



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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SQUARING THE LEDGER

Much has been written about the East Timor campaign in 1942 and the successful guerilla war waged by the 2/2nd Independent Company against a far superior Japanese force. This was attributed to the resourcefulness shown by the men themselves, the valuable and timely assistance by a gallant Royal Australian Navy, a determined RAAF, the mountainous terrain ideally suited for guerilla warfare plus an element of luck. However it was due to the assistance of the peoples of East Timor in the main, who chose to help rather than betray us which enabled the company to survive and return to Australia.

The landing of Australian and Dutch troops in Dili on the 17th December, 1941 was a violation of Portuguese neutrality and resulted in the Japanese invading East Timor on 19th February, 1942. What followed was that a backward and comparatively peaceful small island became a battleground for the next 12 months, creating chaos for the local inhabitants. After the withdrawal of the 2/2nd and Dutch forces in December 1942 and the 2/4th company in early January 1943 one would have thought the Japanese would have treated the people more leniently. Such was not the case. The late Mr Iwamura who visited Australia in August 1993 and was an engineer in the 2nd Formosan Infantry Regiment who occupied the island from mid 1942 confirmed that the people were treated very harshly resulting in many deaths.

To this day war historians are still arguing as to whether the decision of the Allies to send troops into a neutral country which resulted in the deaths of thousands of the Timorese could be justified. Some maintain the Japanese would never have invaded East Timor if allied troops weren't there and as they had done in Macau and Portuguese neutrality would have been observed. Summing up it was one of the greatest tragedies of the South West Pacific War. Timorese casualties estimated at 40,000 dead were higher than all the Australian losses in all the island campaigns.

Our small Association along with many good Australians of all denominations and walks of life and other groups have given an enormous amount of aid of all descriptions to the people of

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East Timor. This was for the help they gave us back in 1942 and the loss and suffering they endured under Japanese rule and subsequent suffering under Indonesian rule mainly by the militia. There is no doubt the massacre at Santa Cruz Cemetery in Dili on 12 November, 1991 galvanised many more people and organisations into helping these unfortunate people. Our troops have also played an important role in maintaining law and order since being the first troops to arrive there in September 1999 and remain there now

We rejoiced when UNATAET handed sovereignty to the new government of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste on 20th May, 2002 and four months later on 27th September, 2002 became the 191st member of NATO.

It can be fairly said, though not all will agree that Australia and its people are close to squaring the ledger for what happened back in 1942. The assistance is still continuing and will be for some time to come.

We, who are left of the 2/2nd, wish the people of Timor Leste "Good Luck" in the years ahead. **God Bless Them All.**

J. Carey

VALE – RAY PARRY, MM - WX12415

Ray's vale was kindly provided by his loving daughter Deborah and delivered at his funeral by Captain Wayne Gardiner, RFD.

Ray passed away on 21 August, 2008. He was 85.

Ray was born on the 5th May, 1923 at Subiaco in Western Australia to his beloved mother, Ruth Parry (nee Bowes) and father, Walter Parry.

He was the eldest of three children, the others being his adored sister Gwen and younger brother Keith. He spent his infancy in Hopetoun where his father was postmaster, later moving to Subiaco, then Forrest Street in South Perth. Schooling was at Christian Brothers in St George's Terrace, Perth.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, Ray was still a teenager, who enlisted in the infantry in the Second AIF but the mystery and allure of the newly formed and highly secret, independent companies was irresistible.

He volunteered for the 2nd, later 2/2nd Independent Company.

Ray was serving with the 2/2nd as it wrote

one of the most remarkable chapters in Australian military history. The guerrilla war fought by the 2/2nd in Portuguese Timor in 1942 against a Japanese force that outnumbered it by dozens, and at one time possibly 100 to 1 is the stuff of legend.

Many in the audience will be aware that the 2/2nd was part of Sparrow Force, a unit intended to deny the ports and airfields of Dutch and Portuguese Timor to the Japanese.

Despite losing their supply base and contact with Australia within days of the Japanese attack, the 2/2nd fought on in the face of overwhelming odds.

Ray was never particularly religious but he did recall with regret that a crucifix was shot from around his neck during the withdrawal. A close shave indeed, one of many others yet to come. The crucifix had been sent in the only letter he had received from home during his time on Timor.

Following the unit's evacuation from Timor, the 2/2nd spent most of 1943 and early 1944 fighting in the New Guinea campaign.

Ray, and the double red diamond's (the insignia of 2/2nd Ind Coy) last campaign of the war was on New Britain in 1945.

After the war Ray returned his own gun and went back to his job with the West Australian newspaper.

Several peaceful years in Perth followed only to be broken by the onset of the Korean War.

Responding to a call for experienced soldiers he volunteered for K Force. Posted to B Company of the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regt, Ray was soon made a section commander.

Ray was awarded the Military Medal for bravery for his role in the battle of Kapyong and the 3rd Bn Royal Australian Regt (Old Faithful) received the US Presidential Unit Citation.

Ray was promoted to Sergeant after Kapyong and was given command of 5 Platoon, B Company, when the 3rd Bn RAR fought the Battle of Maryang San in October 1951.

Field Marshall Sir James Cassels (GOC Commonwealth Forces Korea) would call the Bn's capture and defence of Maryang San one of the finest battalion actions in British Military History.

It was Ray's last battle. He was repatriated to Australia around Christmas 1951 and put aside his own gun for the last time.

He returned to the West Australian Newspaper in 1952 and worked in the Engraving department until he retired as head of the Photo Lithography department in 1985.

Ray married Edna Ponton on the 8th June, 1952 and a daughter, Deborah, was born in 1956.

Sadly, Ray and Edna separated in 1957, finally divorcing in 1982. It appears to have been the classic love/hate

relationship with neither ever marrying again.

On retirement from the newspaper, Ray intended spending more time on the golf course.

These are excerpts from a mock newspaper article about Ray from his workmates at the West Australian.

"Ray deliberately ignores the lush, green fairways that give easy access to the greens. Playing military golf – into the bush on the sides of the fairway, then into the sand traps and bunkers with deadly accuracy".

And "humorous recollections spring to mind when one thinks of Ray. At one stage his lifestyle became rather hectic; a habit developed of losing his car – it always showed up, but in some very unusual places".

"He is the only engraver who turned his darkroom into a laundry. In between shooting negatives it was washing time. The rumour that he took in washing was not true".

Brad Manera also had this to say – "In recent years Ray has assisted in the recording of the military history he helped to create but it won't be just the stories of combat that will remind me of Ray. I have always been touched by the value he placed on his mates and his laconic sense of humour".

In Ray's later years, although very ill and with a loving family wanting to care for him in Sydney, his decision to remain in his own home was difficult but understandable. He remained in his home on his own terms, always fiercely independent. He astounded his doctors with his resilience.

Ray was supported in part by his family, Home Care and his ever watchful and wonderful neighbours, Pauline and Peter.

The choice between moving to another state to be with his family had to be weighed against not only leaving his home and garden but leaving those, whose lasting friendships he'd forged so long ago.

It is a testament to the value he placed on those unbreakable bonds of friendship that he chose to stay.

He was an outstanding soldier, a truly wonderful father, grandfather, uncle and friend.

His loss is keenly felt by Ray's family, friends and ex-service mates.

Ray was a devoted father to Deborah, a spirited and humorous father-in-law to Michael and although geographically separated, always a supportive and loving Grandad to Louis and Greta.

Deborah's tribute to her father reads – Surely it would be impossible to return from not just one but two wars, without being affected in some way by the horrors of those conflicts.

Yet, as his daughter, I knew only my gentle, protective, witty and kind dad who never raised a hand, harsh word or judgmental remark, just unconditional love. If he was disappointed in anything I had ever done he never showed it.

His affection and understanding made me all the more determined to try and not disappoint him. He had enormous charm. Clearly, he loved his family.

Ray loved the East Perth Football Club and the AFL, golf at Gosnells and in Thailand, his tropical plants and beautiful orchids.

There is an old proverb: "For a man to be happy for a week, he should get drunk with his friends, to be happy for a year – he should marry a beautiful woman, to be happy for a lifetime – he should grow a garden".

Dad did all three.

Heartfelt words indeed.

A TRIBUTE TO RAY

Ray celebrated his 18th birthday on the 5th May, 1941. The following day the 6th May he enlisted in the 2nd AIF going to spend the next 4 years and 10 months serving his country, with distinction, until his discharge in March 1946. His army service spent almost entirely with the 2/2nd Independent Company later known as the 2/2nd Commando Squadron changed him from a callow youth to a seasoned veteran and a fine one at that.

When the 2/2nd was formed in July 1941 Ray, an original member, was allocated to No. 5 Section B Platoon with Colin Doig his officer and two good men in Dud Tapper and Ted Loud his corporals. Though Ray was the youngest in a section of 22 he soon proved he could hold his own with the best of them and was readily accepted by the older members. It was also the beginning of friendships which were to last a lifetime.

The company was sent to East Timor in mid December 1941 and settled in the flat, mosquito ridden area in the vicinity of Dili. Early in January 1942, 90% of the company of 270 men went down with malaria. Ray developed a severe strain of the disease and at one stage became so critically ill he was not expected to live. His section mates were said to be betting on the hour he would die. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Doctor Dunkley and his staff and Ray's fighting spirit somehow he survived. The majority of the company then moved to the mountain areas surrounding Dili and by the time the Japanese invaded East Timor on the 19th February, Ray was fighting fit and ready

to go as were his 2/2nd comrades.

The company's performance in East Timor in 1941/42 which has been told and retold 'B' Platoon under "The Bull", George Laidlaw played a leading role of which 5 Section did its share. Ray did well in the tough conditions and was mentioned in despatches for bravery.

In New Guinea from June 1943, 5 Section carried on their good work and had many fine men. Les Halse, George Lewis, Alec Thomson, Harold Brooker, George Merritt and Ray to name a few. Promoted to Corporal, Ray saw out the war in New Britain still in his beloved 5 Section. Ray's passing on the 21 August leaves Les Halse the sole survivor of the 22 men who served in that section.

Ray's father Wally, a member of WA's 11th Battalion was in one of the first boats to go ashore at Gallipoli and which had 11 killed before it reached the beach. Wally somehow survived the Gallipoli and Western Front carnage and lived to over 90. Ray was proud of his father and always wore his medals on Anzac Day. Wally was in turn proud of his son for his fine war record which included his MM in Korea.

Ray was a loyal and generous Life Member of our Association. He served on the committee and was our President for 5 years from 2000 to 2005.

We mourn the passing of our old comrade Ray – a fine man and a great Australian.

May He Rest In Peace

J. Carey

This tribute was paid to Ray at his funeral service at Karrakatta on 27 August. Keith and Val Hayes, Helen Poynton and Julie Ann, Nellie Mullins, Bob Smyth and Jack Carey representing the Association were present as were a number of his Korean mates.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Deborah and family.

Lest We Forget

VALE - WX 12415 - RAY N. PARRY

His suffering is over now, Ray handled that as he did other phases of his life displaying the courage, and determination that brought him through two wars and distinction in each of them. Ray does not need me to elaborate on his history. It is well known to all unit members that he was an original with 5 Section and served in it from go to whoa.

He was a happy go lucky bloke and there was no shortage of laughs in company.

To his daughter we extend our deepest sympathy in her sad loss.

Farewell Ray, your sufferings are over.

Rest In Peace

Paddy Kenneally

EDNA MAY FULLARTON – widow of Doug who died on the 18th August, 1992, passed away 16 years later to the day on the 18th August. 2008 and 26 days short of her 91st birthday.

Edna was a very talented lady being a very capable business woman, excelling at oil painting and ceramics and played tennis and golf well. She had two daughters, Faye and Peta and nine grandchildren and adored her family.

Keith and Val Hayes, Babs Langridge and Jack Carey represented the Association at the funeral service at Karrakatta on 26th August.

May She Rest In Peace

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to her family.

NORMA HASSON DAY

Christmas in July was celebrated on Friday with a lovely luncheon at the Goodearth Hotel; the standard was as high as always.

Although our numbers were down, we only had 18 present, possibly due to the threat of very wet weather and a nasty virus circulating at the moment, we had a very enjoyable and pleasant day.

Several cheery faces were absent. Helen Poynton and Don Murray who were both in hospital; we missed you both and wish you a speedy recovery.

As usual the wonderful Hassons were present in force and Kaye Hasson/Hanson supplied the ladies with a beautiful orchid lapel spray as she always does (thank you Kaye).

Laurie Harrington had us laughing and enjoying his cheeky jokes. There were lots of opportunities for caring friends to catch up, sharing good food and a couple of drinks. The raffles were as popular as always, don't we love something for nothing.

Present were Len Bagley, Jack Carey, Dick Darrington, Kaye Hanson, Fred and Robyn Hasson, Ken and Rhonda Hasson, Laurie and Sheryl Harrington, Linda Haughton and Anne Green (Tony Bowers daughters), Babs Langridge, Jim Lines, Dorothy Maley, Nellie Mullins, Lorraine Puddey and Erica Smythe (Eric Smythe's daughter).

Dorothy Maley

VICTORIAN NEWS – (OMITTED JUNE EDITION)

Dear Jack and all 2/2nd friends everywhere.

Greetings and all good wishes from the Victorians. There aren't very many

of us now but the 2/2nd spirit is still as strong as ever. Don and I are going well and still very busy. We had 2 weeks in Tasmania back in March/April. We went across on the boat or I should say the Spirit of Tasmania. It was great to have the car to travel about. The main reason for the trip was to spend time with Don's granddaughter Nicole and her family at Somerset. Nicole's twin sister Paula and her 2 little girls flew across from Victoria and they celebrated their 30th birthdays together and with us on the 2nd April.

We visited **Bridget Richards**. She is in a beautiful retirement home south of Launceston. She looked very well and was enjoying being well cared for.

On Anzac Day, **Harry Botterill** was again the only one marching in Melbourne. **Fred and Mavis Broadhurst's son Kevin** marched with Harry as he has done over the last few years. Kevin had to return to his farm in Northern Victoria straight after the march so was unable to join us for lunch. There were only six at the 2/2nd table at Eden on the Park. **John and Shirley Southwell** both looking fit and well, **Mavis Broadhurst, Harry, Don and I**. Mavis said Fred is battling on but only rarely leaves the house now.

I rang quite a few so here is the latest from the different ones –

Mary Bone is still at Lakes Entrance. She is pleased to have her grandson living with her and said she is keeping reasonably well.

I spoke to **Dorothy and Ed Bourke**. Ed has been having tests and is now awaiting results. He sounded really good as did Dorothy. They enjoy keeping up with their 11 grand children and will be having 3 weeks in Queensland soon.

Dawn Chaney was very bright when I rang. She is very happy and well cared for at the nursing home in Wangaratta and

enjoys craft and other activities there.

We last visited **Leith Cooper** on 14th March but have talked on the phone a couple of times since. A few days ago when I rang he said he was keeping warm and well fed. Has short spells working in the garden and reads a lot.

Dot Veitch was thrilled when I rang today. She is well and is going to spend all of July with her daughter Diane in Queensland.

Craig Roberts, younger son of John and Cath has recently had surgery for a Cochlear Ear Implant so is hoping for a good result when it is turned on after his head heals.

Fay Campbell at Benalla still enjoys her garden and visits to and from family and friends.

Pat Petersen at Fish Creek has a very busy life on the farm and helping care for her mother who will be 101 next month.

It is now 24 hours since I started this letter and **Craig Roberts** phoned to say he still has a lot of visits to the Eye & Ear hospital to have his ear "fine-tuned" and this could take up to 6 months or more. It is to be hoped that it will be a complete success and his hearing will be restored fully. Craig asked that I send his very best wishes to you all. He told me his twin sister Jane in Perth was surprised to find that John Carey is working at the same place as she is.

My younger son Robert is going to walk the Kokoda Track in July. He has been in training for it for quite a while and for extra training he has been climbing the local Poowong East hills and seeing the neighbouring farms from different angles. His brother Colin would have liked to go to but is building a new house at present at Archie's Creek near Wonthaggi.

Don still plays golf most Saturday's and

on other occasions. He also cuts lawns and wood and also does other jobs on the farm. I like that. I have lots to do keeping up with family, garden, judging, meetings etc.

Our best wishes to everyone from the entire Victoria 2/2nd.

All for this time.

Margaret Monk

VICTORIAN NEWS - AUGUST ISSUE

Dear Jack and all 2/2nd friends everywhere – it's time for the latest news from Victoria. Before my last letter I did a ring around and spoke to most of the Victorians. Most are battling along fairly well –

Mavis Broadhurst rang to say that Fred is now in Darley House in the old repat hospital at Heidelberg. The whole of the 1st floor has been taken for aged care-Fred's legs have failed completely – Mavis visits him every day, it is only about 10 minutes from their home in Fairfield.

Harry Botterill is at present in respite care at a nursing home in Cheltenham – he had a fall recently and had a week or so in hospital. His legs are not so good and he hasn't been able to do his usual walking. I spoke with Lynette this evening and she is very pleased in that he is looking much better each day.

Don and I called to see **Dawn Clancy** at Wangaratta last Tuesday. Her bright smile greeted us and we had a nice visit. She is very happy in the nursing home there and joins in all the activities.

We had lunch with **Fay Campbell** and her sister **Julie** at Benalla later. Fay is doing very well and her garden is just full of colour – bulbs and spring blossom everywhere.

I had a nice talk with **Lorraine McLaren** too – she has sold her big home and is now in an apartment at Ryelands, 33/2 Malmsbury Street, Kew 3101. Her phone number is 9015 7011. Lorraine will be 80 in September and keeps reasonably well. I asked about the business and she said it is going along better than ever and she has her first little great grandchild. Lorraine told me there are 60 apartments where she lives and it is called Independent Living.

Eddie and Dorothy Bourke are always busy with family. Eddie visited Fred Broadhurst at Darley House a week or so ago.

Moira Coats rang me recently – it is nice to hear news of her and family.

My younger son Robert walked the Kokoda Track in early July and found it a really memorable experience. He did a lot of training in readiness for it – even climbed all the local hills here, some very steep as well as the nominated training track in the Bunyips State Forest. Robert is always very fit but found the track a very grueling task. We are looking forward to seeing pictures of it and a talk at our local hall next Saturday night.

To finish just a little Monk and family news – I now have a great grandson after 4 beautiful great grand-daughters. We are looking forward to news any day of Don's 9th great-grandchild.

Don and I send our very best wishes to all – **Special thoughts to Jess Epps**.

Bye for now

Margaret Monk

NORTHERN NSW NEWS

Dear Jack – I was sorry my notes for the last Courier were not included but never mind I am reasonably up to date

with these.

Russ Blanch and daughter Ellen have been victims of the flu which is rampant at the moment. Russ has his 87th birthday tomorrow, Saturday 23rd. Looks like spending it in bed. Son John is up here at Bangalow for his birthday so that is some consolation. We all wish you a happy day and get well soon.

Eric Herd and wife Lorraine are keeping very well at the moment so that is good news.

Tom Yates from Kyogle is well. Tom always reckons he is well all the time. Jean is having a bad trot, bad arthritis continuing and now in hospital with what looks as if it could be an ulcer on her leg. We will all be thinking of you Jean and hoping you can get some relief.

I had a good old natter with **Keith Wilson** from Booker Bay which is on the central coast of NSW. Keith is well and sends regards to all.

Dianne Cholerton is presently in hospital at Evans Head and I have yet to contact her. Julie is coping quite well and is okay. I advised Kath Press who lives at Orange of Dianne's being admitted to hospital and she will contact Julie. Ted Cholerton and Frank Press were on adjacent properties at Carcoar in central NSW.

Edith Jones was not at home at Barreba but was smart enough to be with son Chris on the Gold Coast. She is keeping well as is Chris and family.

Beryl Steen was another one moving further north. She is taking a break with a daughter in Cairns. Beryl is well, I know because her other daughter told me. You cannot beat family contacts.

Beryl Walsh from Kempsey is her usual self, always looking after others. She has her twin sister in from next door

who has the flu and Beryl says it is very prevalent in her area. I think it's bad nearly everywhere this year.

May Orr is one of those people on the go all the time and cheerful as ever. May is having bother with her eyes and of course it's a worry when like a lot of us you depend so much on the car to get around.

Nola Wilson from Gilgandra is another who is always bright and at the moment mixed up with theatricals and also organising a flower show. Nola has to have an operation on both knees so we will all be thinking of you. Her operation will probably be done at Dubbo.

Beryl Cullen at Kyogle still going well and another cheerful person.

Tom Pulliene from Young is okay. I had a short talk with Tom but we were interrupted when a daughter called in. We will talk later.

Fred Otway is okay. He, also like many suffers from arthritis – but like me keeps it in check with Prednesilone.

Keep well everybody.

“Happy”

QUEENSLAND NEWS

Dear Jack – thank you for yours of the 12th instant. Sorry about the stuff up your printer had with my last report. Cannot remember what I wrote then but some of my new news might be different.

Ralph and Sheila Conley are still in top health and are presently on an 8 day visit to northern NSW with a group of lawn bowling friends. Ralph is already organising a **BIG PARTY** to celebrate his 90th birthday early next year!!

Gordon and Joan Stanley – Joan is presently in hospital and Gordon is not

terribly mobile now. Like many of us he has his good and bad days. They are very fortunate in having two very kind and caring daughters. Christine has just returned from a Far East holiday and whilst she was away Helen came up from Melbourne to look after them.

Margaret Hooper is still in pretty good shape. Her happy nature is a big factor in getting through one day at a time.

Last month I received an East Timor package (deferred delivery) from **Yvonne Walsh**. It included a CD photo record of our Scholarship students working at their various courses at the Don Bosco Trade School at Comoro, their Graduation Ceremony in October last year and their Memorial Service at our Honour Board in the Australian Embassy at Dili. I showed it to **Paddy Wilby and Fred Otway** at Paddy's home yesterday. All three of us are not into IT but Paddy's wife Josie helped us out but we were only able to see the first part of the cassette. Paddy had just come home from hospital. He had problems with coughing, bringing up, dizziness and heart problems. Hopefully he is over the worst at least for the time being. Fred has Polio My Ludia Rheumatics. I'll bet that one will beat all of you, however he has stopped playing tennis for the time being but he is sure he'll be back again.

My partner **Lyn Love** is having her 90th birthday next month and a family party has been planned for her. She is keeping well and still drives a car!!

We all hope that Don Murray and Ray Parry are on the mend again and note that in many ways life isn't very easy for you from time to time Jack!

Cheers and best wishes to all our mates and their families.

Ron and Lyn

UNIT HISTORY BOOK REPORT

Sales have been slow over the past few months, 1,550 books being sold as at 31st August, leaving 450 to sell. Despite trying hard we have made little progress with the lady librarians who give war histories a low preference when it comes to ordering books. This is somewhat ironic when you consider the ladies in question were nearly all born after World War 11 and know little of the contribution the men and women of Australia made for their country during the 1939/45 period. Their line of thought is hard to follow.

Selling our book is important but just as important is to have it in all the main libraries throughout Australia for present and future generations to read. This also applies to the histories of our battalions and other units who served our country so well.

Librarians say you can solve the problem by donating a book to your local library. Some members have done this and are to be complimented for their action.

As stated previously our members, families and friends have been very generous in buying books and we do not expect them to shell out another \$60., however if you can sell a book to a friend it would be a big help. With Xmas coming it would make a good present. Each book now contains three autographs and will increase in value as time passes.

The book cost \$50. to produce and our asking price of \$60. plus postage \$10. is reasonable. The \$10. margin will go to our Timor Trust Fund – a worthy cause.

To buy a book ring J. Carey on 08 9332 7050 and one will be posted out immediately. Cheques or money orders should be made out to the 2/2nd

Commando Association and posted to:

**2/2nd Commando Association,
P.O. Box 11, WILLETTON WA 6955
J. Carey**

OUR CANNING STOCK ROUTE EXPEDITION

On the 11th July Fred, Robyn, Rhonda and I (Ken) along with two other couples departed Wiluna for the Canning Stock Route (CSR).

The CSR extends from Wiluna to Halls Creek covering 2,000km of desert. First, the Little Sandy (which is sandy and aint little), then the Gibson and finally the aptly named Great Sandy Desert. It is the most remote and challenging trek in Australia. There are about 1,000 endless succession of traction – sapping sand ridges which run East to West. As you can imagine there are no service stations, supermarkets or bitumen. Hence it is necessary to ensure your prior planning includes adequate fuel, water, provisions and equally important a mechanically sound 4WD vehicle to carry it all.

We spent 18 days bouncing along the corrugated track and climbing our way over numerous sand dunes always hoping that no one was coming from the other side. Although we always let people know by radio what we were doing.

There are 53 wells along the way, some have been restored by various 4WD clubs and these have good water and make nice campsites.

On an average day we would cover about 3 wells. Our average speed would be about 25KM/PH. It was always our aim to be on the move by 9AM and setting up camp by 3PM. Yes, there were some

days when things became a little fragile. We always looked forward to our SAO's at lunchtime and of course a cold drink or two once the tents were up. The highlight of each day was sitting around a beautiful campfire after a lovely meal, talking about the days events and looking up at a magnificent star studded sky, with the Milky Way so close that you felt you could almost touch it.

Typical desert conditions, the nights were freezing cold, like - 1degC.

This was even worse for Rhonda and I as our mattress had a hole in it and we were flat on the ground by the time morning came around - BUGGER!!

Just short of half way Fred and Robyn had roof rack problems and a cracked bull bar that forced them to exit the CSR at Georgie Bore via the Talawanna Track to Newman. This was pretty disappointing as they loved the experience.

Just short of half way mark the corrugations began to take its toll on the vehicles. Shock absorbers became a problem. In total we did 4 of them despite the fact that we all upgraded the suspension prior to the trip. However, warranty covered them on our return. Screws and bolts rattled loose daily. Thank god for the invention of zip ties.

One night after we turned into our tents I had left my pewter goblet on a box outside the tent. During the night we had visitors, yes dingoes. They had bitten thru a tent guy rope, power cord (lucky for them the generator was off) and taken the goblet into the bush and chewed around the top of it. Apart from dingoes we saw a lot of camels and cattle. Bird life was a little disappointing but we spotted finches, budgies, bustard (bush turkey) and brolgas. On the flora side of things I think we might have been a few weeks too early. Another great camp

was Durba Springs. Imagine driving into a large high rock wall gorge with green grass, trees and running water. There was also a nice steel built dunny but this had been burnt down. The alleged story goes that aborigines did it as they don't really want us there, but this is only what we heard.

On reaching Halls Creek we were all very satisfied with ourselves in what we had achieved. Lots of laughs were shared and many photos taken during our CSR experience.

From here we came home via Broome. Rhonda and I went back to Wiluna and spent some time with one of our son's, Brad who is stationed there in the Police Force.

A good time was had by all.

Regards,

Ken Hasson

Mexican Foray -2008 We arrived in Mexico City on a balmy evening with a hint of a thunderstorm in the air, in early July. Yes. Mexico City is traffic choked, polluted and crowded but these problems quickly fade in the face of a rich and fascinating culture, a sophisticated city and a very proud, but friendly people.

In Mexico, family is not a cliché or the mantra of politicians, but a lived experience and greatly valued quality of life. It is observable everywhere you go. Family photographs feature in most commercial establishments, displayed much as we do professional qualifications. And celebrations! There are always celebrations and fiestas-music, dancing, decorations and fireworks constantly exploding into the night skies, celebrating every imaginable thing.

It is impossible to traverse the city without engaging with Mexican art and

culture. Sculpture is omnipresent, at road intersections, in front of buildings and liberally sprinkled throughout the city's parks. It is a tradition which dates back to 200 BC and the pre-Mayan and Aztec civilisations of this fascinating country.

The historic heart and CBD, of Mexico City, the Zocalo is very impressive, with a rich array of imposing historic buildings and beautifully proportioned piazzas. You can see the Spanish and Moorish influences in many of these. They include the stately Opera House, the San Francisco and other cathedrals, the Belle des Arte and the Palace Nationale, where the office of the President of Mexico is located.

This is also the location of the vast and internationally renowned mural painted by the much revered Cubist artist and muralist, Diego Rivera. Its theme is Mexican identity, the mythical and pre-colonial past, and the struggle for independence of native Mexicans over their Spanish colonial masters. It includes hundreds of life sized characters, each with individual facial expressions, and physical stance. Many beloved Mexican heroes and historical figures can be spotted in this amazing tableau. Equally fascinating, are the very distinctive regional characteristics in the hundreds of faces and their clothing, highlighting the diversity of cultures in Mexico's states and geographic regions. We were to observe these same ethnic differences in the faces of people on the streets as we continued our exploration of the city.

The mural was a gigantic undertaking with many months of planning involving hundreds of life drawings of individuals and probably eighteen months to two years more to paint, even with the team of painters who assisted. Rivera, along with his wife Frida Kahlo, were leading

intellectuals supporting the push for independence and the rights and identity of the country's many different Indigenous peoples.

The mural raised many of the issues that we know so well through East Timor with its own long battle with repressive colonial powers and the subsequent Indonesian occupation. This was to be the first of many resonances with the Timor situation, which my daughter Kate and I were to discover in our first fascinating foray into Mexico.

Outside the walls of the Palace Nationale and in sight of the city's most splendid cathedral is an important archeological site. You can still see the footings and built remnants of the original Aztec city, from which contemporary Mexico City radiates. This is a favourite place for street performance. While there, a troupe of Indigenous (Rainforest) dancers and musicians performed. They wore spectacular costumes and facial markings. Their beaded headdresses with dangling tassels and halos of shimmering long feathers in brilliant reds and purples, blues, greens and vibrant yellows were truly splendid! Here too, as in other parts of the central city, you can see the gold and winged figure of the angel of liberty etched on the skyline. *The Angel*, as this most important monument is fondly called, has become the official icon of Mexico City.

Traffic here thunders past. Surprisingly, in the centre of grand boulevards like La Reforma, (the words 'reform' and 'revolution' are popular here), which carry huge volumes of vehicles into the city, are long linear parks with footpaths down the middle of them. Above these, trees form a continuous cathedral-like arched canopy, protecting the pedestrian from the hot Mexican sun. True green

arcades! We walked for 2 kilometres along one of these, taking photographs of the many contemporary sculptures that appear along them. The sculptures on Revoluta also function as park seats and are greatly used by Mexicans of all ages.

The flower market in San Angel was fun. Where we carefully match colour tones in our flower arrangements, the Mexicans do not. They put the most brilliant colour combinations together—red, purple, orange and yellow in one bunch. Even the tissue paper they use for wrapping is more vivid in colour than ours. Altogether quite joyous! We were to discover later, when we visited some cactus and dry gardens, that these are the colours of the actual cactus flowers, other wildflowers, and also Mexican birds. (Art and culture has always taken its cues from nature, as my father, would have been pleased to see us observe.)

On our second day in the city, we headed for the very famous National Museum of Anthropology to immerse ourselves in the Aztec, Mayan, Teotihuacan, Zapotec and Olmec civilisations. So much history to absorb.

This museum is huge, as are many of its exciting exhibits. These are displayed in great halls open to a central courtyard, within which is a long rectangular water garden. On the edges of this, scores of small tortoises sat, sunning themselves. We counted seventeen just in the immediate perimeter near us. (Another Mexican feature of which, Ray Aitken would have approved.) This highlighted for me, how the Mexicans embrace their climate, none more so than in their public buildings and parks. There is a special magic in visiting a museum which not only exhibits inanimate objects of the past, but links this to the 'living breathing

things' of today.

We spent over six hours here, taking a lunch break in the very pleasant outdoor garden café. Then we shifted our focus from the archeological exhibits on the ground floor to the ethnological collection, upstairs, to learn something about the cultural practices and traditions of the Indigenous peoples of Mexico and its climatically and geographically diverse regions.

High on our list of things to see in Mexico City was a visit to the house of Mexico's most beloved female painter Frida Kahlo and a few streets away from the 'Blue House', the twin studio/ houses built by Frida and her husband Diego (Rivera). These are joined at the upper/ studio level by a footbridge, which we understand, was opened or blocked up, depending on the vagaries of their (now much written about) tempestuous marriage.

The *Blue House*, still has its original furniture, crockery and other personal items including a wonderful collection of traditional pottery and folk art collected by Frida from each of Mexico's regions. In her bedroom, you can see Frida Kahlo's four poster bed with the mirror suspended from its canopy so she could paint as she lay recuperating from her shocking injuries sustained in a trolley bus crash on the way home from art school. Her parents also had made for her, a second panel which could slide in as the mirror slid out. This was comprised of two sheets of glass clipped together displaying several jewel-coloured butterflies. Those of you familiar with her surrealist paintings or the film starring Salma Hayek called *Frida* will know that many of her paintings show her with butterflies and flowers in her hair and sometimes with her pet

monkey on her shoulder. Family photos, pages from her diaries and love letters made this an intimate experience.

Mexicans adore Frida. There are banners and photos (usually in little brightly painted tin shadow boxes) of her all over Mexico. She is almost as popular as Guadalupe, the black Virgin Mary. Mexicans venerate their heroes and heroines in a big way, while we in Australia are more likely to pull our leaders down a peg or too. Even the taxi driver who dropped us to the *Blue House* talked proudly and reverently about Frida's inner strength and how her art was painted from the soul and for Mexico. "She was a strong woman - on the inside and out" he said, adding meaningfully "that she needed to be".

The picket fence around the twin /studio houses is amazing, about 5 feet high and entirely made of long linear cacti planted very close together and still growing. The buildings were in the modernist style of their time. Once on the fringe of the city, this former artist enclave is now a fashionable and affluent part of the city.

We were to see lots of superb modernist buildings in Mexico City. The new glass and steel Stock Exchange is in the shape of an Aztec pyramid. Mexicans are great architects and they really know how to build for the climate. 'The courtyard' always has an important place in public and private buildings in Mexico, drawn both from the Spanish influence and from the Pueblan tradition. We visited the famous Chapultepec Park, a much valued and popular place, particularly on week ends as is our Kings Park. We explored the streets, cafes and restaurants as much as we could in our remaining time in Mexico City.

We saw beautiful silverwork, weaving, ceramics and embroidery as well as all

the conventional things you would expect to find in any modern city. We also browsed in some wonderful bookshops. The Mexicans produce books of a very fine quality, mostly in Spanish, of course. We left with a long list of other things to do and see the next time have the opportunity to visit this very exciting and cosmopolitan city.

Then it was off on our country adventure to Guanajuato and to San Miguel del Allende, a little Spanish colonial city (about the size of Fremantle), four hours north and up into the mountains. San Miguel is named after another leader of the Mexican revolution, a brave (Spanish) Catholic priest and friend of Indigenous Mexicans. (Yet another synergy with Timor). Here we were to discover many more cultural, regional and botanical treats.. But this is a story for another time!

My warmest wishes to all my father's 2nd 2nd comrades, friends, and families

Jenny (Aitken) Beahan
September 2008

TIMOR - THE LAST PATROL???

4.30am on the 21st April, 2008 there was much activity at 28 Wilkins Street. Packs all prepared for take off. Sean, Gerald and son Daniel plus the old bloke ready to leave for Timor. It was Daniel's 13th birthday and he was setting out on an unusual trip, it was going to be unusual for his grandfather as well. We arrived in Darwin with about 3 hours to wait for our flight to Dili.

4.00pm Dili time we arrived in Dili to a Royal Reception, Kirsty Sword Gusmao met us and we just sat about talking whilst Kirsty's aid Jenny attended to our loading fee and customs. We had a very

big box of "I don't know what" to deliver to Kirsty from our daughter Helen in Canberra. Kirsty led us to her four wheel drive, a police driver and a police escort. Destination, the Prime Minister's and her former home about 16kms south of Dili on the Aileu road. Since the attack on the Prime Minister they have been living inside the compound near the drome whilst their new home was being built adjacent to the tourism hotel in Dili. The Prime Minister and his wife Kirsty kindly gave us the use of the house and staff up above Dare whilst we were in Timor and consequently we had a very comfortable first night meal prepared and beer in the fridge.

Next day 22nd April we picked up a four wheel drive and driver Juliana but unfortunately his English was about as good as my Tetum, we managed. We met Max Stahl the man that did the video on the Dili massacre, November 12th, 1991. I had met him years ago in Sydney, this was actually my third meeting with him in Timor. Over lunch he mentioned "an Irishman" who apparently was a miracle worker at getting things done. I asked him if he had met up with Tom Hyland, a Dubliner I knew who had been in East Timor for a couple of stints, and was, I knew back there once more. That's the Irishmen I have been referring to, I had forgotten about you knowing him. That man could be anything, Prime Minister, diplomat, chief executive, anything!! Max replied "Yes", I said when I met him years ago in Dublin he arranged a meeting with a foreign desk journalist on the Irish Times and a meeting with RTE Radio's premier interviewer and he achieved it with two telephone calls and as you know Tom was a bus driver before he gave up work to fight East Timor's cause I told Max. In Max's opinion East Timor is slowly evolving with a long hard road

ahead of it yet.

After lunch we had a wander around Dili and out to the statue of Christ erected by the Indonesians to celebrate East Timor's freedom from the colonial yoke. It is I believe 17 metres high, one metre per year of freedom, work it out for yourselves.

I called around to catch up with the Goncalves family. Florentino died a few years ago, also the son whose face I never saw in any visits, all I ever saw was his back as he squatted in front of a small fire. He was mental and a recluse. There is only Junario, his sister, her husband and family alive now. Junario bears a most remarkable resemblance to Nicolau. As long as I have known them they have lived in Lecedere as the Indonesians paid a high price for his devotion to East Timor. His life and the lives of two of his sons, and all his worldly possessions. If all else in my mind is erased the memory of Nicolau Goncalves will always be with me.

22nd April we left on our trip to the south coast. Called into Remescio to have a look at the ambush spot Ray Aitken set on 24th May, 1942 when his subsection ambushed the Japs on the Remexio track. The scenery unchanged except for the track. It is now a narrow bitumen road leading off the main Dili. Aileu road leading to the south coast. Gerald did a bit of video on the site. In 2002 I was in there with an old local native when he saw the spot, he became very excited. "Barrack Nippon Mati" and he pantomimed falling off the edge of the track into a deep gully. Norm Thornton I reckon was responsible for that episode of the ambush. He was just above the track with a tommy gun and Norm was a cool efficient tommy gunner.

We went up to Remexio it does not take

long to see around Remexio. These days it boasts a school and a church. We rejoined the Aileu road and headed south. Much more coffee plantations along that road now than in 1942.

Aileu not as busy as days of yore, of course. The Portuguese used it as a garrison town in 1942 and the Indonesians did likewise after they arrived in East Timor in 1975 and of course I saw Aileu under each of those regimes when Aileu was an important and busy town.

Maubisse has changed little, a huge Catholic church on the main road in. In 1942 I remember Tom Nisbet deciding we would push on to 'Flea Hill' just south of Aileu, a cold and windy night and we were riding ponies and Norm Thornton was riding the crankiest, most stubborn 'Kuda' in all Timor. He and Geordie Smith were that far behind I waited at the turn off to guide them in. I could hear Norm describing the pony and its ancestors half a mile behind. The command structure was receiving a few bouquets as well. Sean and Gerald had a good look round before we headed for the same saddle as the men of "C" and "D" Platoon well known standing at the top of that saddle much of our campaign in September to December can be viewed from that vantage point. Sean is very observant when it comes to country, he just stood there taking it all in. "Tough country Paddy", "the men who operated here" would agree Sean. They would also "add" thank God it helped them survive.

On down to Aitutu and the memorial statues of the crucified Christ and our Lady of Sorrows facing south and overlooking the huge valley to the south coast. I opted for the same track as I intended to go to Fatu Cauc and Betano also the driver lived in same.

We stayed in a really first class motel, tea, bed and breakfast. Sean, Gerald and Daniel wandered around but I was happy to just sit around.

The south coast of Timor is one area that has gone ahead as it is good farming country. Food production down there much expanded since 1942.

We left for Betano, not a bad road, but a much changed countryside. Many of the Balinese farmers opted to remain in East Timor. They are good industrious farmers and the country has reflected this fact. It was high tide, so what's left of the Voyager which is far less now than when I first saw it in 1992 was under water. One of its boilers still stands above the shoreline, whether it was Japs or Indonesians have salvaged it I know not. There was not much else to see around there so we headed west and my common sense abandoned me. Why in the name of God did I choose to do what follows I will never know. We went west from Betano, an indifferent road, rivers crossed per track or incomplete bridges. One huge river was a 50-50 proposition and I remembered it well from Indonesian days. They had a huge rock crushing plant on it. At Zumbia I decided we would go inland and head for Bobonaro, Serai is only 20kms from Zumbai, a good road and a couple of good places to stay. I decided we would climb over a rough mountain road to Bobonaro, no where to stay when we got there. A great view of the mountain ranges and the hugely massive bulk of Mount Cailaco towering up above all. So onto Maliana where I knew a couple of places where we could get tea, bed and breakfast. Idiocy was in command. "We will go up to Balibo" I said. We found the parish priest "Did he know where Bogin was?" He did. He would come with us and before I knew where we

were we are heading for the north coast road at Batugade. We then turn east for Maubara. The priest realized he doesn't know where the turn of to Bogin is, so we go looking for one of his catechists who do know. He wasn't home so his Reverence decides he knows someone else who does know, but the good father isn't sure where he lives. That's when the cool, calm Paddy exploded. "Bugger Bogin", back to Balibo. "No" says the priest. Well you can get out and do what you like, but we are going back to Balibo. The priest burst out laughing "We go Balibo" he said. The poor man had to feed us and find us a place to sleep. Sean, Gerald, Daniel and the driver slept in an abode behind the convent and I slept in the priest's residence as I couldn't negotiate the track leading to the convent.

The priest was a Divine Word missionary and poor as a church mouse but when we left in the morning he was not quite as poor. Gerald also gave him his telephone number and instructions for him to ring Gerald in Sydney as the priest and a party from the parish would be in Sydney for WYD. Gerald met him and took him and all his party out to dinner and made sure they were transported back to their quarters safely.

Next day 24th April we headed for Dili. Pulled up at Maubara and Gerald did a video of the pre-school that was built by our parish who raised the funds, \$120,000. for that. Our parish priest at that time also raised the money to build the three class room school and a teacher's residence in Bogin, plus re-roofing the school in Fatu Bessi. Father Graham McIntyre has done much for the people of East Timor.

We stocked up with beer for the bar. Kristy's staff had tea ready for us and

we had a few pre Anzac Day drinks. Next morning we attended the Anzac Day ceremonies at the Australian Memorial at Fatu Naba.

The army had painted and refurbished the memorial for the occasion. The Commanding Officer of the Timorese army, the Australian Ambassador, the Portuguese Ambassador, Warren Snowdon, Minister for the Army and Tom Snowdon's son, a representative from the RAN and an extremely fit, lean, young Major who I think was part of our Ambassador's party and not forgetting Rufino, ramrod straight, green beret, double red diamond colour patch and a seat of honour. His sons took, him there and his grand-children were left with him. There is a story there if anyone is interested enough to piece it together. Read Paul Cleary's book "Shakedown". The answer lies between the covers.

It was a different Anzac Day ceremony. Children played a major role in it and fittingly so. Death, glory and dauntless courage seems to get nowhere except continual episodes of death, glory and dauntless courage.

In the afternoon Sean and I went to Ermera, past Three Spurs. They are still there but the waterfall has disappeared and up to Railaco, much changed. School, church, more dwelling and coffee plantations. On past Tocolulic and we stood and looked over the Gleno Valley, a thriving place, much more farming, then across the Gleno river on a different kind of bridge, past the turnoff to Vila Maria and I said to Sean "C" Platoon, the sappers could tell many a story about all this area. Up near Ermera the road is a shambles, a pointer of what to expect. Ermera is little better than a shanty town. There is a beautiful church overlooking what had once been a busy mountain town, now it is

derelict. Sean said "It's lifeless Paddy and even I felt it and I never knew what it had been like, you did." It was a sad day. The only bright spot, the leader of the rebel soldiers had surrendered here the day previously. It was not a happy trip.

We sat around talking about our trip that evening. The boys had imbibed much of what they had seen and when we were in residence Daniel used to play soccer with the local youngsters. We left for Baucau on the 26th via the coast road. Ramos Horta lives out that way so we had to pass through a couple of security check points. It is a good road, of course nearly all flat country. There is still a big refugee settlement between Hera and Manututo. The latter place was completely wrecked and destroyed by the pro Indonesian militias in 1999. Manututo has not recovered from that destruction yet.

The north coast going east is not nearly as good a country as the south coast, very arid. Only on the rivers is there cultivation and those rivers are almost dry during the dry season. Vemassi the only place of any significance between Manututo and Baucau and none of that road between those two towns any good for the kind of actions we indulged in during 1942.

Baucau, busy as usual. It is a pleasant place with some fine buildings which were not subject to the destruction inflicted elsewhere. The way I heard it years ago, the bishop of the new diocese did a deal with the paramount militia leader to spare Baucau. Another story I got from a very, very high up police official (NATO) way back where a militia leader handed him fifty million rupiah's, yes fifty million rupiah's. The militia leader's conscience was bearing heavily upon him. He wanted out and no more of what he had been involved in. I also got

the name of the man the official gave the money to. What happened to the money after that I do not know and have never endeavoured to find out. That story is not a rumour.

We had a good look around Baucau and a good lunch. I should have gone on to Tutuali, one of the most beautiful parts of East Timor but stayed overnight in Baucau. We made it an easy day and returned to Dili.

We were invited to dinner with the Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmao and his charming wife Kirsty. One of the most pleasant evenings of our stay. Xanana is an excellent communicator as is his wife Kirsty. The conversation flowed back and forth, Sean, Gerald and Daniel perfectly at ease with their honoured, down to earth hosts.

Xanana told me the most dangerous period in the History of the Resistance was 1982. It was reduced to just a few platoons, scattered over East Timor. It was close to destruction. It had to be rebuilt completely from the ground up. This was done and very successfully so and though Xanana was in an Indonesian goal by 1999 his organisation in East Timor was strong and a force in the Referendum in August 1999.

We had an extensive and happy trip, were befriended by many people and it was well and truly worth the effort. Our thanks must go to all who made it so.

We arrived back in Sydney 6.00am, 1st May, 2008 to a warm greeting from the Holder of the Fort, Nora. She was overjoyed that two of her sons and a grandson had visited the land they had heard so much about and now had experienced for themselves.

Paddy Kenneally

FRIENDS OF ERMERA

The following is an extract from the President of the Friends of Ermera, 6th Annual Report by Jan Trezise. What wonderful work they have done and are still doing for the Timorese. We congratulate them for their achievements.

Letefoho Water Supply – This year 2008 we have taken on our largest project with the rehabilitation and potential extension of the water supply to the town of Letefoho and its surrounding villages. We were made aware of the problem and inspected it with local officials and residents during visits in 2007.

Rather than simply raise the funds and contract a company with the expertise to do the job, in the manner in which aid is often offered to developing, struggling communities, the Friends of Ermera have decided upon a model which vitally involves the locals and relies upon their input in the planning and design of the project and ultimately, in the care, maintenance and control of it once it is up and running.

The government of Timor Leste has expressed an interest in this proposal and the way it will be carried out as they endeavour to eventually provide piped, local water to all the communities of the country.

All this comes at a cost, of course! The Friends of Ermera have called upon many of the likeminded groups that they have worked with in the past to help fund the project which will probably cost \$46,000. to complete. Although not large by Australian standards, this is an enormous amount for the local East Timorese where the average income is under \$2. per day. Groups as disparate and wide spread as some plumbers from Warrnambool, Montmerency Secondary College, the Friends of Letefoho (from

WA), our local Kambrya College, a collective of doctors from Geelong, The Eltham Interact Club as well as Rotary groups in WA have all made generous contributions towards this project and, along with funds that the Friends of Ermera themselves have raised and allocated, we are only \$12,000. short of having it fully funded.

The initial stage of the project is the consultation process, in which nine of the villages that are affected by the pipeline will form water committees to decide upon where taps will be situated for the benefit of all who will be able to use them and how the responsibility for the accountability of usage of water and maintenance of the system will be arranged.

The second stage will involve the education and support of these water committees in each village and then the actual building, replacing or rehabilitation of the system will go ahead, supervised by Australian volunteer plumbers but actually undertaken by local skilled and unskilled labour. The Friends of Ermera have undertaken to find all the costs-for the consultation processes, the education, the hire of specialized equipment, the pipes and other materials and all labour.

Projects Completed During this Financial Year

Ponilala Junior High School was completed for the start of the 2007/8 school year and was officially opened by Jan Trezise and Lee Norris with a wonderful community based ceremony during January 2008. It was funded by Dandenong East Rotary, St Paul's Anglican Grammar, Hallam Valley Rotary, St Paul Apostle Parish, Endeavour Hills

and St Michael's Parish, Berwick.

Railako Kindergarten was completed at the beginning of 2008 and was also officially opened by Jan Trezise and Lee Norris at a happy, child friendly ceremony during January. It was funded by Project Nine and general fundraising.

Hatolia Junior High School Rehabilitation Stage One was completed at the start of the 2007/08 school year. This rehabilitation of two classrooms was funded by the Beaconhills College Village Campus school community.

Gleno Kindergarten rehabilitation of toilets, drainage and provision of ceilings was funded by Woodbine Road Kindergarten.

Atsabe Kindergarten/Primary School rehabilitation of toilets was funded by Project Nine and St Paul's Anglican Grammar School.

Gleno Junior High School basketball/volley ball court was funded by Gleneagles Campus.

Matata and Humboe Women's Groups each received two new sewing machines.

Radio Cafe (Ermera District Community Radio): with technical support from the Alternative Technology Association we funded the replacement of two solar panels so that the radio could continue to broadcast to the Ermera Community.

Bubaria Primary School Roofing was funded from the proceeds of a concert arranged by St Paul Apostle North and South Primary Schools.

Jan Trezise, President

RAMALA CAMP-13TH NOVEMBER, 1945 Part 2-

Barbed wire was put all around and no communication with outsiders was ever allowed. It was only after I myself was brought in that I learned that very few of the fowls and eggs I sent in reached the missionaries, everything had to pass through the hands of the police and they helped themselves very liberally to the poultry or whatever else came into their hands.

By special request of our Bishop I was allowed to come to Vunapope (under guard of course) on the 12th November, 1942 to see Father Barrow, who was dying of dysentery. On the way in we passed ninety British and Australian prisoners brought here from Singapore. Though surrounded by armed Japs I could not bear to pass by our own men without waving to them, they answered with a beautiful salute. The Japs could not salute like that – not for a fortune. Going back that same evening it was raining, we met again these same men tired and hungry after working unloading ships all the day. Some of them were supporting mates who seemed too exhausted to walk. Prisoners as they were and ill clad, yet how superior they looked to the crawling Japs. It made me feel proud to belong to their race. Since peace we have heard that all of them except one died of starvation – starved to death whilst the Japs had mountains of food stuffs all over the country.

Father Barrow who was P.P. in Rabaul for two years previous to the invasion, remained in the vicinity hoping to help dying and wounded when the attack started. He was captured with hundreds of Australian soldiers on the 24th January, 1942 and during five weeks he got a rough time. He had to unload ships, chop

wood and other menial work. Whilst in the camp he got dysentery and like all the others got no medical treatment. At the end of five weeks Father was brought to Vunapope. He was bright and apparently his old self, the sunshine of the camp, always full of wit and humour. But, though he never spoke of it he was suffering all the time and early in November he had a serious relapse together with ulcers on the liver. When I saw him, 12th November he was dying but even then witty and bright. He died next day. Father was loved and admired by all, white, yellow and black he was a great missionary and is still talked of and mourned by all who knew him. When dying he heard thunder. Father imagined it was the Americans bombing and laughingly said: "That sounds good." Poor Father thought our release was near. When asked if he had any wish he answered: "Yes, to live to work for the mission and to see Ireland again." Although he loved the mission yet he longed to see Ireland, he always talked of his approaching holiday. He used to say, "I want to see the faith in practice". When the doctor gave up all hope our Bishop told father that Our Lord was going to come for him soon and asked him to offer his young life for the mission. Father wanted so much to live, but when he knew it was the will of God for him to go, he willingly assented and offered his life for the success of God's work amongst those native peoples. When it became known that father was so seriously ill the whole mission, Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and children flocked to the chapel to implore God to spare him to us. The sisters prayed all through the night, taking turns each hour before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The chapel was all in darkness even the customary sanctuary lamp had to be extinguished

on the arrival of the Japs and was not relit until almost four years later. We were warned that if we even struck a match at night the soldiers would shoot. As the sisters knelt there in the darkness Our Lord seemed very near and they were confident that he would not turn a deaf ear to their petitions. But the inscrutable designs of God, he willed otherwise and with bleeding hearts they must utter their Fiat. Our sisters were with him when he died, it was a little after 8pm on the 13th November, 1942. He was conscious until very near the end though unable to speak and was pleased when the Brother and Sisters took it in turns to pray aloud for him. All thought of the little Irish Mother who was losing her fine priest-son and many a fervent prayer was said for her and her loved ones when father was really gone. His loss was such a sorrow for us all, what would it be for them when they would hear of it. We trusted him to comfort them, no one else could. His funeral was very simple, he was carried to our little cemetery followed by all who were at the mission. The sisters told me that there was not a dry eye even the priests wept for their loved confrere. They also told me how the fathers came every few minutes to the window of his room during his last hours, all giving him their priestly blessing. Two priests remained with him day and night and vied with each other to have the privilege. I was not at the funeral as you know, I had seen him for the last time in life the day before, but I was able to visit and pray at his grave later on when I had been brought into the camp. The seminarists whom he had been teaching for some months previous to his death simply idolized him and took great pains to keep his grave in order. It would have been a consolation for those dear to him to

know how he was revered in life and loved and remembered in death.

Back in Tapo we went on fairly well except that we were pestered by the Japs imposing on us and in spite of all my protestations that I had so many sick, etc. I had to make shirts, trousers and even whole uniforms for them. One day too a Jap threatened to cut my head off. I had refused to give him an injection, told him they had their own doctors. Some days later while I was making a novena to St Therese for his removal, the idea of losing my head had not appealed to me, he was shot – a bullet from a New Zealand plane – and he died almost immediately. He had been supervising about a hundred native men who were working in a garden for the Japs, and though the bullets were many and fast he was the only one struck. It seemed to me that St Therese knew something about shooting. This incident increased the estimation of the natives for the pilots about 100%. They thought is marvelous that they could pick out this one Jap and leave them all unhurt.

We were always being told that we were to be taken into the compound but it was not until 12th October, 1943 that they actually put us behind the barbed wire. I have gone before my story here a little. It was 12th October that about five hundred planes came over Rabaul. Showers of bombs fell over Rabaul itself and over the aerodromes all around it. Planes flew over us in Tapo, machine gunning fiercely, bullets went through the church, convent, hospital and school but the Lord takes care of his own, no one was hurt though we were all caught unawares. The bombing and machine gunning continued every day so at long last the Japs came and ordered us to Vunapope. It was the 28th October,

we went off with heavy hearts leaving weeping and disconsolate natives behind us.

In Vunapope everybody was bright and cheerful (even behind the barbed wire) and in spite of the fact that the food was most unpalatable. We had sufficient food at that time, it was sent in by the three brothers who had been allowed to remain at the farm to look after the natives. From this time on we had two or three raids every day, they were terrifying although only a few bombs actually fell close to our camp. All these months I was one of the few who used to remain at home or outside somewhere, counting the planes as they came over and rejoicing when we would see the Jap fighters getting the worst of it. Most of the sisters were terribly scared and they used to fly to the trenches, which were about 200 yards from our house, as soon as a plane would be heard. At night this same few slept peacefully in their beds whilst the scared ones raced back and forth to the trenches as every plane came over, it meant wasting hours and hours of good sleep as the planes used to go round and round half the night and sometimes even the whole night. Many and many a time they would bemoan the fact that they hadn't the nerve of the "few", and many were the resolutions made to stay in bed the next time. These resolutions, however, were the kind that are made to be broken, the next night and every night it was the same story. I can assure you that it was not all prayers that were said for the Americans on these weary nights, the most of us wished them in Jericho.

Conclusion next Courier

Colin Doig's – "The Ramblings of a Ratbag" printed in 1989 contains many humorous accounts of his life in the depression years. Present day Australians are on clover compared to what the people in those times went through. Col wrote:

The local police mostly did not like vagrants such as us cluttering up their fair towns and begging feeds from the townspeople after offering to do odd jobs such as cutting wood etc. The coppers could give you a bob (one shilling) to buy a feed and then would order you away so that the serenity of their existence was not impeded. I must say that generally speaking if you didn't make trouble the gendarmes were not too bad, and many is the time we used the local cells to keep out the weather. Townsfolk were all pretty good in regard to a handout considering how tough the times they were going through were. My blue eyes and youthful angelic smile, turned on for housewives to give us a cuppa or a meat sandwich. Of course it was nearly a waste of time trying out the farmers because they were all on the flat of their arseholes.

Alan Cross and I were on our way trying out the possibilities of the towns in the wheat belt adjacent to the Great Southern, and arrived at Bruce Rock, a small town in those days, but it did boast street lighting. As we wandered through the street I said to Alan, "Hell, I could do with a smoke". And at that moment a chap came along rolling a smoke, so I smartly stopped him under a light and put the bite on him for a twirly. I think he was going to say "No sir", when out of the darkness big Alan, all of his six feet three inches, loomed over his shoulder. The bloke took one look and panicked, and thrust the tin of tobacco and papers at me, and took off like his date was on fire. Alan and I gave a great big giggle,

but suddenly realized he might go for the cops and we would have been up the creek without a paddle, so we made smart tracks back to the vicinity of the railway line ready to decamp on the first train.

"Podge", one of my good mates and about the hardest case and glibbest talker I ever knew, and I joined forces and went up the Midland line together chasing work. We landed a job at Three Springs for a cockie who was also the local Member of Parliament in the Upper House. It was said that he had been in Parliament for ten years and hadn't yet made a speech. He must have been as conserving with his words as he was with his cash.

After the first day's work, Podge said to the boss, "Mr Maley, I know why they call this Three Springs". Maley fell in like a sucker and said "Why?". Podge spoke up, "You spring out of bed, spring to breakfast and then spring to work". The second day brought forth another gem from the irrepressible Podge who asked, "Mr Maley, are those fowls up in that tree ornamental?" Again the boss tumbled and asked why. Podge said, "They are there when we get up and they are there again when we get back".

We didn't last long as the skinflint sent us packing, and as Podge said, "I didn't mind him sacking us but I barred him standing at the gate whistling 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' as we walked on down the road".

Three of us took off for Kalgoorlie to try out the Goldfields which was one of the flourishing areas at that time as the price of gold had not tumbled. Unfortunately we arrived too late. The place was overladen with blokes chasing a job. The local populace had, had enough by the time we arrived, and I'm afraid the receptions

we received on looking for handouts were far from the alleged hospitality reputation of the Goldfields. We did not tarry and headed back to the big smoke.

On the return trip we jumped into a closed van at Merredin in the middle of the night, and this van was packed with Abos. When we arrived at a station someone asked, "What place is this?", and an unmistakable Abo voice piped up, "this place Killer berrin". It is on this trip I made the acquaintance of one "Bumzac" who had been ho-boing it around the state for donkeys years. It did not take a Rhodes scholar to know how he got his moniker. He was totally allergic to soap and water, and his worldly goods would have made Dick Whittington look like a millionaire. He stank to high heaven, and I think got most of his handouts on the basis that it was good to get rid of his stench. He just could not stop jumping trains. A tale is told that he once was employed by a cockie, and took a dray load of wheat into a siding. Just as he got there a train pulled into the siding and he left the loaded dray and jumped train to wherever be its destination and "Bumzac's" landfall.

Using the WAGR easy travel movement, I managed to see a great bit of WA in a very short time, but I'm afraid I did not find any place any better than home. "Podge", "Jarrah" and self set off to see the south-west to find out if the dairy country was any better than what we had seen as far north as Geraldton and east to Kalgoorlie and south to Albany. The south west corner really was all that remained of the bush.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Dear Jack – Herewith cheque for \$50. – dispose of this as you see fit. Cannot write much these days – arthritis in

fingers and wrists.

May is in care in Melbourne, cannot drive that far these days to see her.

Best of luck to you and yours.

Leith Cooper, Cowes, Victoria 3922

Dear Mr Carey – I do apologise for not writing earlier, my sister and I wanted to thank you for taking the time to attend our mother's funeral service. I am sorry I did not have more time to speak to you on the day.

Sandra and I grew up reading and seeing copies of "The Courier" around the house, so in a way although we haven't met many of the members of your 2/2 Commando Association, we feel that we know most of you.

Our mother and father, Gerry and Mary McKenzie derived the greatest of pleasure from their contacts and friendships associated with the 2/2 Commando's. Over the years I have come to understand (in a very small way) of the utter bravery and sacrifice my father and his many friends and colleagues made throughout the war.

My sister and I want you to know we will always be grateful for everything that you endured and did for us during those war years.

I hope that you all live forever and if that is not possible then the memory of what you did is never forgotten.

Kindest regards

Ross McKenzie, Fairfield, Victoria 3078

Jack Carey – please accept this donation for the Courier. I like reading about my brother's friends whom I have met on past safaris which I miss.

Thanking you

Frank Park, Newcastle 2284

Dear Jack – I had no luck getting the

regional library to buy a copy of the unit's history due to the bureaucratic system that they have to go through to make all purchases. This is forced on them by government regulations in the name of greater "efficiency"!!! However, it is no good worrying about things you cannot change so send me two books as per the order form as I am sure that they cannot refuse a donation. The RSL only has a small library, mostly of donated books, so I'll give them one too. Put the extra money to wherever it is needed.

Like everyone else, life has slowed down to a very slow walk for me but Marj's artery problems have finally caught up with her and they can no longer be operated on. The arteries have now hardened in the mobility section of the brain so that she can no longer walk and spends all her time either in a wheel chair or in bed. Luckily we made the right decision in coming here seven years ago when we moved into a self care unit. I now live alone in the unit and Marj has moved into the full care hospital section and I can wheel her up to our unit for part of the day. The staff here are tops so after so many good years we have little cause to complain.

I have fared pretty well as I still do not take any medicines but have a good dose of arthritis that means that I find it hard to write with a pen for more than a few minutes and then everyone finds it hard to read! The only use that I find for arthritis is that combined with a weakening bladder, it gets me out of bed early.

We still enjoy the Courier very much and appreciate the huge amount of work that has been put into it by the dedicated group that have managed to keep it going after so many years. Our thanks go to all those in the West and elsewhere who

have given their time and energy to do such a great job.

All the best to you and to those that we have not had contact with for so long.
Jack Peattie, New South Wales 2340

Dear Jack – By way of introduction, my name is Bob Iles and I'm writing on behalf of my father Jack Iles. I believe Dad's nickname was "Iggy" and he served with the 2/2 in New Guinea.

Unfortunately Jack suffered a serious stroke some time back and as a result has been forced into high level care at a nearby aged care facility. Without going into too much detail Jack's condition could not be any worse.

On a happier note, Shirley and I will shortly be moving to the NSW far North Coast. We're headed for the Northern Rivers up near Maclean and Iluka. I know Eric and Lorraine Herd live at Iluka and I think Happy Greenhalgh lives up there somewhere. When we get settled I'll try to touch base.

I'd be happy to hear from any members who remember Jack.

Regards

Bob Iles, Evatt ACT 2617

Dear Jack – I have just read the 2/2 Commando Courier and most interesting it was too. Please find the enclosed \$50. towards publishing. I have recently been to Perth which is indeed an effort these days. I spent two nights with my younger daughter Trudy and then Max came and picked me up to stay at his home in Floreat. While there he took me to visit Babs and of course we had a nice time talking about old times. I know how much she must be missing Bernie. Gilbert and his wife visited Kim and Erica when holidaying in America last year and it was lovely seeing all the family at Bernie's 90th birthday party and I was very pleased

both my boys went to his funeral. Max drove me home after my few days stay in Perth, but I came home exhausted. He is off on another trip around the world next month and both my girls are touring up North at present to get away from the cold. I keep snug in my nice little unit and do a lot of reading. I have home help and a gardener each week and I could not do without my garden.

I hope you are keeping reasonably well; old age is not so good. I cannot get about like I used to but I have great memories of those wonderful holidays with Harold and a great life on the farm and being blessed with four wonderful children.

It saddens me to think of Timor now, it was once a very peaceful country and I have fond memories of when Harold took me up there many years ago, such lovely, friendly people. The 2/2 Association has done a wonderful job helping them in so many ways.

Bye for now Jack, this was to be just a note.

Best wishes,

Iris Rowan-Robinson, Bridgetown, WA 6255

Dear Jack – sending an enclosure for \$30. my donation for 2/2nd. I'm sorry this is so late; I was hoping to have been able to give it to you at the dinner in July. It was a disappointment to me to miss the dinner. I had the flue and was quite ill for about a month, but thank goodness am okay again now. I very much appreciated the call I had from Dorothy Maley and her offer to take me to the dinner was very kind.

I do hope this finds you well and not feeling too badly with regards of the cold, wet, windy weather we are having. I had hoped to show you and others my photo's of the visit I had to Canberra.

Maybe some other time. Well Jack my hands and pen never want to go together these days so I say cheerio.

Lots of love,

Joy Chatfield, Dudley Park 6210

Dear Jack – good to hear your voice last weekend and I regret not actually catching up.

Enclosed a cheque which is my belated \$50. Courier donation and \$50. for the Trust Fund. Remembered whilst reading the June Courier.

Was sad to learn of Bernie Langridge's passing. I always enjoyed conversations with him. Never, never go to Scotland for the weather. I have just returned after 4 weeks there, (came home via Perth). It was the middle of their summer – top temperature was 6 degrees and only two days without pelting rain and the wind chill factor was 16 degrees and I am castled and castled out forever.

King regards

Patsy Thatcher, Victoria 3182

Dear Jack – the books arrived in yesterday's mail. Thank you very much – I am sending Don's cheque with this. We were all pleased to see the three signatures in the books too.

I have just been talking to Mavis Broadhurst on the phone – she rang to tell me that Fred is now in care. He was taken to Heidelberg Repat Hospital and after a short time there a bed became available at Darley House which is a “nursing home” wing of Heidelberg. Mavis said his legs had given up and she could no longer manage him at home. He is quite happy there so it is a big relief for Mavis.

I also had a talk to Harry on the phone this evening. His legs are not the best and so he cannot do the long walks he has been used to. His doctor has told

him he needs to eat more meat and so he is going to get Meals on Wheels about 3 times a week. Harry says he can only cook sausages and his doctor said there is not much in sausages.

I rang Pat Petersen this am. Her arthritis is giving her trouble. Her mother had her 101st birthday on 29th June.

I will send a letter for the Courier to you before the end of August.

All for now and thanks again for the books. Don joins me with kind regards.

Margaret

Dear Jack – Please find enclosed a cheque for \$50. towards the production of the Courier. You and your team do such an excellent job.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Laing, ACT 2617

Dear Jack – Thanks for sending the “Spec” over with John’s obituary. I must admit I hadn’t seen it for a while. (I have one with all my documents, but don’t seem to read them often.) “Happy” did well to retain it.

I am sending you a small DVD which you probably have seen but nevertheless you can give it to the family if you like. I have shown it around our town quite a bit.

Also including \$140. for 2 books of “All the Bull’s Men”. Our local library is accepting them from me.

All the best and I enjoyed the bulletin which you sent of the 2/2nd.

Regards **Kevin Rose, Hillston 2675**

Dear Jack – Hope this letter finds you well. I have enclosed a cheque for \$100. to cover the costs of the purchase and posting of the Courier magazine.

Shirley and I are both well and looking forward to celebrating our 60th Wedding Anniversary on the 24th July.

We are having a gathering at our daughter and son-in-law’s home, just a few friends along with our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren which at this stage of our lives range in age from grandchildren from 15 to 40 and great-grandchildren 3 to 20. All in all we expect 60 people at the function most of which is family.

We really enjoyed the last issue of the Courier and are looking forward to the next issue.

Please send everyone my best wishes.

Kind regards

Doug Dixon, Jannali 2226

Dear Mr Carey – Herewith is a cheque for \$210.00 being payment for 3 copies of “All the Bull’s Men” that you have kindly forwarded to:

- (i) Peter and Pat Fischer, Castlemaine, Victoria
- (ii) Allan Adair, Deree, Victoria
- (iii) Janet Lane, Bicheno, Tasmania.

Thank you for this wonderful account.

In 1994 Peter Spillett showed me the two “coastal guns at Kelapa Lima and the memorial at Oesau, near Koepang.

In 2004 at Oesau what was the hospital and used by the Sparrow Force were green painted roofs with white painted eaves and similar appointments. The buildings appeared neat and noticeable. I do not recall their current use.

As children living near Darwin my father took us to Brooks Creek railway siding to see the troop trains stop there for a break – hour? (in 1941) in the evening. The troops in transit spent the warmer part of the day at Pine Creek – then moving onto Darwin at near dark. They travelled in cattle trucks and also in freight wagons. There was a railway station there also – being the centre of gold mining activity

commencing in 1871 – the railway opened in 1880? Darwin to Pine Creek.

Many believe that security from observation as well as heat were considerations. People did believe that the enemy had 'agents' operating in the country.

With best wishes,

Reg Wilson

Dear Jack – Thankyou very much for the family photo (per Jim). Hope the Norma Hasson day went well. Sorry I could not make it. I am well and keeping busy. Boy sitting (he's no baby he informs me) Luke and thoroughly enjoying him. Hopefully will have a good roll up in November from the family once again.

Best wishes

Elvie Howell

Dear Jack – the last day of the financial year. I must now settle down to informing the Taxation inquisitors how much help I received 2007/08 and do my bit for the 'Lucky Country'. The place is awash with dollars thanks to the miners in the golden West and Queensland and of course China. Never in its history has Australia had so much money and strangely people on the minimum wage have never found it so hard to make ends meet.

The Aussie week-end has gone, women no longer stay at home to raise a family, they are out working to help dad get enough money to feed and house the family. I agree with you that we are fast becoming a nation of whingers and many people make little effort to sustain and help themselves. Many more haven't a clue on how to do so and never will, nevertheless there are many more who battle hard to survive in a market economy with not nearly enough finance to do so.

Jack me boyo – there are nine parliaments in this country to govern and manage it, considering our resources, our huge area and a small population they don't make a

very good job of it.

The men from Iraq marched through Brisbane and a fine body of men they looked. They went where they were sent, they did what they were given to do but when the media equates them with the men of World War 1 – it is an insult to the memory of our original diggers – not even in World War 11 did Australian soldiers endure what the men of 1914-1918 endured. The only exception I make to that, are the men who were unfortunately Japanese prisoners for 3-1/2 years.

Maria Luby was, or still is down from North Queensland visiting Alan, that will be a pleasant and happy interlude in Alan's day to day life. Alan keeps himself busy per medium of the phone. As you know he keeps contact with many people and is visited by people from the Dee Why RSL. Alan was a very active member there and the club is only a few hundred metres from where he lives.

We are all keeping well, the family scattered around a bit with Helen in Canberra, Stan in Gundagai. We have a lot of contact and of course Gerald and Michael live within a few miles of us. Nora sends her best wishes.

Remember me to Harry Sproxton and Keith Hayes and any of the diminishing clan you meet up with.

The big battle on Wednesday night. Well Jack if NSW plays like they did in the first game and Queensland plays like it did in the second game we are in for a magnificent and exciting game of Rugby League. Who will win, if played as I have said, toss a penny in the air, if one falters it will be a massacre for the one that falters. You can toss another coin on which one will do that – if either does.

Good luck Jack – send me two histories and put the change to the Courier and ET Fund.
"Paddy"

Dear Jack – Don has written Robert's poem for me to send.

I have been talking to Harry Botterill's daughter Lynette this am. He is much better and all being well will be going back to his unit on Wednesday. He is to have "Meals on Wheels" 5 days a week, so hope it all works out well for him.

We have had some more rain overnight and have now had almost 6-1/2 inches for August after 4-1/2 inches in July – our wettest winter since 1996.

We are off to Poowong to church and then our annual church dinner.

Margaret Monk

WALKING IN NEW GUINEA

My father was in New Guinea in 1943
He didn't walk the Kokoda Track he left that bit for me
He was up the Ramu valley and patrolled the Bismarck range
Though walking in New Guinea to him would not seem strange

The Second Independent company was his unit's name
Over 12 months stuck on Timor had brought the unit fame
Commando style training at Wilson's Prom wasn't very much fun
But it kept the poor bastards alive when outnumbered ten to one

After going to New Guinea the units name was changed
To the 2/2 Commando Squadron and it was re-arranged
Intelligence gathering was part of the job so patrolling was the go
This walking in New Guinea – Dad and his mates did know

So now we've walked Kokoda Track and really did it on our ear
We haven't caught malaria or walked in very fear
And while we are all gathered I'd like to say out loud
That of my Dad and all his mates – I am so very proud.

Written by Robert Monk - whilst walking the Kokoda Track

July 7-18, 2008

PARS ON PEOPLE

Old age presents many problems but isn't all that bad when you consider the alternative.

Alan Luby celebrated his 93rd birthday on 6th September. Congratulations Alan on making another year. Unfortunately he is now back in Lady Davidson hospital receiving treatment for oedema in his troublesome right leg and expects to be there for 2-3 weeks.

Don Murray our Vice President has had a tough three months. He took ill in late June and spent the next two months in Sir Charles Gairdner hospital where he became critically ill and was not expected to live, somehow he pulled through (Ida said it was a miracle) and though feeling better his condition is still not good. Don is now in Peel hospital, Mandurah and is being well cared for.

Ida and the family naturally are very worried but grateful that he is now closer to home. It has been an exhausting time for them all.

Please remember Don in your prayers.

Helen Poynton underwent a major operation in the Mount in mid June. Helen a matron herself for many years took it

in her stride and made a remarkably quick recovery. She is now planning to move to York with Aaron, Rhian and family and hopes to be there by Xmas. Our best wishes to you Helen.

Elsie Jordan has recovered from a duodenal ulcer which hospitalised her early in the year. She is now feeling well and enjoys the social life style in her new surroundings at Tapping. Elsie will be 90 next April.

Keep on keeping on Elsie.

Hazel Wicks has not been feeling well of late and is still undergoing tests by her doctor to find out what is wrong with her. Hazel will be 80 before Xmas and wants to be 100% for the big occasion. She sees Nancy Timms frequently and they chat about the good old days. Keep your chin up Hazel.

Henry Sproxton and Wilf March are two truly amazing blokes. Both have been through hell over the past 10 years and have all the complaints you can think of but still battle on. They are an inspiration to the other 20 members still on deck in W.A. God Bless them both.

Les Halse as reported in Ray Parry's call is the sole survivor of the 22 originals in 5 Section. Les who had a massive operation about 15 years ago will be 89 on December 8th. He gets great support from his family and is always cheerful and bright.

Elsie Penglase - Elsie's last Courier was returned so I rang the one and only Penglase in the phone book and was told she was not related to the person I spoke to. Can anyone assist me in finding Elsie's whereabouts? I would be most grateful if you could.

We thank **Greg Tyerman** for providing such a fine selection of photos on our Commemoration Service held in Kings Park on 18th November last year.

J. Carey

COURIER DONATIONS

Dawn Laing, Dick Darrington, Len Bagley, Fred and Robyn Hasson, Babs Langridge, Jim Lines, Paddy and Nora Kenneally, John Burrige, Ed Willis, Anne Green, Carmen Green, Leith Cooper, Tom Yates, Jack and Marge Peattie, Bob Iles, Frank Park, Iris Rowan-Robinson, Joy Chatfield, Doug and Shirley Dixon, Patsy Thatcher.

TRUST FUND

Paddy and Nora Kenneally	\$30.00
Bob Iles	\$50.00
Patsy Thatcher	\$50.00

Thank you all for your continued support.

BIRTHDAY BOYS

Bert Price	June	17 th	88
Harry Handicott	July	4 th	86
George Greenhalgh		6 th	88
Tom Yates		21 st	88
John Southwell		27 th	85
Tom Foster	August	1 st	88
Jack Hanson		9 th	87
Russ Blanch		23 rd	87
Fred Otway	September	3 rd	88
Alan Luby		6 th	93
Fred Broadhurst		7 th	86
Doug Dixon		8 th	87
Bob Williamson		13 th	90
Jack Iles		26 th	87

A Happy Birthday to you all!!



THE TIMOR - LESTE FLAG

W.A. MEMBERS - PLEASE NOTE

Our 59th Commemoration Service will be held in Lovekin Drive, Kings Park
on

Sunday 16th November, 2008

Service commences at 3.00pm

Members and friends are asked to make a special effort to attend.

DON'T FORGET NOW

OUR XMAS LUNCHEON

Will be held at the
GOODEARTH HOTEL

198 Adelaide Terrace, Perth

on

Friday 5th December, 2008

From 11.30am - Luncheon at 12.30pm

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE



**2nd 2nd Commando Squadron Honour Roll
 Kings Park, Perth, Western Australia**