



# **2/2 COMMANDO COURIER**

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## **THE LUCKY COMPANY**

Looking back on events over 67 years ago which involved the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>, many members conceded an element of luck played a big part in our survival.

As a member of Sparrow Force the decision to send our unit along with a small Dutch contingent to Portuguese East Timor in mid December 1941 meant we were spared the main Japanese attack on West Timor in February 1942. Overwhelmed by a far superior force and after a desperate resistance the 2/40<sup>th</sup> battalion and attached units had to surrender. They lost 84 good men and had 132 wounded and became part of the 22,376 Australian POW's taken in the South West Pacific campaign of whom 8,031 (36%) died in captivity. Many of those of the 14,345 who did return died prematurely from the harsh and often brutal treatment they endured as POW's. Had we remained in West Timor, we may have suffered heavy casualties and became POW's with no more than 150 making it back to Australia.

It is worth noting that Lieutenant Col Leggatt the CO of the 2/40<sup>th</sup> battalion had requested early in January 1942 that the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> was needed in West Timor and that they return forthwith. He was told that the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> could not return until they were relieved by a Portuguese force which would be leaving Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique) soon. Preparations began early in February for the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> to move back to West Timor as the Portuguese were expected anytime. This never eventuated. The rapid Japanese advance southward combined with the late and slow movement from East Africa by the Portuguese resulted in their turning back when Japan refused to guarantee them safe conduct to Dili. This in itself was a great tragedy. Had the Portuguese made it, the people on East Timor may have been spared the great suffering and loss of life they endured under 3-1/2 years of Japanese rule. The British, Dutch, Australian and Japanese all stand condemned for waging a war in a small neutral country.

Luck certainly played its hand in our 12 months on East Timor. 90% getting malaria in the early weeks of our arrival in mid December 1941 resulted in the movement in

*continued page 2*

mid January 1942 of the majority of the unit to the mountains around Dili to recuperate. Only one section plus a small HQ group and the Dutch force remained in Dili and the airfield to do what they could in the event of a Japanese invasion. All the talk was of the coming of the Portuguese troops and our return to West Timor. When the Japanese attacked East Timor on the 19<sup>th</sup> February, the men were in reasonable shape and had a 20/25 kilometre start which they made the most of. Contact with Australia in April, the wonderful support from many of the Portuguese and Timorese people, not forgetting the Criados, a valiant RAN, a determined RAAF and later support from the fine 2/4<sup>th</sup> Company finally helped us through. In August the Japanese made a determined effort to deliver a coup de grace with a large force from both West and East Timor. They were about to do so when they were signalled to return immediately to their respective bases at Koepang and Dili which they did much to the relief of the beleaguered men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. It is understood the Japanese were sent to Guadalcanal and suffered heavy casualties fighting the American marines.

On returning to Australia in mid December 1942, after a short leave, the company was reformed with many of the originals who were feeling the pinch dropping out and replaced by fitter and well trained men. By June 1943 we were on our way to New Guinea.

Our luck had held.

J. Carey

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**VALE - LEWIS CHARLES NICKLASON  
– TX5280 18/09/1920 – 17/02/2009**

This Vale on Lewis was kindly forwarded by his family.

Lewis began his adventure in life at St Helen's on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1920. He was the second youngest of 9 children born to Alf and Kate Nicklason who ran a dairy farm in the North East at Pyengana. There was: Gilbert, Daphne, Clyde, Keith, Gladys, Kathleen, Max, Lewis and Doris. Sadly Gladys is the only surviving sibling.

Lewis grew up on the farm at Pyengana. He milked cows by hand and learned to do many of the other farm chores. Lewis attended the local state school but was far more interested in being outside. He loved being active and could never sit still for long.

After finishing school at the age of 14 years, Lewis and his brother Max signed

a partnership to farm the Top Property at West Pyengana. They made a living by trapping rabbits and selling the skins, by agisting the heifers and dry cattle and growing swedes. These were the depression years of the mid 1930's. Times were hard and Lewis and his brother lived on rabbits.

Lewis had memories of milking the cows by hand, separating the cream and then taking cans of cream to the Pyengana Cheese Factory by horse and cart. Lewis loved going to local country Saturday night dances. He would ride his horse from Pyengana up over the hill to Ringarooma to the dance, have a few drinks, and sleep it off under the horse returning early in the morning to milk the cows!

Lewis was a very competitive sportsman. He loved playing football with the local Pyengana team. One year

he won his club's Best and Fairest Award. Lewis also played cricket in the summer. As we know, Lewis was a very determined, passionate man. I imagine he would have been a formidable opponent on the footie field!

After World War II broke out in 1940 Lewis joined up with the army – the AIF 2<sup>nd</sup>/40<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Then Lewis met a young woman called Jean Bessell at a dance at the Albert Hall here in Launceston.

In 1941 Lewis and his battalion were sent to help defend Timor from the Japanese. Many were captured and sent off to POW camps. Lewis was listed as: MIA – presumed dead. Not so! Lewis was trapped on Timor for 9 months barely evading capture by the Japanese a number of times. He had vivid memories of these times but rarely spoke of them. A broken knee cap and weak with malaria he escaped on the back of a donkey led by local natives.

Another time Lewis and his mates were on the run from the Japanese. He was so slow from malaria that they left him behind. Fortunately he met a Chinese man who healed his malaria and then reunited him with his mates. Lewis helped build a radio. In this way Lewis and the rest of his party established contact with the Australian Navy and were evacuated from a beach at night.

In 1943 Lewis and Jean were married at St David's Presbyterian Church, Mowbray – the first wedding in the church where the bride wore a wedding gown. Later he served in New Guinea with the 2/12<sup>th</sup> battalion.

Lewis could have farmed at Pyengana, but instead he became a linesman with the PMG, later Telecom. He first worked at Burnie, then Oatlands and finally in Launceston. While at Burnie, Lewis was responsible for building a power pole line

right down the West Coast. He ran a gang of multi-nationals, picking them up from the Burnie Wharf and sorting out their language and other issues.

Lewis and Jean and their two daughters, Wendy and Judy, lived in Burnie, Oatlands and finally Mowbray at 4 Heyes Place. They remember once at Burnie dad taking them to the shop for an icecream. They persuaded dad to rescue a kitten from a tree. Lewis did. Despite his protests the cat went home with them.

Lewis was a passionate football supporter especially teams with the red and white colours of his unit the 2<sup>nd</sup>/40<sup>th</sup>. He barracked for City South and the Sydney Swans. Going to a footie match with Lewis was never dull!! He could get so worked up about the game or the umpiring that he would yell his disapproval or jump the fence! Once at Scottsdale he got so angry that he jumped the fence and punched an umpire. After that he was banned from the Scottsdale ground! Lewis was also banned from York Park for a year.

At home at Heyes Place, Lewis had an enormous veggie garden. He fed his immediate family, his brothers' and sisters' families, the neighbours and friends. The grandkids would always eat Pop's veggies but no-one else's!

Lewis raised chooks as well. He even had a pet magpie! Lewis had a huge compost heap and would bring home trailer loads of manure – horse, cow or sheep manure. Then he would shovel it and stir it all together and come back to the house stinking of pooh!

Lewis had an amazing memory for people and places. Taking him for a drive meant a history lesson. On a recent trip down the West Coast he described the way the power line had gone in all those years ago. It was the same going back to the N/E Pyengana! He could tell you where each

farm house was and who lived in it.

In the late 1970's Telecom workers had to wear a safety helmet. As a line inspector Lewis suffered with a bad neck and headaches. One morning he went to see his boss who sent him to his doctor to get a medical certificate. By lunchtime he was out of Telecom.

Can you imagine Lewis being retired? He always had so much energy and couldn't sit still for long. Retiring at the age of 58, Lewis and Jean were able to share another 30 years together. They enjoyed Christmas holidays at Bridport with their family – in a tent, then the caravan and finally the shack on Westwood St. They travelled around Tassie with a caravan. They went on bus trips usually with Australia Pacific to SA, WA, Qld, NSW and NT.

In 1986 Lewis and Jean shifted out to 5 Docking Court, Newstead. They lived there for over 20 years. Lewis had a veggie garden and flowers not to mention his shed where he kept all his tools in place. Steps became an issue so Lewis put in a ramp at the back.

Lewis drove his car right up into his early 80's. Then he walked everywhere, down to the supermarket and bakery at Newstead; down to Lyttleton Street; or to the pub and back home. Lewis would talk to anyone. So he always had places to sit and chat.

Lewis was a man of deep faith in God. He and Jean attended St David's Presbyterian later Uniting Church and then the Uniting Church at Newnham. Lewis was a regular at worship at the village.

Lewis loved food, especially cream. On the dairy farm he loved scooping the cream straight out of the vat. He loved cream cakes or raspberries, cream and icecream. He loved cheese as well.

Lewis was a strong minded individual with

passionately held opinions. He could be difficult to live with at times. He called a spade a spade and you knew where you stood with him. But Lewis lived for his family. He supported his own and his brothers' and sisters' families, his nephews and nieces. He would do anything he could to help them, cutting firewood or supplying them with veggies.

Lewis loved Jean deeply. He always wanted to make sure that she was all right. At their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary he and Jean renewed their vows at St David's, the same church where they had been married. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was held in the Newnham Hall. The family had it set up like a wedding breakfast. It was a great time with lots of food and singing war songs. It was played up a little! In June they would have celebrated 65 years of marriage.

And Lewis was a special pop to his four grandchildren – Tammie, Mark, Kieron and Leigh. They all have happy memories of good times shared with pop. He was also proud of Ezekiel and Sirach too!

The last few years have not been easy for Lewis. He and Jean shifted to the village. He tried to be as active and useful as he could, helping round the village with the garden, the fish and birds, and did a heap of craft work. He participated in everything even the footie tipping at which Jean usually beat him.

Sadly Lewis is no longer with us now but we can take comfort in believing that the cares and concerns of this life are behind him. We can believe that he is resting peacefully in God's tender care.

May we remember Lewis Nicklason for the unique individual he was: a hard working family man; a strong minded, passionate man, who loved nothing more than being active and useful or spending quality time with family and friends. May we remember

with love, Lewis Nicklason now at rest.

NB: Lewis became a member of 9 Section C Platoon on his escape from West Timor early in 1942. He was a good soldier and highly regarded by his section mates.

### **May He Rest In Peace**

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the Nicklason family.

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### **VALE**

#### **- ALAN ADAMS - VX60797**

Alan passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 at the age of 90. We were not aware of his death until March of this year. His last two Couriers had been returned so Ed Bourke offered to drive up to the Steel Creek area to find out about Alan. He was amazed at the carnage he saw from the bush fires and number of homes burnt to the ground. Ten people had been killed though the area received little publicity such as Marysville, King Lake and Whittlesea did.

Ed established that Alan had passed away in June the previous year and that a young couple had bought his old home in December which since had been destroyed in the fires. They told Ed that there had been a lot of his old wartime memorabilia, letters to home, Japanese surrender notices etc. in the house on his demise which was all destroyed. It seems Alan had lived all his life there. The house was very old and simple with a beautiful orchard and garden now all gone.

The Adams family was well known in the district and many relatives still live in Steel Creek. Alan's father had once owned a timber mill there.

Although Alan was a loyal member of the Association and enjoyed reading the Courier, the Victorian Branch saw little of him although he did show up for a brief time at our Mildura Safari in May 2002.

Alan was born in Melbourne on the 19<sup>th</sup>

March, 1918. He and his brother Richard, who was two years older enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF in mid June 1941 on the same day. Alan being VX60797 and Richard 60789. Both went on to serve in the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> on Timor. Richard as a sapper and Alan in 8 Section under John Burrige. Alan became a good mate of Charlie Sadler and was a good soldier as was Richard who played the accordion well.

Alan and Richard did not stay with the unit after Timor but according to army records continued serving in other units, Alan being discharged in March 1946. Richard passed away in December 1981 at the age of 66. He too was a member of our Association.

A brief Vale on Alan which appeared in the local paper was as following:

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### **VALE - ALAN VERNON ADAMS**

Alan Adams, a quiet man many have seen walking his dog Millie out along Steels Creek Road and Greenwood Lane, passed away June 27<sup>th</sup> at age 90.

Alan loved his Lotto – dreaming of a big win, a punt on the horses, and spending Friday afternoons playing pool with his RSL mates. Alan was a World War II veteran, having served in Timor, New Guinea and Borneo.

He missed his wife Wilma dearly after she passed away several years ago. He had his good friends and neighbours though, who'd look after him and keep his home in good enough nick, and bring a meal now and then to see that he was eating properly.

His trademark "Oooooohhhh...." After a particularly hard shot at the eight-ball will be sorely missed by his friends at the hall as will his harmonica and accordion music along Greenwood Lane.

Rest In Peace, Buddy.

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**May He Rest In Peace**

Our sincere thanks to Ed for providing the above information on Alan.

**Lest We Forget.****J. Carey**

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We regret to advise of the recent passing of five of our precious widows, they being: Sunny Daniels widow of Danny, Gwenda Kirkwood widow of Ron, Kath Press widow of Frank, Nancy Mildren widow of Tom, Jess Epps widow of Bill.

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to the Daniels, Kirkwood, Press, Mildren and Epps Families.

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The Special Air Service Regiment, Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne WA 6010

The President: J W Carey

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 offering your personal congratulations and those from the members of 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Although a proud Australian soldier, I am humbled at the attention this award has brought upon me. I am flattered that you have personally taken the time to write to me and I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to you.

Thank you for your sincere words and of those from the Association.

Regards and all the best.

M G DONALDSON, VC

Trooper

26<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

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Alan Luby has kindly provided the names of members who attended Paddy's Requiem held at Christ The King, Yagoona on 6<sup>th</sup> March last. They being Maria

Hartley, Yvonne Walsh, Betty Devlin, Majorie Goodacre, Patricia Weller, Fred and Norma Janvrin, Pauline and Greg English, Murray and Jill Thornton (from WA), Marilyn Bennett, Kevin Birmingham, John (Snow) Went, Harry Handicott and Alan Luby. Representatives from the NSW Commando Association and No. 1 Commando Association were also present. The church was packed and Alan estimated over 350 people were present to pay their final tribute to Paddy.

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**ANZAC DAY 2009 – WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Peter Epps who once again laid our wreath at the Dawn Service in Kings Park estimated a large crowd of about 25,000 in attendance. It was a fine crisp morning and Peter also noted the presence of many young people which is a good sign for future Dawn Services.

Bob Smyth and son Richard attended the SAS Regiments Dawn Service at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne with Bob placing a lovely Red Diamond wreath on our behalf. The SAS men and former SAS veterans were there in strength. Our thanks to Peter, Bob and Richard for doing the honours for us.

Held in very pleasant conditions our march on Anzac morning went off well. Regrettably only 4 veterans from all the combined squadrons marched, they being Harold Durant 2/5<sup>th</sup>, 'Speed' Jones 2/3<sup>rd</sup> and Bob Smyth and Jack Carey 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. Neil Barnett in his customary role led our group carrying the Australia flag followed by four flag bearers. Mark Chalwell 2/2<sup>nd</sup>, Nigel Eagan 2/5<sup>th</sup>, Jacob Gosper 2/6<sup>th</sup> and Greg Sells 2/8<sup>th</sup> proudly carrying their respective double diamond flags. Fortunately a good response from mums, sons, daughters and grandchildren from ours and other squadrons made for a presentable group.

We were lucky to be right behind the Perth City band who played stirring military marching music which enabled us to keep in step throughout the march. The large crowd who came to see the march were generous with their applause.

Peter Epps provided the transport once again for those who could not march and this was very much appreciated by John Burridge, Jim Lines, Dick Darrington and Peter Campbell who flew up from Esperance.

Helen Poynton marched again this year accompanied by Aaron and Rhiann and grandchildren, Rory Jacob (a flag bearer) and Beth. Also our lovely regulars in Christine, Nerine and Amy. John Denman, Rennaye, Lachlan and Riley, Mick Press, Geoff Payne, Brian Chalwell, Bob Palmer, Graham Devenish and others.

Peter saw to it that we were well looked after before the main service began providing seating and drinks. As I have said in the past, what would we do without him.

Twenty five attended the luncheon at the Goodheart Hotel and although our numbers were down it went off well. Bart Mavrick and Garry Kingston former SAS veterans arrived accompanied by the new CO of the SAS Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Burns, DSC and his RSM, WO1 Garry Murphy. What fine looking men they all are.

It was a great honour to have the new CO come along as he had many other commitments on the day. Paul was welcomed and met those present saying how pleased he was to meet up with the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. He assured us of his support during his term as CO which was appreciated. The traditional toast to the famous SAS Regiment was drunk with gusto.

The Goodheart staff saw to it that we were well looked after and the meal was

excellent. Speeches were at the minimum with President Jack thanking in particular the ladies who are now the mainstay of our social functions. John Burridge now a grand 91 years sang a couple of his old ditties which always go over well. Nice to see you in such good form John.

More who enjoyed the luncheon were Babs Langridge with son David and wife Jo, Helen and her family group in Aaron, Rhiann, Rory, Jacob, Beth, Amy, Jim Lines, Mike Press, Geoff Payne, Speed Jones, Peter Campbell, Anne Green, Linda and Ross Loughton, Bob and Richard Smyth, Dick Darrington, John Burridge, Stuart Porter, Jack and John Carey. Thus passed another Anzac Day. How quickly they seem to come and go.

**J. Carey**

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### **AN HISTORIC DAY AT THE FAIRBRIDGE VILLAGE, PINJARRA - 2009**

This year our Anzac Day Service was held after the main Perth service on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April by the Old Fairbridgians Association. A record attendance of 600 Old Fairbridgians and children assembled to celebrate the occasion at Honour Avenue; Twin Rose Garden Patios built 25 years ago inside the entrance to Fairbridge Village.

A perfectly cool sunny day was ideal with the Mandurah Youth Band playing light music entertaining those present in the shade of the trees and roses.

The service commenced at 11am with 50 able marchers including children and led by Jim (Tiger) Lines, Dick Darrington and 93 year old Bill Jones in a wheelchair pushed by his daughter Jane. The march was just over 100 metres to the Rose-Garden Memorial gates breaking off to sit in comfortable chairs. The Rev J Askcroft conducted the main service with prayers

and a fine address. Two old Fairbridgians read out the names of the 48 World War II members and one Korean member who paid the supreme sacrifice serving their country – Heroes All! A total of 500 members from Fairbridge enlisted in the services during the world war. A fine record indeed.

Wreaths were placed on the Honour Plaques, the flag raised with the bugler sounding the Last Post followed by The Ode, The Rouse and the National Anthem.

### **Lest We Forget**

The Fairbridge village has other chapters to add to its war history. Several thousand women in the Women's Land Corp trained there before going on to work on farms thus helping the war effort producing food so necessary in those tough times. On two occasions I was allowed to return to Bridgetown to help pick apples – 3 months in all without pay.

An air station just inside the boundary of Fairbridge Farm enabled the RAAF to have a Beau Fighter Squadron operating from it. There was another airstrip on the other side of the Perth-Bunbury highway with the RAAF flying sorties over the Mandurah coast line and beyond. Fairbridge was a pretty active place in those vital years.

A well known Fairbridge veteran and author, John Lane who passed away at the end of last year had four books published. 'The Village Kid', Fifth Edition will be published at the end of this year. It is a very good read and I am certainly waiting to get my hands on it.

I spent 5 years at Fairbridge 1934-38 and have many happy memories of my childhood years there.

### **Dick Darrington**

NB: Thanks Dick for an excellent account of the Anzac Day Service at Fairbridge and part of its war history.

**Andy Smeaton** who was a Fairbridge farm boy enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF and joined the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. Tragically he was killed in Timor on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1942. He was 24.

### **Lest We Forget Editor**

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### **ANZAC DAY – MANDURAH, 2009**

The Dawn Service was very well attended. Many young couples with small children and quite a lot of teenagers. It was very impressive with the sun rising behind the memorial with the ocean view also.

The march was also very well attended. More than last year. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> was represented by the Howells and Kings and also quite a few whose units have diminished. The speech was one of the best I have had the pleasure to listen to.

Cassie and Johnny Howell laid the wreath and they were impressive with their white shirts with the Double Red Diamond epaulets on them. Paddy came to the fore and brought the wreath. Thanks Paddy. All in all we had a wonderful day both weather wise and good company.

Len Bagley was present and went by car.

**Best wishes, Elvie Howell**

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### **JACK DENMAN'S LEGACY LIVES ON**

The most important and sacred day for my husband's father was Anzac Day. He would march and commemorate the day with his unit. Now, forty years on, the family commemorates the day in much the same fashion.

Until three years ago, my husband John preferred to watch the Anzac Day march on television in the comfort of our home. Then one day, quite out of the blue, he was contacted by one of the few remaining members of his father's unit, wanting to know if he would like to join with them and march on the forthcoming Anzac Day.



Although seldom fazed, he was on this occasion; he didn't know what to say. He felt honoured but apprehensive, uncertain as to how he would cope with what he knew was bound to be an emotional experience.

As Anzac Day approached, my husband, after much consideration, decided that he would really like to march. He arranged to have his father's medals restored and remounted. Our daughter and her six year old son expressed an interest in marching too. When my husband contacted his father's unit for approval, he was told that any member of their old mate's family was more than welcome.

That was three years ago. My husband, our daughter and her two sons, have marched every year since. One of his sisters marched for the first time last year. Now, after each march, the extended family gathers at our place for lunch. It is becoming a tradition; our family's special day. Each year our number increases. Three generations are now represented.

My husband's father served in Timor and New Guinea, and was part of an elite commando squadron, famous for its guerrilla tactics which played a significant role in repelling the Japanese army. His bravery was documented and he was awarded the military cross. His service in the tropics impacted upon his health. He contracted malaria and was hospitalized many times during the war. His health was compromised for many years after the war. He died unexpectedly when he was 53. My husband was devastated. He was newly married and we had a young son. Although he needed to, he was unable to cry. His relationship with his father had always been tenuous and he seldom spoke about him. Neither one understood the other.

After lunch last Anzac Day, my husband

made an impromptu decision to share his father's story. He spoke with unabashed emotion and with understanding. He held in his hands the symbols of his father's bravery, his medals. His siblings, his children and his grandchildren were visibly moved as he spoke. It was a cathartic moment. There he was, the father and the grandfather, recalling the father he had lost so many years ago. The importance of the moment was not lost on him. Tears rolled freely down his cheeks. He looked at me and I nodded and smiled with pride. His father's legacy was in good hands.

**Laraine Denman** – 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2009.

NB: Thank you Laraine for a very moving letter. **Editor**

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### **REFLECTIONS ON ANZAC DAY – 2009** **DARE IN EAST TIMOR**

Much has been written about the war brought to Portuguese Timor in 1942 and about the resourcefulness of No. 2 Independent Company who waged guerilla warfare throughout the island against numerically superior Japanese forces.

Much less is known of the chaos and brutality suffered by the inhabitants of this small island when Timor became a strategic battleground and subsequently one of the greatest tragedies of the South West Pacific War.

Still less is known of the surviving Old Commandos of 2/2<sup>nd</sup> and 2/4<sup>th</sup> Independent Companies. More than 60 years have passed since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company was disbanded and the men returned to civilian life – yet their lifelong comradeship has never wavered. Formed in 1946, their 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association are recorded as the oldest continuing fraternity of returned men and are in fact, the original group for East Timor.

It was their legacy which we celebrated one morning in the hills south of Dili on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

All manner of folk came, leaders, dignitaries, local people and international visitors – to join the community of Dare-Fatunaba to witness and celebrate the ties that bind friends across time and space.

This Anzac Day ceremonial was the realization of a dream 'to honour the memory and to nurture the future' with the renewal of the Dare Memorial on its fortieth anniversary.

And thus the Commandos' memorial to the Timorese who enabled their survival and return to Australia, was re-dedicated to the people of Timor Leste with songs and with words, with blessings, flowers and prayer.

The passage of time has taken a steady toll of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> – 90% of the Old Commandos have passed away and the average age of the 58–'still on deck' is 89. They may be OLD MEN but the spark of profound experience burns still in hearts and minds. Many still march in remembrance of fallen comrades and all recall often in poetry, the mountains, tracks and rivers of Timor. Never forgotten are the loyal youth who were their life support and companions-in-arms, their faithful 'Creados' they remember as true Belun.

How right and fitting it is that the children of Fatunaba School shall remain on this memorial site to continue to learn and to grow in these beautiful hills of Dare.

Through these children and through the generations of youth who come to visit Dare Memorial Museum, the legacy of The Men of '42 will live on in perpetuity.

**Yvonne Langley Walsh**

**Widow of Vince Walsh 1919-2003**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Co. 1941-42**

NB: Thank you for the fine tribute Yvonne.

**Editor**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT'– YEAR ENDING 31.01.2009**

The year 2008 saw the passing of 12 of our good members and 12 of our precious ladies, a heavy loss indeed for our small association. A lady member told me that reading the Courier these days makes her feel sad with the vales and health problems of members appearing so frequently. I am afraid this is not going to alter. The average age of members is 89 years which means we are all heading for the exit door while our 104 ladies whose average age would be in the early 80's still haven't reached that stage? Such is life.

The financial statements which appear in this edition show that for an aging association we are in a reasonably safe financial position. We have current assets of about \$35,000. with books still to be sold to the value of \$23,000. As indicated only 8 more Couriers will be published the last being in December 2010. The trust fund account is low and finance to cover future seed shipments to Timor now costing \$10,000. per year will be met from the book account. The general account is also light on but as in the case of the trust fund any monies needed is readily available from the book fund. Our main objective is to sell the 390 books on hand at 31<sup>st</sup> January by December 2010. I am confident this can be achieved.

Keeping the association going has not been easy. Our diminishing ranks and advancing years make it difficult to get things done. That we have is mainly due to the contributions over the years of you good people. Courier contributors in Margaret Monk, Ron Archer, Happy Greenhalgh and the late Paddy Kenneally, God Bless Him and others have helped maintain the Courier. We are now depending on our ladies and friends to

ensure our yearly functions of Anzac Day, Norma Hasson Day, The Commemoration Service and Christmas Social are kept going and to date the response has been encouraging. To all those who have and are contributing to maintain the association I extend my grateful thanks. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> is a fine association and one we should all be proud of.

**J Carey, President**

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### **AGM - 2009**

Our 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting was held at the home of Mrs Dorothy Maley in Mandurah on the 26<sup>th</sup> March last.

**PRESENT:** Mesdames Ida Murray, Elvie Howell and Dorothy Maley.

Messrs Dick Darrington, Bert Mavrick, Jim Lines, Len Bagley and Jack Carey

There were 7 apologies.

President, Jack Carey declared the meeting open at 10.30am. A brief silence for fallen members was followed by 'The Ode'.

The minutes of the 2008 AGM were read by the secretary and confirmed on motion by Mr Bagley seconded Mr Darrington.

The reports tabled at the meeting and appearing in the current Courier were touched on briefly.

The Executive elected for the year 2009/2010 is:

President	J Carey
Vice President	---
Secretary	Mrs D Maley
Editor/Treasurer	J Carey
Auditor	E Smyth
Committee:	Mrs E Howell, R Darrington and C Hodson
Trust Fund Chairman	B Mavrick

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

It was agreed the Association should continue to subsidise our social functions, Anzac Day, Norma Hasson Day and Christmas Social with fees for each function at \$25.00/head.

Mr Mavrick reported the next batch of 20,000 packages vegetable seeds costing \$9,810. would be forwarded to East Timor by May 2009. Payment would be made from Unit History book account as agreed at the last AGM.

The President said Mrs Jenny Beahan was still working with a lawyer friend to prepare a Constitution for the Trusteeship. It should be finalized before the end of the year.

He also said there were still about 390 books to be sold which we wanted to have off our hands by December 2010. Elvie Howell suggested we should try the local Mandurah radio station to get some publicity. Mrs Maley said she would contact the station. Mr Bagley was prepared to be interviewed if the opportunity arose.

Mr Carey said our diminishing numbers in the West made it important that our members, ladies and friends support our few functions as they arose. He would like to see more members contributing to the Courier as copy coming in had fallen off.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.30am.

**Dorothy Maley Hon Secretary.**

NB: Dorothy supported by Elvie and Ida provided a lovely light luncheon. Thanks ladies for your support.

**J Carey**

**STATEMENTS OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE YEAR ENDING 31.1.2009****GENERAL ACCOUNT****RECEIPTS**

Balance 31/1/08		2,456.16
Courier & Donations	3,710.00	
Social Events	1,930.00	
Interest	6.66	
Badges	30.00	
Ex history book a/c	2,500.00	
		<u>8,176.66</u>
		<u>10,632.82</u>

**EXPENDITURE**

Couriers (4)	5,771.27
Social Events	2,465.45
PO Box Rental	182.00
Funeral Notices	277.42
Listening Post	25.00
Commemoration Service	352.50
Anzac Day	160.00
Admin fee	95.00
Balance 31/1/09	<u>1,304.18</u>
	<u>10,632.82</u>

**INDEPENDENT TRUST FUND**

Balance 31/1/08		776.78
	<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>	
Donations	1,300.00	
Interest	12.32	
		<u>1,312.32</u>
Balance 31/1/09		<u>2,089.10</u>

**EXPENDITURE**

NIL

**UNIT HISTORY BOOK FUND**

Balance at 31/1/08		2,186.09
	<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>	
Sale of books	12,556.10	
Interest	1,052.79	
		<u>1,3608.89</u>
		<u>15,794.98</u>

**EXPENDITURE**

Box Rental	123.00
Cartons and satchels	989.50
Postages	514.50
General Account	2,500.00
Balance at 31/1/09	<u>11,671.98</u>
	<u>15,794.98</u>

Investments \$20,000 1/10/09 6 months  
 Books Sold 1610  
 Books on hand 340

**INDEPENDENT TRUST FUND**

Dear Jack

Just an update on how the seed program is going for East Timor. Since taking over from Bob I have managed to get a regular courier to take the seeds from Darwin to Dili. ConocoPhillips is a mining company in East Timor that runs regular flights between Darwin and Dili, and after

discussions they are more than happy to help us out. It turns out an ex SAS chap David Meagher works for the company and I caught up with him on ANZAC Day. Three of the four seeds are ready to go and the fourth lot will be ready by the end of this month. We will then see how the plan works. As soon as this lot goes I will order another lot for the end of this year,

which should give the East Timorese seeds for the different growing seasons. It was good to catch up with a few of the 2/2 on ANZAC Day at the Goodearth Hotel. I like to get down there with the CO and RSM as it makes it easy to get back to Swanbourne in the CO's car. I always learnt as a young soldier (as you all would have done), never miss an opportunity. It was also great to see the Colonel and RSM drop in to see you. They are both top operators and have a lot of respect for the 2/2.

It is always sad to hear the passing of one of your boys and Paddy Kenneally was no exception. I had the good fortune of spending a week with Paddy and some of your other members in East Timor in 2000. He was a great man with a passion for the East Timorese people. Rest in Peace dear friend and I will continue the legacy for you all.

Regards to All

**Bart Mavrick**  
**Chairman and Administrator**  
**Independent Trust Fund**

### **OPENING ADDRESS BY JENNY** **BEAHAN (daughter of Ray Aitken)**

On the occasion of the Inauguration of the Dare Memorial and Café April, 2009.

Since we were tiny children, I have been hearing the names of Timorese people and the places in which they lived. We learned from a very early age of the bravery, steadfastness and long struggle for independence of the Timorese people and how vital it was that this be achieved. Often as we grew up we had Timorese friends visiting for holidays or for educational, business or medical reasons. My father and all his friends and comrades of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Company, (who were little more than boys themselves

when they came to Timor), have talked endlessly of the beauty of this land and its people.

Before he died, when he was 89 years old, and knew from the doctors that his time was nearly over, I had the privilege of coming to Timor Leste with him and visiting the children and grandchildren of these friends and others.

We travelled to many places, all names I recognized from childhood. He wished to see first hand that things were improving for you all and I think to feast on a land which he had come to love so much. Many times on this trip he said to me –

“Have you ever seen anything more beautiful than this place? Have you ever met such wonderful people?”

In his heart and I know, those of his many comrades, Timor Lorosae had become their second home. A “HOME OF THE HEART”.

On this trip we also had the privilege of staying with your Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao and the First Lady Kirsty Sword Gusmao. We were able to talk about Timor Leste's needs and concerns and the constructive role that countries like Australia could play. These were magical days which filled him with joy and which I feel rich from sharing with him and you.

My father was a school principal, as was my mother. They had a great passion for the opportunities education can create for young people and for a country. For Timor, he believed it to be the key to the future. He also shared with my mother and I, a great and abiding interest in the world's cultures and often talked with great respect about the rich and diverse cultures of the many people of Timor Leste.

He would be delighted to see that this Memorial has evolved as both a school and a museum, which celebrates shared Timorese and Australian history. He

believed that it is most important that young Timorese should know about their own heroes of which there are many. He talked of Juli Madera and Louis Goncalves being just two of these of the period of the second world war.

Today however I am not just here because of my father, who passed away not long after his final visit to Timor Leste.

I am very proud to have been asked by the President of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Mr Jack Carey and the members of the Association to represent them here today. Sadly none of them was well or robust enough to make the journey but their hearts are with us.

My cousin Jacquie Drymlski and Mrs Yvonne Walsh are also here to honour you and this important day. I carry with me an important written message from the President. This will be given to the museum for display and its permanent collection. The First Lady may be kind enough to read it here for you today.

NB: Thank you for an inspiring address Jenny. **Editor**

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Mrs Kirsty Sword Gusmao  
Residencia Primeiro Ministro  
Bidau, Lecidere  
Dili, Timor Leste

Dear Kirsty and the Organising Committee,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Over 67 years ago on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1941 the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Independent Company with Dutch forces landed on the shores of Portuguese East Timor at Dili. This act was a direct violation of International Law as at the time Portugal was a neutral country.

Nine weeks later on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1942, a seasoned Japanese force, who at that time were sweeping everything before them invaded East Timor and within 24 hours had occupied

Dili. The heavily outnumbered Australian and Dutch withdrew to the mountains to join their comrades. For the next 10 months until the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> was evacuated in mid December 1942 what had been a backward but peaceful country was turned into a battleground which brought great suffering and loss of life to the people of East Timor. The 2/4<sup>th</sup> Independent Company who joined the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> was evacuated in mid January 1943 leaving the Japanese in supreme command, a position they held until the war ended. During this period due to the harsh treatment at the hands of the Japanese, lack of medical treatment, disease and a shortage of food resulted in a heavy loss of life, estimated at 40,000 of the Timorese.

That the majority of men who served in the campaign made it back to Australia was mainly due to the help given willingly by the Portuguese and Timorese people. In adversity, the Timorese who had very little themselves provided food, shelter, information on enemy movements, labour for pony trains etc. The bond between the men and their Creados who ages ranged from 9 to 40 years who shared the daily problems and dangers has never been forgotten by the men who served here.

The company went on to serve in New Guinea and was in New Britain when the war ended where it was agreed to form the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Association of Australia to carry on the comradeship formed in the 4-1/2 years it served its country.

It was not until some 20 years later in the mid 1960's when Mr John Burrridge visited East Timor, now again under Portuguese control and met the Bishop of Dili who asked Mr Burrridge when Australia was going to do something to show gratitude for the help given by the people of Timor to the Australian troops back in 1942.

On his return Mr Burrridge conveyed the

Bishop's request to the Executive. Realising that some form of reparation should have been made long before the Bishops timely reminder it was agreed something should be done posthaste and if it was to be a memorial what form would it take? After a lot of thought and discussion it was decided a resting place, above Dili, should be built for the Timorese travelling to and from the Dili markets and a wading pool with pleasant surrounds would add to its beauty.

The plan was accepted by the Portuguese who agreed to erect the memorial providing the architects and builder. To speed up the project. Mr Ray Aitken generously provided a loan of \$8,000. and the building was underway. The money to repay Mr Aitken was then raised 50% by members and 50% by the Federal Government then led by PM John Gorton. The official opening of the Memorial took place 40 years ago on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1969. It was a memorable occasion with 27 members and 10 ladies of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> attending along with many dignitaries including the Governor of East Timor and the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Mr Roger Dean. Addresses were delivered by Mr Bill Epps the President of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>, Colonel Scapinakis spoke for the Portuguese as did Nicola Goncalves (Norm Thornton and Ray Aitken's credo). The Bishop of Dili blessed the resting place. Mr Roger Dean read the inscription on the special plaque dedicated to the people of East Timor in English and the Governor read the plaque in Portuguese. Mr Dean then spoke for the Australian Government and the Governor replied for the Portuguese. As the plaque was unveiled the navy gave a Royal Salute and the Retreat was played. It was a moving and colourful ceremony.

In its 40 years of existence great changes took place in East Timor now Timor Leste

and the memorial fell into disrepair. It was originally planned to have a caretaker look after the memorial but a reliable one was not forthcoming. It was sadly neglected during the years of Indonesian reign. The Australian War Graves department restored the memorial in the 90's and again later the Australian Forces serving here tidied it up. However maintenance was always a major problem and in the end apart from a newly worded plaque it became an eyesore and something needed to be done. Eventually the War Graves department acted having the pool sealed off and levelled the area making it look a lot more respectable.

Since then the organising committee under Kirsty Sword Gusmao's guidance has worked hard to add schools and today due to their efforts are marking the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations with the inauguration of the Dare Museum and Café taking place. They are to be congratulated for what they have achieved.

It is with great regret that no members of the remaining 28 veterans who served here back in 1942 and were kindly invited by Kirsty were unable to be present on this great occasion. We have all simply become too old to make the trip. However we will be with you in spirit and are represented by two of our good ladies in Mrs Jenny Beahan the daughter of the late Ray Aitken who did so much for the Timorese people and Mrs Yvonne Walsh, widow of the late Vince Walsh who served here in 1942.

During the peoples painful years from 1975 until September 1999 when East Timor voted for and obtained its independence the men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Association gave their full support and assistance for their cause. We pressed the Australian Government to set up a Parliamentary/Senate Enquiry and wrote

submissions to the United Nations advocating independence for East Timor. Throughout the years since the war, the members of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> have organized and funded medical, educational, textile and agricultural projects to assist the Timorese people. The trust fund set up in 1992 and ably led by Mr Bob Smyth has along with many good Australians given considerable help to the needy Timorese. This year for instance a consignment of vegetable seeds valued at \$10,000. is on the way. So, we have not forgotten you and this will continue until we are no longer active. Invading East Timor in 1941 was, as has been said, an illegal action and should never have happened but it did and this set up events leading to a great and lasting friendship between your and our people. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> along with the people of Australia will be ever mindful of what you did for us in those desperate times.

May Timor Leste advance in peace and prosperity in the years ahead.

God be with you.

**J W Carey,**  
**President**

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## **TIMOR LESTE BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO THE DARE MEMORIAL**

### **Memorial de Dare Café & Museum**

The site of the Dare Memorial is as beautiful as ever, a captivating view of a lush green valley, a deep ravine and mountainside. Visitors to the site will see one step down from grade (Road) level, a handsome memorial and plaque. A large white-washed plinth features the 2/2 Independent Company Double Diamonds insignia in red and the blue Double Diamonds of the 2/4<sup>th</sup>, immediately above the original 2/2<sup>nd</sup> brass-engraved plate. (This has been relocated from the original wading pool and respite area). As many of you will recall this clearly honours the

contribution of the Timorese peoples and their courageous role and assistance to the Australians in World War 11. Above it now fly the flags of Australia and Timor Leste. As this is close to grade level it will be clearly seen by anyone traveling along this route. It is quite prominent, but reverentially sited. In future years as visitors and tourists begin to discover the delights of Timor Leste at peace, it will certainly arouse interest and encourage people to stop and explore.

Two concrete outdoor bench seats are near by for those wanting to sit and contemplate. These have been mosaiced in ceramic tiles, one in the image of the Australian flag, and the other in that of the Timor Leste flag.

### **The Museum & Café**

Steps lead down to the lower level where the new Dare Museum and Café has been located. Here visitors can take in the spectacular view as they browse in the museum and learn at first hand, the dramatic and poignant stories of the Timorese and Australians in the war and the enduring bonds forged at this difficult time. Long didactic panels feature maps, photographs, (many obtained from the War Memorial and Museum in Canberra and some, I think, from Portugal) together with text in Tetun, Portuguese and English. These take the visitor on a chronological journey from 1935 to 1972. They tell the story we all know so well. The players, Portugal, Japan, Australia, Holland and Timor are all identified and documented here. The illegal occupation and landing on Timor, the remarkable role of the Australian soldiers, the strategic operations, the triumphs and adversity and importantly the high price paid by the Timorese for their support of the Australians are all covered.

Those well versed in the history of this (second world war) conflict and the



colonial and post-colonial history of Timor would find the interpretation in the Dare Museum and Café balanced and fair.

Dominating one end of the museum is a beautiful and magnetic portrait of Paddy Kenneally and Rufino Silva, sitting hand in hand, taken on one of Paddy's many return visits to Timor in 2000. Below this is a quote taken from a letter written by Paddy to the first Lady of Timor Leste, Kirsty Sword Gusmao.

*It is my belief that all the Criados were superb; we really did not deserve them. We the diggers got all the glory, the Criados and the people of Timor did the suffering and the dying and in our disgrace, many people forgot and ignored the fact.* (I believe Paddy was, here, referring to the treatment of East Timor and the Timorese by the Australian Government, particularly after the Indonesian Occupation, not his comrades in the 2/2<sup>nd</sup>. I know that there has never been a gathering of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> where this contribution has not been formally or consistently acknowledged. I also know that my father carried a little pencil sketch of Maubere, his criado, next to his heart along with a photograph of my mother until he died. A framed reproduction of this treasured image also hung in his house. It is now cared for by me and will be passed on to my children as a symbol and reminder of our family's debt to the people of Timor Leste.)

Suspended from the ceiling and fluttering high over the heads of visitors are copies of the propoganda leaflets dropped on Timor. This adds another dimension to the experience in the Dare Museum and Café. One artifact only, is on display in the Café, it is a shell. *This highlights a problem in developing the displays in the museum, the lack of any objects and memorabilia connected this shared history to form part of and to enliven the displays.* Historians and museologists will tell you

that nothing can take the place of real objects in bringing things to life.

There is also a short DVD which plays in the Café and is narrated very competently and graciously by Kirsty Sword Gusamo. This is very moving and captures the anguish of the war for both the Timorese and the Australians particularly in relation to the bonds between soldiers and criados and the enduring love they have for each other.

I have traveled home with a copy of this from the First Lady to the President of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Mr Jack Carey. Many of you will be able to see this at your next get together in Perth. (A personal thrill for me was to discover that footage from the opening of the original memorial and pool feature in the new DVD, included frames of my mother and father attending this event.)

At one end of the Museum and Café is a small kitchen from where people will be served. Comfortable and very handsome cane chairs and tables in the café area are placed where visitors will get the best view. As the little Fatunaba School is now also located on this site, the plan is to train young people from the school in hospitality skills, in the café. This may assist them later in gaining much needed employment, when they are no longer students.

Following the opening ceremony on Anzac Day, at which the President Ramos Horta, the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, spoke, I was delighted to see young students from the school notepads and pencils in hand, standing in front of the didactic panels copying down information. How much more meaningful it would be if we were able to send to the museum some objects relating to this shared history?

**Perhaps some of you still have objects relating to your time in Timor during the war that you might like to donate?**

**Do you have any war souvenirs , clothing, letters, Timorese items given to you either during the war or in subsequent visits, identity tags, objects you made on Timor, sweetheart brooches, shoulder pips, hats or hatbands, water bottles, or other army kit which you would like to donate? If you do have something could you ring me (08 9293 1908 or the President Mr. Jack Carey. Alternatively, you can email me on [jennyaab@bigpond.com](mailto:jennyaab@bigpond.com)**

See also separate article on Timor's Lost Heritage

Special congratulations must go to Kirsty Sword Gusmao who has guided the museum to a reality. and to the two fine young Portuguese architects who assisted with planning, research and formulation of the displays and interpretive panels.

Thanks also to Maria Madera for translating the President, Mr Jack Carey's speech and my introductory remarks into Tetun for the opening of the Museum at the Anzac Day ceremony.

**Jenny Beahan**

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## **TIMORS LOST HERITAGE HOW YOU CAN HELP!**

One of the great agonies of the Indonesian occupation of (East )Timor Leste has been the loss of so much of the countries and many individual and family's material culture. What may you ask is *material culture*? This is a term used by historians and museologists referring to all those objects, documents and photographs which record or are evidence of a people and their culture. Mostly these are stored in our state and national archives, museums, galleries and libraries. (Almost every local government authority has a local studies collection focusing on local events, people and places.)

Families pass material culture down- grandma's wedding ring, little Johnny's first bootie or bonnet, the family bible, paintings, vases, grandpa's gold watch, a beautiful (or sometimes not so beautiful) piece of furniture of special significance and photos, photos and photos!!! These things not only tell us who we are but they help us understand where we have come from. They are at the heart of our identity. At the wider level they can show how lifestyles and technologies have changed, plot migration patterns, wars and conflicts, legislative changes and much more. Mostly we don't think about all of this. We take it for granted that it will always be there waiting for us when we want to tap into it -on that rainy day when we decide to go to the museum or when a child has a project to do. Even today's children when they Google something, are often tapping into the nation's treasure trove of material culture. All Australian museums, libraries and galleries are committed to and have been putting their collections on line. This is a huge undertaking, but is well advanced. In fact the two young architects who helped with the displays in the Dare Museum expressed their admiration for the access they had to Australia's war heritage via the internet. They said that Australian galleries and museums are years ahead of Portugal in this area.

### **The National Timor Leste Collection**

But back to Timor. East Timor did have a national museum but during the Indonesian occupation this was badly looted and much important material was stolen. The Timorese Government is in the process of re-establishing its national museum and considers this as an important educational and nationally and culturally significant resource. At Kirsty Sword Gusmao's request I went to have a look at the remains of the collection and

to meet Dr Nuno Olivera, the Cultural Advisor to the government on the collection.

The objects in the Museum have now been re-recorded and stored under proper and secure conditions until the Museum has a building in which to display its collection. Objects from the collection are currently on loan to the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory until July and are well worth a visit if you are in Darwin. Timor Leste has only a few objects-army helmets, on the Second World War in its collection. The museum has no photographs at all!

If you have any objects you could contribute could you contact me on 08 9293 1908 or email me on jennyaab@bigpond.com

### **SENDING THE PHOTOS BACK**

Many families have lost their photographs during the occupation and many have never had any at all. That means no images of family members. If you have some photos in which there are Timorese people, you may actually have the only photo of someone in Timor's grandparent or loved one. I have found a volunteer, a friend, Gill Baxter who is prepared to undertake a project receiving copies of your photographs. (Of course if you don't want the originals these could be sent.) Gill will work out a system of recording and returning these to Timor. This project could possibly all be conducted over the internet with material transferred electronically or digitally to Timor. We will take advice on this.

### **The Berndt Museum-Sending the Photographs Home**

Dr John Stanton of the Berndt Museum (University of Western Australia) has offered advice on training Timorese people in the issues relating to digital collections.

He is currently running training programs for Indigenous people in this area. The Berndt Museum has, in conjunction with the Stolen Generation Royal Commission, been involved in digitising and sending back to Indigenous communities hundreds of copies of images of individuals, groups, ceremonies and many other events. In some cases, it has given people the first glimpse of relatives heard about but never seen. It has reminded Elders of ceremonies, places, lifestyle practices and dances no longer known and has led to the revival of knowledge and ceremony and importantly it has helped in tracing family.

I had the privilege of being in Warburton in the Western Desert when one of the files of photographs arrived from the Berndt Museum. It was very moving-people became very animated. There was laughter, tears and lengthy conversations late into the night.

I was reminded of this again when I went up to Beser Tete to visit Eugenie Goncalves, son of Luis my father's great friend, to take him photographs I had taken of he and his children when my father and I had previously visited him in 2004. The gift couldn't have been more appreciated. The new images were carefully pinned on a card with his other photos of which there were only about five or six. All others, he told me, were lost during the Indonesian occupation.

I hope some of you will be interested in contributing. Gill and I look forward to hearing from you.

**Jenny Beahan**

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The good Sisters of The Mary MacKillop Order are endeavouring to get the Australian Government to bestow an award to the Timorese which can be given to non-citizens in its Honorary form. The

Sisters have formed a committee as is explained in the following letter:

“Mr J Carey,

2/2 Commando Association

26<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

Dear Mr Carey

Everyone here at the *Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission* sends their very best regards to you and the members of the Association.

Recently we attended the funeral of Paddy Kenneally and it was a fine turn-out for a fine man. On the same day there was a Requiem Mass for him in Dili at the Motael Church at which Rufino Alves Correia was present. Also there was Mr Peter Heyward the Australian Ambassador, Mr Joel Fitzgibbon the Minister for Veteran's Affairs and Michael Stone, Advisor to President Jose Ramos-Horta. Lieutenant Colonel Steve Ferndale, Commanding Officer of the Australian Defence Co-Operation Program attended as well as a large number of soldiers currently serving in Timor-Leste.

Around the time of the death of Paddy, someone said that Rufino and the other creados ought to get a medal. I agreed, and then the idea came to me that a fitting tribute to the Timorese would be the bestowal of an award eg: the Companion of the Order of Australia. This award can be given to non-citizens in its honorary form. I think it would be a fitting way to honour the people of Timor and its significance would help to strengthen efforts to give them practical assistance in their huge task of re-building.

We have formed a committee and have worded the petition and I enclose a copy for your perusal. The effort will be launched on Tuesday 31 March by sending out a press release and then we will begin to send the petitions far and wide. I intend to alert the authorities in Timor-Leste about

this, although I did mention it to Mr Hernani Coelho the Ambassador and to Mr Abel Guterres the Consul General, and they both seemed pleased.

Please do not hesitate to write or call for further information.

We all send you our sincere regards,

**S. Connelly**

**Sister Susan Connelly**

**Assistant Director”**

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## **NEWS FROM OTHER STATES**

### **SA NEWS**

Dear Jack – Another Anzac Day has passed and the weather was cold and wet. I rode in a wheelchair as I had only come out of hospital in which I spent 6 days with a bad leg. The leg was very enlarged and some tablets helped a lot. Back to Anzac Day. When I arrived at the starting point there was only one person who was the leader of the Commando parade and he was the Adjutant for the 4<sup>th</sup> Coy in Timor, Rex Lipman. He led the banner and I was the only other person in the parade behind the banner.

Jack I am enclosing a story for you to publish in the Courier if you desire.

We have had a good downpour of rain over the last five days and some areas have had 60+mm in 24 hours.

The reservoirs are now 60% full. The article on the back page of the Courier (The Cowboy) was quite a laugh. I have shown my family and it passed 100%.

On the first Wednesday of this month we had our Commando luncheon, biggest number in attendance for some years. It was a thank you to our secretary who spent 25 years in that job and a plaque was presented to Bill Powell and Bill gave a small speech as it was his last day as secretary of the Commando Association

S.A. Bert Bache attended the luncheon with his wife Sylvia who looks very well and Bert is okay too.

Regards to all members and widows and other members from the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Association in South Australia.

### **Kel Carthew, Andrews Farm, SA**

NB: Last year I had two cataracts removed from my eyes, the first one in July and the second in September. I have had trouble ever since. I have been back to the specialist who said you can be unlucky as it happened.

### **VICTORIAN NEWS**

Dear Jack and all 2/2<sup>nd</sup> friends everywhere It's time again to send the Victorian news for the Courier. A very pleasant time was spent at the Anzac Day lunch. There were just eight at the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> table – John and Shirley Southwell, Ed and Dorothy Bourke, Mavis Broadhurst, Harry Botterill and Don Thomson and Margaret Monk. Harry was the only one marching and from one who saw him on TV said he looked very handsome and smiling as he passed the cameras. Harry is still in his own unit and enjoys meals on wheels and weekly shopping trips with his daughter Lynette and daughter-in-law Elizabeth.

I have spoken with some of our Victorians this past week. Mary Bone is still smiling and still at Lakes Entrance.

Leith Cooper has had a really hard time over the past months with shingles – although the outward signs have faded the pain and persistent itch is very distressing for him. Don and I hope to visit him again soon – we seem to have a very busy life keeping up with two families.

Don's youngest grand-daughter is to be married on 12<sup>th</sup> June so we are looking forward to the wedding.

My son Robert and wife Cathy are going to

Canada next month for 5 weeks. Robert worked in Canada for 6 months back in 1976. He was a trainee with the International Agricultural Exchange Association – they will be visiting his host family at Peace River 300 miles north of Edmonton in Alberta.

Pat Petersen's mother passed away earlier this month – Don and I went to her funeral at Fish Creek on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May. She was a wonderful old lady and would have been 102 in late June. There was a very large family – 9 children, 8 living, one died as a small child. 24 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren and 5 great great grandchildren. She had lived on the farm for 74 years and passed away in her sleep in her own bed at home. Pat and her sisters made daily visits to tend to their mothers needs. A really wonderful family.

Don and I called to see – Dawn Clancy at Wangaratta on 30<sup>th</sup> March after visiting friends at Finley in NSW. Dawn is going along reasonably well and is always pleased to see us.

Faye Campbell at Benalla is keeping well and busy. She has just returned from a holiday to Horsham and Portland and all places in between. A local over in that area told Fay the rain this past week was the best for 15 years. Fay sends best wished to all.

I didn't get to Dot Veitch at Sunbury when I dialed her number so can't give the latest news from there.

It was great to read of the Press brother's trip to Timor in the last Courier. The names mentioned were mostly all the ones that Ken had told me about. Ken named our Jersey stud Ermera – He said Ermera was the only place on Timor that he tasted a spread that was closest to butter – hence the connection to our lovely Jersey cows. Our sons Colin and Robert are keen to take a trip to Timor. On Anzac Day a Timorese man came to our Commando lunch and was keen to meet 2/2<sup>nd</sup> members and others. His name is

Manny Napoleao (Lito).

He has established a business – Eco Discovery, Timor-Leste Tours.

Office (+670) 3322 454 or Mobile (+670) 7385 783

Email: [inquiries@ecodiscovery-easttimor.com](mailto:inquiries@ecodiscovery-easttimor.com)

I have copied the above from the card he gave me.

That is about all I have from Victoria except that I had a nice talk with Moira Coats. She was sorry she was unable to get to Perth for Anzac Day – had a short stay in hospital but is now feeling much better. A wonderful family is always there to help her when needed.

We in Victoria send greetings and best wishes to all.

**Till next time – Margaret Monk.**

PS: I am sending a cheque to help with Courier costs or whatever is needed.

## **QUEENSLAND NEWS**

Here we go again with the latest Queensland news.

**George and Mary Shiels, Bowen** continues to be in good health and still lead active lives. George stood down for the first time from his Anzac Day duties this year but is still busy with his Legacy and lodge works and they both enjoy outings with Probus. They expect to visit their Brisbane families later this year and we will have a meet and catch up then.

**Lucky and Doreen Goodhew, Townsville.** Lucky will be 85 on the 30<sup>th</sup> May – one of our “younger” mates! He is deaf in one ear and although he has a hearing aid for the other it is not very helpful so Doreen keeps me informed of their family events. They have three children – two live in Townsville. Steve the third one lived there too till recently. He has a charter boat and has towed it to

Darwin where he now does his charter work.

**Bulla and Jean Tait** – our great Bulla is not at all well. He is being well cared for in a nursing home and is a bed patient. His dementia is getting worse and he has not recognized any of his visitors since about Christmas. Jean visits him twice a week and life is not at all easy for her either. Their three children are doing well, so that is a help.

**Jewell Soper, Townsville** is 83 and with the help of a pusher is still getting around okay. Arthritis is her main problem (like many of us) and she has had a few operations. Her large family is mainly still nearby but they keep very busy so I expect loneliness to be her main problem.

We people in Eastern Australia have had more than our share of the nation’s problems. What with bush fires in Victoria and floods in parts of Queensland – in fact at one stage 70-80% of this state was under water! That is not to say that for example WA doesn’t have problems too. With your ‘boat people’ I sometimes wonder how many are really illegal refugees!

Best wishes to all our members and hoping that you are all coping okay.

**Yours very sincerely - Ron**

## **NORTHERN NSW**

Dear Jack — **Gordon Stanley** is still in care and apparently quite contented. Joan says he is pretty much the same as previously recorded. Joan is well and sends her regards to all.

**Beryl Steen** is okay and finds her life up in Cairns suits her fine. She is off down to Brisbane to settle her affairs down there and then back to Cairns. The son is up there and Beryl gets on very well with her daughter in law.

I spoke to **Jean Tait** and apparently Bulla

is still the same. Bulla was a great mate of Tony Bowers and a good bloke.

**Tom and Jean Yates from Kyogle** are pretty much the same. Tom always well but Jean having a bad time with arthritis and trouble with her eyes. We all think of you Jean and hope for better times.

I rang **Keith Wilson from Booker Bay** for his birthday recently and he is going along okay. Still having a game of snooker at his RSL club. I find that memorable as I do not think I would see the ball at the end of the table, let alone hit it.

**Russ Blanch from Bangalow** had a trip to Sydney to pick up a Certificate of Appreciation for being an office bearer at Bangalow RSL for almost sixty years. The presentation was by the Governor of NSW at Rooty Hill RSL. Daughter Ellen accompanied Russ to Sydney where they were met by Russ's son John who drove them out to the venue.

**Eric Herd from Iluka and wife Lorraine** are both well and enjoying our good weather after a fairly wet time. Luckily well out of flood reach.

**May Orr from South Grafton** is well and always cheery. She keeps busy with various organisations and a bit of gardening but not as much as she would like.

**Nola Wilson from Gilgandra** is another cheerful person who is getting better all the time after having both knees operated on. True Grit Nola. I have had a sore toe and whinged about it.

**Beryl Walsh from Kempsey** is well, a result of being an active person. Her sister is also getting better all the time no doubt having Beryl next door helps. Kempsey had a very bad flood but luckily no damage to the CBD. Fortunately Beryl is out of flood reach so no damage there.

**Beryl Cullen from Kyogle** is well and although in her nineties still gets around

and down the street to do her shopping.

I finally tracked **Edith Jones** down after getting no response at Barraba. Rang Chris at the Gold Coast who informed me his mother was with a daughter in the wilds of Queensland where I finally found her having a whale of a time on a cattle station near Moranbah which is out from Mackay. She is looking towards moving in to Barraba town from her present home outside Barraba. On her own it's probably a sound move.

**Edna Vandeleur from Buderim** is well as before but like a lot of us has eye trouble. Sends her regards.

**Fred Otway** is recovering from a bit of a set back but still having a bit of tennis now and then. He is a marvel.

**Alan Luby's** right leg is causing him a lot of trouble and at present he is back in the Lady Davidson Hospital and expects to spend at least a month there.

My regards and best wishes to all. I'm okay. **Happy Greenhalgh, Maclean**

### **PARS ON PEOPLE**

**Fred Humfrey** celebrated his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday quietly at his Swan Cottage unit. Keep going Fred your within sight of your 100<sup>th</sup>.

**Helen Poynton** made her big move to York on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Mandurah's loss will be York's gain. Good luck Helen.

**Len Bagley** is heading for Hollywood Hospital on 15<sup>th</sup> June and expects to be there for a week or two. Nothing too serious we hope Len.

**Henry Sproxtton** is now in his 3<sup>rd</sup> week in Hollywood following a heart attack at home on 28<sup>th</sup> May. Another stent, his third has helped but he is still in a very weak state. He is being well cared for and is bearing up well. God Bless.

**Dick Darrington** has moved from Quinns Rock to Inglewood which is a lot closer to

Perth which suits Dick and he is happy with his new set up.

**Elsie Jordan** celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with a nice luncheon with her friends in the Swan Valley in March. Elsie is in good health and enjoys life. Keep it up Elsie.

**Nellie Mullins** had a nasty fall recently and was laid up with a badly bruised leg. Nellie missed out on our Anzac Day luncheon which she always attends. Watch your step Nellie.

**Blanche Sadler** spent two weeks in Hollywood in May. She would love to be back home but is confined to a nursing home in Wongan Hills until her health improves.

**Kaye Hanson** is off for six weeks in Europe in July. Laurie and Sheryle Harrington are also in the group travelling with Kaye. Have a great time you lucky people.

**Ida Murray** has decided to move to Bunbury to be close to daughter Vicki and her family. We wish you well Ida.

**Bob Smyth** was featured in the West Australian recently being the first person in WA to have a new procedure to unlock major heart valves using small tubes passed through the groin. The operation was a success and Bob is now feeling a lot better.

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## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Dear Mr Carey

– It was lovely to hear you mention my uncle, Arthur Marshall.

In the family he is always known as ‘Arp’, a nick name he got as a kid because he was always ‘harping’ on something or other. It is wonderful to read about all your experiences in Timor. Thankyou for all you did, all of you. If it hadn’t been for blokes like you we would probably be speaking Japanese.

Regards —**Lynnette Potter, Bunbury**

Dear Jack – Enclosed please find money for book, ‘All the Bull’s Men’. Balance for association.

At our Anzac Day luncheon we met Manny Napoleao, a Timorese who made himself known to the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> table and had a great talk to Harry Bottrill as he was the only one to have been in Timor. Apparently he only knew what he had read in books, also I suppose what the older generation have told him, he also runs tours. Would you send the book to the address on the back of the card, they will forward it onto Manny as he was to return to Timor about a week after the luncheon. I am getting along okay but miss Fred dreadfully and as you know it leaves a big hole in your life. I have just come back from visiting my son in Queensland. It was sad to hear of Paddy’s passing, I loved to read of his experiences in the Courier. I am sure he will be missed by everyone.

Kind regards —**Mavis Broadhurst Bathurst**

Dear Jack – thank you for your lovely note about mum. She was the last of her generation in our family so it really is the end of an era, and we will all miss her so much.

The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> was such a large part of dad’s life and by association of mum’s life as well. Each November after the service in Kings Park I had to provide a detailed report of who was there, who marched, who laid the wreath, etc, etc.

Over the years, visits from you and Delys, Don Turton and others were greatly appreciated by mum, so thank you all for those.

Regards’—**Helen Harvey (nee Kirkwood), Karrinyup**



Dear Jack – I'm sorry but the clock is moving more quickly than I am so now further to our conversation on the weekend' – thank you for the offer to post the –'book' immediately but there is no great hurry.

I have kept the cover of the one I had and am enclosing a cheque to cover cost plus a donation to be split between the Courier and the Trust Fund unless you need or feel otherwise.

As I told you Blanche is staying at Lovegrove Lodge until she feels she can manage at home – as we all know there is no place like home, I know that and I dread the thought of losing my independence.

I have lots of happy memories and send my warmest regards to all the –'Oldies' you meet. **Mavis Sadler, Wongan Hills**

This letter was received by Mr Len Bagley

Dear Len – you probably wont remember me. I met you in 1972 with my partner Jim Hallinan. Dear Jim passed away in 1980 – we had 9 wonderful years together. I was very sad reading of Paddy Kenneally's death so please convey my sympathy to Nora and family. He wrote some wonderful articles in the Courier and thank you Len for the years that you have sent the Courier to me.

I do hope you and your family are well. I met you and others on the Perth safari in 1972 (a long time ago). All good wishes, - always **Flora Lucas, Sussex Inlet.**

Dear Jack – Enclosed a photo of Anzac Day, 2009 (see Page 31). Rex and I were the only two from the Commando units to attend. Rex Lipman AO who was an officer of 4<sup>th</sup> company in Timor. Rex has a business in Adelaide. He has had a varied

life. He was a dentist and the Angas Finance Company, tour guide for school children, on a visit to Flanders on every second Anzac Day. He has 25 hectares of grape vines in the Adelaide Hills. He sells the grapes to Penfolds, the price he is getting for grapes is now at the rate it was in 2004.

He is the chap who took over the security job of the Commando Association in South Adelaide. I think he may have gotten in touch with you.

Weather is still cold, around about 17 degrees.

I am still having trouble with my right leg, it is still swollen. I have to see the specialist on Monday, and my oncologist on Tuesday. All the best – **Kel, Andrews Farm**

Dear Mr Carey – Just a note to inform you and your organisation of the death of my beloved mother, Nancy Mildren.

Mother has spent the last two years at the Yackandandah Nursing home due to deteriorating health. During this time she was very fortunate to have received your Courier, and looked forward to me reading it to her each time. Thank you so much for affording her that small pleasure.

You do a great job and I am sure others enjoy the read as well. I wish you all well.

**Regards, Bronwyn Coysh, Wodonga.**

## **PAGES FROM THE PAST** **AN INTRODUCTION TO MINING**

Every single item on this earth falls into one of the three great kingdoms, animal, vegetable or mineral. It is also true that the animal kingdom, which includes the human race, entirely depends upon the vegetable kingdom for its existence, and to a lesser degree upon the mineral kingdom. The mineral kingdom however, depends on neither of the others and is

therefore the basic supporter of most life on earth.

The exploitation of mineral as an industry has developed with the advance of civilization into a major contribution to our way of life, and in fact next to our food and clothing is most important. Our modern agriculture would be doomed without the trace elements of copper and zinc in fertilizer, or sulphur for our superphosphate and arsenic for our insecticides. Modern farm implements are made entirely of the products of the mining world, such as iron, steel, tin, copper, zinc, aluminium and countless alloys of the rare metals. These tractors and engines generally turn daily to the mineral petroleum for their very life and power. This also applies to all our modern transport systems embracing all motor cars, trains and aeroplanes. The machines and fuel are products of our mines.

Our modern cities look to coal entirely for such every day things as electric light, cooking, refrigeration, air conditioning and cinema. All modern buildings are products of our steel, cement, tile and brick works drawing daily on the crust of the earth for these accepted minerals. Even our synthetic nylon stems from coal, our paints from lead, our galvanised wire and roofing from zinc, our electric generators and conductors from copper and our rails and railway engines from iron.

Such a common thing as a wrist watch may contain a dozen different minerals, such as steel, chromium, silver, gold, copper, platinum, phosphorous, gems and stones etc.

The exploration and development of almost any of the minerals is a romance of its own, and any or all would need volumes to describe their geological occurrence, discovery, extraction and recovery. Very few minerals are used as

found in nature (such as coal). Most require a very complicated metallurgical process for their ultimate recovery. All the allied sciences and professions relating to this wonderfully fascinating and important occupation come under the heading of mining, and are playing an ever increasing role in the development of our industry and Australia generally.

**Jim Smailes - October 1957**

### THE KNIGHT

Big Paddy Knight was still in the croupier business in the gambling joint at Cairns and one of his more regular punters was a Chinaman who had a queer superstition he pandered to of throwing a handful of loose change over his shoulder out the open window when his luck was going bad. Being in the middle of the 'depression' all the gambling joint 'Fleas' were a wake up to the Chinaman and in the hope of turning an honest or dishonest penny they would hang around the window in the fairly sure hope of being in the shower of coins when Chinese was trying to change his luck. Paddy took a quick look at the gang around the window and slipped the Chink a handful of something and with a broad wink from his crossed right eye and a swift nod towards the window gave Ah Sam the office to perform. The howls of anguish as fingers got trodden on in the fight for a handful of bottle tops brought from Paddy the remark: 'That Cairns beer is red hot, you can even get a decent fight out of the bottle tops.'

**'Seedy' - July 1958 (Seedy being C D Doig)**

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Jack Steen who passed away in September 2005 served in the army as Jack Stafford celebrated his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday on a troop ship on his way to the Middle East. He went on to served in the Middle

East, in New Guinea and New Britain with the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> in the Korean and Malaysia campaigns and finally in the Vietnam campaign. He was a professional soldier in every way. Jack was awarded the American Honour, The Silver Star for bravery in Korea. His citation which appeared in our October 1952 issue is worth repeating.

### **STAFFORD'S GONG**

The citation printed below gives a full account of the deed which won Pte Jack Stafford the Silver Star.

'Pte Stafford, a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, distinguished himself by gallantry in action against the enemy north of the Chong-Chon River in Korea on the 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1950. During a company action which ultimately cleared the main axis of advance for the 24<sup>th</sup> United States Infantry Division, to which his unit was attached, Pte Stafford displayed such individual courage and initiative that he made it possible for his platoon to secure its objective. During the advance of the platoon towards its objective, intense enemy fire from small arms halted the advance and pinned down the platoon. Pte Stafford's section was ordered to advance but again encountered intense enemy fire which inflicted several casualties. With complete disregard for his own safety and in spite of the enemy fire which continued to sweep the area, Pte Stafford moved alone around the right flank and destroyed an enemy light machine gun position. In doing so he exposed himself to fresh opposition. Although he could not advance further in the face of this fire, Pte Stafford, from his exposed position, placed such accurate and effective fire on the enemy with the Bren gun he was carrying that the rest of his section was able to advance and bring additional fire to bear on the enemy. Aided

by this fire, Pte Stafford again advanced alone, firing his Bren gun from the hip, with such devastating effect that the entire platoon was able to advance and seize the objective. During the reorganization Pte Stafford moved forward of the platoon position to clear the front. Discovering what appeared to be a camouflaged dugout, he fired a burst from his Bren gun into what seemed to be the opening, but was in fact ammunition on the side of a concealed tank. The resulting explosion blew away the camouflage and drove out the tank crew. The tank was later destroyed. Throughout the entire campaign Pte Stafford has shown outstanding courage and has been an inspiration to all members of his unit. His masterful use of the Bren gun and his complete disregard for his own safety have repeatedly been the deciding factor in carrying his unit to success over numerically superior enemy forces. The gallantry displayed by Pte Stafford reflects great credit on himself and the military service.'

### **LEST WE FORGET**

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#### **RAKING UP THE LEAVES**

Twas peaceful and quiet that day in the  
Park  
As I raked up the leaves and the pieces of  
bark  
When I gazed up and down that long line of  
trees  
And memories stirred with thoughts that  
can please  
To recall the 50 and 2 of the men honoured  
there  
Who proudly the double red diamond did  
wear  
I thought of my mates, those splendid  
young men  
There were Charlie and Bill, Scotty, Paddy

and Ben

The memory lingered on how they looked  
then

As along with the leaves the heart had  
been stirred

For memory lasts: it cannot be blurred.

**Jerry Haire                      October, 1953**

### **RAMBLINGS OF A RAT BAG - EARLY 1938**

This was when the threat of Hitler was being felt by governments all over the world. Australia felt its defences should be shore up with a very much expanded military force. The late

'Billy' Hughes, the Prime Minister in World War 1, was then Minister for the Army, and he called for 80,000 volunteers to join the current units, and also other units to be formed right through Australia. One of the units to be formed in WA was a mechanized machine gun unit to be known as the 25<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment. This really was a resurrection of units way back prior to 1924 which had been disbanded? This was to be a specialist unit raised mainly in the country districts of WA. It was to be a mechanized light horse, the future to be tracked vehicles with Vickers machine guns the main armament. This would be well into the future as tracked vehicles were then not available in Australia, so it was accepted that trucks would be hired from farmers who were expected to join the unit.

The headquarters squadron was to be raised in the metropolitan area along with parade signalers and administration and other facilities. 'A' Squadron was to be raised in the south west with troops from Donnybrook, Bridgetown and Kojonup. 'B' Squadron was to come from Narrogin, Wagin and Merredin. 'C' Squadron targeted Kellerberin, Three

Springs and Moora. This shows the spread over a large section of rural WA. Recruits were called for in my town, and the local Roads Board hall was the venue at which recruits were to assemble and be medically examined and attested. A troop was to consist of an officer and 40 other ranks. A big crowd assembled on the appointed date and we were firstly examined by the local medico Doctor Baker, who had been the medical officer for the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse in World War 1. The doctor was one of those real patriots and said straight out that he wouldn't knock back anyone on medical grounds if he wanted to be in the Army to fight for his country. After being weighed and height tested the medical examination was fairly cursory. We were then attested by a fulltime warrant office that came to town for this purpose, and to tell us what we were in the game to do.

I must admit that I did have second thoughts on joining anything of a military nature, as discipline and I were not the best of mates, and I got the impression that the Army was inclined to push you around more than somewhat and with my hair trigger temper I thought that a court martial could be dished out to me fairly quickly. Still I thought that I should give it a go that I'd soon find out what it was all about, and that if it didn't suit I could chuck it in. As it turned out the crowd that formed our troop were really top grade, and from the word go we enjoyed everything that went on. Some potential NCOs' went down to the city to get training to pass on the rudiments to the rest of the gang. We used to meet one night a week at the local drill hall and were soon shown the early training of squad drill and weapons drill. We were issued with giggle hats and a felt digger's

hat and a .303 rifle. The appointed CO of the unit and the 2 I/C, a regimental sergeant major, came down from the city for our first parade held on the local school grounds. The brass buttons on the giggle jackets were polished with Brasso and the boots highly polished. The RSM had a hat parade showing us just how this unique Aussie hat should be proudly worn.

It was not long before Vickers guns were issued and we set out to familiarize ourselves with this most versatile weapon. We literally spent countless hours in perfecting the use of this gun and learnt of its roles in modern warfare, and the stripping and maintenance of the weapon. We were even allowed to take home the heart of the gun known as the 'lock; which really handled the automatic action of the Vickers. We taught ourselves to strip and reassemble this intricate mechanism in the dark or blindfold. We were not paid for this weekly night parade, and only received payment for 'called' parades which occurred on a Sunday and were attended by professional soldiers from the regimental headquarters in Perth.

The troop was in pretty good shape when the first regimental camp was called late in 1938, a 14 day affair at Rockingham. The 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse were in camp at the same time at Naval Base. We were called the Black Slaves, as the dust at the Rockingham showground's was as black as the inside of a cow. The water was as hard as a stepmother's heart, and the lather used to roll up in front of the razor when shaving which was highly observed by the officers. We settled into some shape by the end of the camp. The regimental officers,

squadron officers and troop officers were appointed with the original NCOs' at all levels. By the time we left we were a unit welded ready for the proper training to get into our real warfare primeness.

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### **BERT TOBIN – VX70645**

#### **A great soldier and a good punter**

On one fine day in September 1964 my father took me to the Caulfield races. He had 100 pounds in his pocket. (Average weekly earnings in Melbourne was seventeen pounds per week.)

Coming to the last race my father had 800 pounds in his pocket. He put it all on a horse named Samson @ 10/1. It won by eight lengths and he won eight thousand pounds.

We cleaned out four bookmakers.

On the way home to our home in Glen Iris my father said to me, 'Let me do the talking!'

We arrived home and he said to Wilma, 'clean the kitchen table dear, we've had a shocking day. Put the kettle on dear'.

Then he said to me, 'clean out your pockets Warwick'.

There was a pile of five pound and ten pound notes on the kitchen table several inches high.

The following week my father paid off his house mortgage in Glen Iris.

#### **Warwick Tobin, Kew, Victoria.**

NB: Life was not kind to Bert. A fine, talented man he died of cancer May 1977 aged 56.

**J. Carey**

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**BIRTHDAY BOYS**

John Burridge	April	6 <sup>th</sup>	91
Colin Hodson		6 <sup>th</sup>	85
Vince Swann		9 <sup>th</sup>	93
Harry Botterill		12 <sup>th</sup>	89
Eric Smyth		15 <sup>th</sup>	89
Arthur Marshall		21 <sup>st</sup>	87
Keith Wilson	May	16 <sup>th</sup>	88
Lucky Goodhew		30 <sup>th</sup>	85
Gerry Green		31 <sup>st</sup>	93
Jim Lines	June	4 <sup>th</sup>	87
Fred Humfrey		10 <sup>th</sup>	96
Jack Carey		19 <sup>th</sup>	87

**A HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU ALL****COURIER DONATIONS**

John Burridge, Peter Campbell, Babs Langridge, Jim Lines, 'Speed' Jones, Dick Darrington, Mavis Broadhurst, Tom Foster, Mavis Sadler, Jan Musk, Ida Murray, Margaret Monk, Marie Buckman.

**TRUST FUND**

Jan Musk	\$60.00
Mavis Sadler	\$25.00
Henry Deacon	\$30.00

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT****WEST AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE**

Because Kaye Hanson will be overseas and Ken Hasson has a medical appointment the **NORMA HASSON LUNCHEON** booked for the Goodearth Hotel on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July has **BEEN CANCELLED.**

**Kirsty Sword-Gusmao the Chairwoman of the Aloia Foundation** will be visiting Perth in mid September. A special dinner is to be held at Government House Ballroom on **Tuesday evening 15<sup>th</sup> September** when Kirsty will be the keynote speaker. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> will be having a table at this function. If you are interested please ring J Carey on 9332 7050 for further details.

**MEMORIES**

**I remember the cheese of my childhood,  
And the bread that was cut with a knife.  
The children all helped with the housework,  
And the man went to work, not the wife.  
The cheese never needed the ice chest  
And the bread was crusty and hot.  
The children always seemed happy  
And the wife was content with her lot.  
I remember the milk from the billy  
With the lovely cream on the top,  
And the dinner straight from the oven  
And not from the fridge at the shop.  
The kids were a lot more contented  
They didn't need money for kicks,  
But a game with their mates in the paddock,  
And sometimes the Saturday 'flicks'.  
I remember the shop on the corner,  
Where a penny's worth of lollies sold.  
Do you think I am a bit nostalgic?  
Or is it'– I am getting old!  
From Margaret Monk**



**ANZAC Day Perth, Western Australia 2009**  
**(L-R) D Darrington, B Smyth, J Burridge, J Carey, P Campbell**



**ANZAC Day Adelaide, South Australia 2009**  
**(L-R) Kel Carthew (2/2nd), Reg Lipman (2/4th)**



**Xanana & Kirsty-Sword  
Gusmao**  
with children Alexandre, Daniel, Kay Olak



**Honour Roll Plaque, Dare 2009**