. Both of them have spent four years in the Australian Navy Cadets, based at TS KANIMBLA, with Martin reaching the rank of Leading Seaman and being a keen Drummer in the Cadet Band, while Kim Mai has achieved the highest Cadet rank of Midshipman.

I joined Legacy about a year ago, and was lucky enough to be offered a Legacy holiday to Moss Vale a few months ago. It was a very relaxing and enjoyable 10 days away, and I got to see some familiar old places around the Southern Highlands where John used to take me and the children years ago, so it brought back lots of memories.

In late August I spent a week in Fairfield Hospital because of a bleeding ulcer, but I seem to be better now. I get to talk with Alan Luby from time to time, but I wish that I could get myself over to his place for a visit. The problem is the distance and all the road works where everything is changing so much, and I don't feel confident on those roads by myself.

Winnie Brown (Keith's widow) lives close by and she seems to be doing well, despite a few health scares. Betty Hoy has turned 80 and is still at home on her own, though she is getting frail.

Frank (John's younger brother) will turn 80 in November. He is doing well, although I don't get to see him as much as I would like. Frank still lives in Teralba near Newcastle, on the same property

that he bought and built over 50 years ago. Frank is the last surviving member of the 13 children of John's parents, and he has a wealth of knowledge of the family history that he has been busy recording.

I am sure that the 2/2 will remember Frank Park as Jack Hartley's handsome younger brother who served over 30 years in the RAAF. Despite his own distinguished service which included the Korean and Vietnam wars, Frank has always been deeply respectful and in awe of the deeds of the 2/2. He attended several Safaris with John and made lots of friends in the 2/2 who embraced him as one of their own.

I don't know if I will be able to send Christmas cards to everyone this year, so please accept this letter as a sending of love and best wishes to all the Commando family for a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and the best of times and good health. I look forward to reading the next Courier and hope to hear that everyone is well and in good spirits.

I am sending you two photographs of John (Jack) and some of his mates. I understand the colour photo is of the 2/2 in New Guinea during 1943 or 1944, and the B & W is of John with SEMUT 3 men of Z SPECIAL at Labuan Island in December 1945. I don't know how many of these men are still alive, but hopefully names can be put to all the faces when these photos are published.

I am also sending in a cheque for fifty dollars to the Courier and to the Timor Fund. I am sure you will put this money to good use.

Take care, one and all! Yours in friendship, Maria Hartley.

J. Fenwick, Curtin, ACT.

A two day tour with Friends of the National Botanical Gardens earlier this month took us through Harden Murrumburrah where we visited a memorial to the 1st Australian (Volunteer) Horse and the Australian Light Horse and I mentioned this to Alan Luby in a telephone conversation and at his suggestion I'm sending you a brochure as we thought parts of it may interest some Courier readers.

Canberra Streets and gardens have been full of beauty since the rains; unfortunately the weeds try to take over so life is never dull.

All the best to Unit friends and a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

Joan Fenwick.

Ed: Thank you Joan for the pamphlet – space permitting we may use it at a later time.

M. Monk, Poowong, Vic.

It's almost time for the Christmas edition of the Courier. How time flies and another year is nearly gone. It has brought the usual good times and bad, happy times and sad.

We were all saddened when Bluey Bone passed away recently after a very courageous battle. Don and I had been to visit Bluey and Mary and family a number of times over the past months.

Harry Botterill has written to the Courier with the names of the 2/2nd who attended the funeral. There was a very big crowd there and it was a great tribute to Bluey. We will all miss him but will remember the good times over the years and his work organising Safari, especially the Mildura one.

Harry came and stayed a week with us from Monday 10th October, whilst here, we took him to visit Bluey and Mary and also to Cowes to see Leith and Marj Cooper.

I have spoken with Mavis and Fred Broadhurst on the phone too – they are going along fairly well.

Pat Petersen is still busy running her farm and is always bright, as is her sister Miriam.

Eddie Bourke hasn't been too well of late but is battling on and has a great helpmate in Dorothy.

I had a phone call from Dawn and Arch Claney a week or so ago and was sorry to learn that Arch had had a fall and broken his right arm very badly and spent eight weeks in Wangaratta hospital. The break was up near the shoulder and so was unable to be put in plaster. Arch is home again and we wish him well. Dawn hasn't been in the best of health for quite some time but was able to drive to the hospital each day and spend a lot of time with Arch. Don's daughter lives in Wangaratta and we always visit Arch and Dawn when we go to see Margaret and Geoff. We last saw them on the 23rd August.

Wangaratta was our last stop on the way home from our trip to Darwin on the Ghan. We thoroughly enjoyed the whole trip. We left home on the 5th August and drove to Adelaide, stayed at Stawell and Murray Bridge on the way. The car was put on the train and we boarded about 5.30 p.m. it was a very enjoyable journey. We had two stops – Alice Springs on the Monday. There we were taken by bus to Desert Park for lunch and a tour around which was very good. Then next morning we had some time in Katherine. The railway station is six

kilometres out of town.

We were taken to Springvale Homestead – a lovely spot which is also a caravan park. The train was the second biggest since it started early in 2004 and was six metres short of a kilometre long. We arrived in Darwin on Tuesday evening and went to the Free Spirit Resort that we had booked for three nights. It was wonderful to have the car and so had a good look around. We met up with friends and a relative of Don's.

When we headed south we called at the Adelaide River Cemetery. It is beautifully maintained – the frangipani trees were magnificent, about twelve or fifteen feet high and covered in flowers. A 2/2nd member's grave is there – I can't recall the name.

Then we stayed at Mataranka and Tennant Creek. We had an interesting stop at Larrimah. The old Repeater Station there is now an Army museum and on one wall is the photo taken at Larrimah on the return of the 2/2nd from Timor. The old pub is still the same as when you were all there I am sure! Ken and I called there back in the early 90's and he said it hadn't changed.

Then we stayed two nights at Alice Springs and visited Panorama Guth, John Flynn's grave and memorial Church and other interesting places. Leaving there we went on to Eridunda and out to Uluru and The Olgas. We stayed at Curtin Springs Homestead about 90 kilometres from Uluru. From there we traveled on to Coober Pedy where we stayed in an underground motel – very interesting. Coober Pedy is an amazing place and has to be seen to appreciate the size of it.

We then got to Port Augusta for

overnight before going across to Broken Hill to spend some time with Lionel and Elsie Newton. It was lovely to see them again. The last time we saw them was at the Mildura Safari. Then we stayed in Mildura with Don's niece and we also visited relatives of mine on Ken's side of the family.

Back in Victoria we zigzagged around and called on friends in Warracknabeal and Don's sister in Rochester. Then on to the Holden Museum in Echuca and down through Shepparton and across to Benalla calling on Fay Campbell's sister and then Fay before going to Wangaratta and then home. We were away two days short of three weeks and traveled almost seven thousand kilometres in the car. Petrol was a dollar fifty a litre at Curtin Springs. That was the dearest on the whole trip – it was cheaper at Uluru!

Both our families are well and busy and growing in number. I now have four great grandchildren, all girls and just beautiful. Zali was three in June and the twins Grace & Emily two in July and Ebony was one on Armistice Day.

Don has five and another due in Early January. This one will be a little Sandgroper as the parents are living in East Fremantle and both are in the army.

On Saturday evening we went to a wedding at Eltham, a Melbourne suburb. The bridegroom is one of Don's grandsons. It was a lovely wedding and everyone had a great time.

We have Elva home from Vietnam at present and Rod will be back mid December. It is great to have them home even if for a short time. Barbara and Owens's new home at Healsville is soon to be finished and they are looking forward to living there permanently.

Colin and Robert are still very busy with

their farms and cows etc.

I would like to wish everyone a really Happy Festive season and this will take the place of letters that I usually send to different ones.

All the very best to you all, and Don and I hope 2006 is kind to everyone.

Bye for this time, with our love and best wishes,

Margaret and Don.

Ed: What a wonderful trip Margaret – though I have to admit I was exhausted just reading about it!

B.Sadler, Wongan Hills, WA.

So sorry I did not get down to the service on Sunday. Hopefully next year!

With the warmer weather the boys are very busy – like all farmers at this time of the year. The crops, well some parts – were hit by the severe frosts we had in October which has been disappointing.

This small country town of Wongan Hills is such a busy place. Dewsons opened a store in town; so many people from surrounding districts come to shop.

In May the Tourist Committee opened up a visitors centre – they have had a constant stream of visitors who are greeted with a cup of tea and a chat. It has quietened down now with the wildflower season finished – over 1000 have enjoyed a break.

Best wishes to you both and all members of the 2/2nd Commando Association and enjoy good health and happiness in 2006.

Blanche Sadler.

M. Sadler, Wongan Hills, WA.

The shock of receiving a letter from me will probably cause the system to fall apart; letter writing is not my forte.

Although we all know our numbers are dwindling I was really shocked to see so few members at Kings Park, widows as well as veterans – time marches on! I no longer drive myself to Perth so was lucky my family were able to take me. Harvest has always clashed with this special day and we cannot change it. It made me realize I had given up some of my independence.

I didn't send a donation last year so herewith find a cheque to help the Courier – suggest \$60 to the Trust Fund – Charl would approve.

I do get frustrated because I cannot do all I would like to but shouldn't because life has been very kind to me.

With my best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, May God bless you all.

Mavis Sadler.

R. Morris, Weston, ACT

We wish you all Joy, Peace and Good Health in 2006.

Ron & Hazel Morris.

H. Hollow, Findon, SA.

Xmas wishes to all the 2/2nd. Please find enclosed donation for the Association.

Love and blessings always,
Hazel Hollow.

H. Handicott, Hamilton, NSW.

It's time again for that seasonal letter. Well we should be having nearly continuous hot days but we've been having some good showers this last week, cooling things down. Sunday was a bleak 16c and out came the track suit again!

Paddy had a bit of bad luck but Nora says he is coming good very slowly.

I spoke to Joyce Smith about a week ago and she is happy to be home at last. She has had a rough time.

Andy Bevrige is about the same and 'Snowy' Went is hard to catch.

We are going okay. I've just had my second cataract done – now I can read between the lines and see all the good sorts go past but my glasses don't fog up any more!

One of our grandsons is a Chief Engineer on the 'Australus'. He leaves Hobart on Sunday fifth December for the Antarctic bases so he won't be home for Christmas. Another one leaves 30th November for the oil rig out from Kununurra. He flies to Perth then Kununurra then by chopper to the rig or the tanker acting as the holding tank until the tankers arrive for a load – present day kids get around don't they?

It's time to start wishing everybody 'Seasons Greetings' so we wish all a healthy 2006, that's all we need now – you are both doing a great job on the Courier.

Please split the cheque between the Courier and the Trust Fund.

Best wishes to all, cheers,
Amyce & Harry.

Courier Donations.

Reg Wilson, Viv & Verna Paust, Allan & Joan Mitchell, Lewis & Jean Nicklason, Tony Adams, Elizabeth Prior, Maria Hartley, Russ Blanch, Nancy Teague, Blanche Sadler, Mavis Sadler, Hazel Hollow, Len & Betty Bagley, Tony Bowers, Keith & Val Hayes, Elsie Jordan, Bart & Loris Mavrick, Don & Ida Murray, Vince Swann, Bob & Margaret Smyth, Clare West, Doc Wheatley, Harry & Amyce Handicott and Ron Archer.

Trust Fund Donations.

Reg Wilson (Darwin)	100.00
Happy Greenhalgh	1000.00
Nancy Teague	50.00
Maria Hartley	25.00

Mavis Sadler 50.00
 Harry & Amyce Handicott 50.00
 Ron Archer 1000.00
Thank you one and all for your donations. Ed.

Birthday Boys.

Tom Martin	October	5	89
Bob Smyth	"	8	88
Len Bagley	"	13	82
John Chalwell	"	20	82
Doc Wheatley	"	28	93
Clarrie Turner	"	30	88
Dick Darrington	"	31	83
Ross Shenn	November	23	83
Bulla Tait	"	29	83
Leith Cooper	December	8	89
Les Halse	"	8	86
Kel Carthew	"	12	83
Rolf Baldwin	"	16	96
Fred Stewart	"	18	93.

Congratulations boys!

Change of Address.

Terry Paull,
 Illawong Village Hostel
 I Rodd Place
 Hamilton Hill W.A. 6163
 Ph. (08) 9434 6446

Vera Watson
 Unit 12 /45 Sholl St
 Mandurah, W.A. 6210

Mrs Mary King
 Lot 15 George Rd,
 Waroona. W.A. 6215

Bart Mavrick
 18 Gratitude Way
 Dawesville, W.A. 6210
 Ph. (08) 9582 2424

Heard This One?

An elderly Italian man who lived on the outskirts of Monte Casino went to the local church for confession. When the priest slid open the panel in the confessional, the man said, "Father, during World War II a beautiful woman knocked on my door and asked me to hide her from the enemy. So I hid her in my attic."

The priest replied, "That was a wonderful thing you did my son! And you have no need to confess that."

It's worse than that Father; she started to repay me with sexual favours."

The priest said, "By doing that you were both in great danger. However, two people under those circumstances can be very tempted to act that way. But if you are truly sorry for your actions, you are indeed forgiven."

"Thank you Father, that's a great load off my mind. But I do have one more question."

"And what is that?" asked the priest.

"Should I tell her the war is over?"

STOP PRESS

Margo and George Shiels wish everyone a joyous Christmas and a happy, healthy year.

Their letter, which missed the deadline, will appear in the next Courier.

'When you were in Jerusalem did you go to the Wailing Wall?' asked Dick. 'Yes, I did, but I couldn't get near it for the Collingwood supporters!'

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

ATTENTION ALL VETERANS.

**SPECIAL AIR SERVICES ASSOCIATION
2006 CALENDARS ARE NOW ON OFFER.**

Wall calendars \$10 plus postage of \$2.50 for one or two.

Desk calendars \$5 plus postage of \$2.50 “

Calendar contains famous photo taken at Larrimah 20th Dec. 1942

“A” Platoon after Timor.

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Please provide your mailing details – include your name and postal address.

These are quality calendars and are recommended.

If using credit card please provide the number and expiry date.

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W.A. Members Please Note.

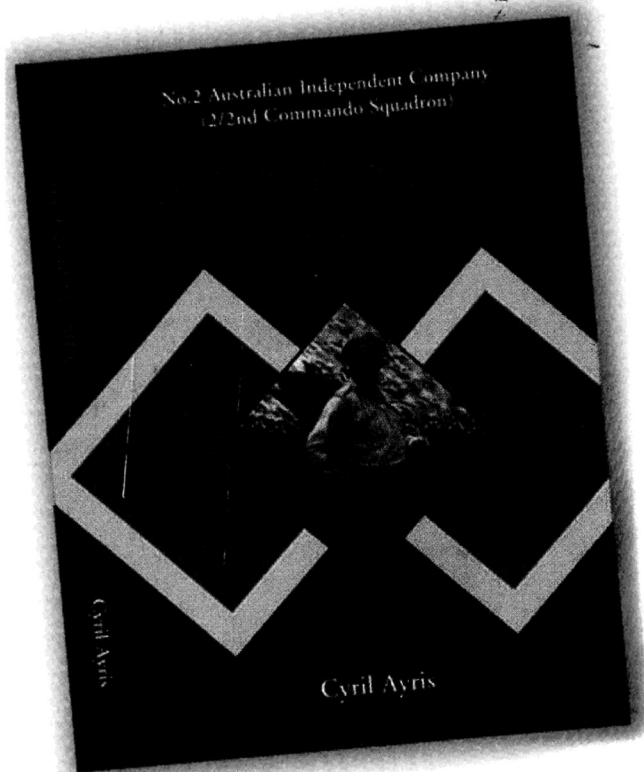
The SAS Veterans’ Association once again invites members and friends to join in their Australia Day celebrations at “The House” on Thursday 26th January 2006.

This is always a great day so come along and enjoy drinks and a barbecue lunch, bright Aussie music and take part in a few raffles – from 10.30 a.m. on.

If you intend coming please let Secretary J. Carey know on 9332.7050 by no later than Monday 23rd January.

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The Association Committee and Courier team take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year.



Our official history is now written and is in the hands of the editor. The title is: All The Bull's Men, under the sub-title: "No. 2 Australian Independent Company (2/2nd Commando Association)"

The book has taken almost eighteen months to write and will be published in time for a launch at the end of March or early April.

Named after the Unit's commanding officer in Portuguese Timor, New Guinea and New Britain, Major G. G. (The Bull) Laidlaw, the 500-page book (with more than a hundred pictures) will tell the 2/2nd history from its inception to its official disbandment after the end of the war.

This is about as exciting a war book as you are likely to find anywhere. The patrols, the ambushes, the atrocious conditions, the constant danger, the humour, the mateship, the fire-fights, the operations – they are all told in a way that is easy to read.

Everything about the book will be quality. It will be beautifully printed and bound, with hardback covers and gilt titling. Some copies will have leather slipcases (similar to a video cover) and 2/2nd bookmarks. These special commemorative editions will cost a little more but will undoubtedly hold pride of place in your book collection.

For former 2/2nd Commando Squadron men and their family and friends, All The Bull's Men will be a "must have". It will undoubtedly increase in value but, more than that, it will be a permanent reminder of the extraordinary battles our 2/2nd men fought to protect our homeland.