



2nd 2nd Commando Association 60th Commemoration
Kings Park, Perth, 15 November 2009



2/2 COMMANDO COURIER

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THE 'CHRISTMAS SPIRIT'

To we oldies and this includes our precious ladies Christmas is upon us once again. Though a happy time there is a tinge of sadness in that many of our loved ones are no longer with us – but life goes on.

Looking back over Christmas messages in our early Courier extracts from a few are of note:

John Burrige in his 1951 message wrote 'Let us however in the midst of our Christmas happiness give thought to those less fortunate than ourselves – those unlucky ones who for a variety of reasons cannot rejoice and make merry at this merry time. Let us if we can, by word or deed make this particular Christmas more joyful for them by bringing happiness to others and surely we will also make our Christmas happier for ourselves'.

Colin Doig in his Courier message of Christmas 1952 wrote 'Let us with every word, thought and wish help this old globe and reflect the whole year around the glorious fellowship of the Spirit of Christmas' and in the Courier Christmas 1953 he wrote 'Make the spirit of Christmas permeate your whole being during the year to cope and may a divine province shine 'on you and yours'.

In the Christmas Courier 1982 John Fowler wrote 'What is wanted is the Spirit of Christmas to extend throughout the whole year. Let us work and strive to make this a better world to live in and a more neighbourly haven.

Christians of all denominations celebrate the great Christmas of the birth of Christ and churches will be overflowing. St Nicholas now the benevolent and much loved Santa Claus will fulfill the expectations of children worldwide on Christmas morning'.

As Australians we live in a wonderful country for which we should all be thankful. In these prosperous times let us be generous in giving to the less fortunate. The messages of over 50 years ago apply more than ever.

To our members and their good ladies, our precious widows and to all our friends we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. To those not enjoying the best of health may 2010 be kinder to you all.

God Bless

J Carey

VALE - Leonard Arthur Bagley – WX 35333**13th October 1923 – 1st October 2009**

Len passed away at the Fremantle Hospital on Thursday 1st October 2009. He was just twelve days from celebrating his 86th birthday. He leaves behind many people, who will miss him dearly, His son Gavin and daughter-in-law Pam, his grandchildren, Michael and Michelle, his great-grandchildren Mia, Adele, Ethan, Kate and Millie and of course his many friends.

Born in Mt Lawley on 13th October 1923 Len was one of two children to parents Steve and Robbie Bagley.

Along with his younger brother Fred, Len did most of his growing up and schooling in and around the Highgate area.

On leaving school Len went to work for Coventry's for a short while before enlisting into the Armed forces. He joined the 2nd 2nd Commandos serving in New Guinea and New Britain in many roles including as a driver.

Gavin and Pam remember one of the stories he would tell, it involved rolling an army truck on one of the midnight runs, they suspect he had had a few, they also suspect that this wasn't the only time he got into trouble.

On being demobbed Len went to work for WA Newspapers where he continued to work until his retirement in 1982.

One New Years Eve he met Dot. Dot was an usherette at the Piccadilly Theatre. Six weeks later they were married

It was the early 1950's and Len and Dot built their home in Mount Lawley, where they lived happily for many years. It was here that their only child Gavin was born.

In 1973 they sold their home in Mt Lawley and moved to Dianella. In 1982, Gavin married and Len welcomed his daughter-

in-law Pam into the family.

Len would often tell the story of an event in Gavin and Pam 's early courting days, before he got to know Pam. On her way to visit Gavin' in her new car, Pam was involved in an accident.

Gavin just happened to be out, so a very distressed Pam fell into Len's bewildered arms and burst into tears. Poor Len didn't quite know what to do with this crying female, and was so relieved when Gavin came home and could sort it all out.

It was about this time that Len's marriage to Dot broke down and they each went their separate ways.

Len moved down to Mandurah. The big draw card for him was the large contingent of 2nd 2nd Commandos that were already living in Mandurah.

He moved to a home in, the appropriately named suburb of Soldiers Cove. He met an old friend from before the war, Betty, they found they got on very well and in 1996 they married. In the early 2000's they sold their home in Soldiers Cove and moved into a unit in Gibson Street, but when Betty's health began to deteriorate they decided to move into the Coolibah Retirement Village.

Sadly, in 2006, Betty passed away. Len was very lonely without her and soon his own health began to fail. He passed away on Thursday 1st October 2009.

Len was a very social man; he just loved get together with family and friends and to down a few beers with his mates.

In his earlier days he was a member of the MAAC; The Marmion Angling and Aquatic Club. However he never actually put a rod in the water. He was there just for the social aspect of the club and he loved it.

A huge component of Len's life revolved around his mates of the 2nd 2nd Commandos. He was a very active

HELEN'S DAY

Helen Poynton is holding a party at her home at 2137 Top Beverley York Road, York on Saturday 16th January 2010 from 11am – 3.00pm. It is her wish to meet, for the last time many of her old friends and promises it will be a most enjoyable function. 2/2nd members, their ladies and friends are asked to make every effort to attend and say hallo to Helen on this special occasion. Members are asked to contact either Julie-Ann Jackman on (08) 9581 7367 or mobile 0429 689 178 or Rhiann Gosper on (08) 9641 2774 by no later than Friday 8th January if they intend going. A

bus will be provided but it is expected most of the 2/2nd will go by car.

During her more active years Helen made many friends in the nursing fraternity, in Joe's rugby club and in Mandurah during the many years she and Joe were there. They were happy times.

It is to be hoped that there will be good support from all her old friends.

Refreshments will be provided and Rhiann and Julie-Ann are in for a busy 3 weeks. Ringing early will be a big help.

J Carey



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"The Howell Clan"

first visit to this country was made as part of its army.

The panegyric was given by Jack Hartley of Cabramatta, who fought with him. A priest conducted the service, then whispered in Portuguese:

'Vai com Deus, Alfredo'— Go with God.

We went and had a drink to him.

There was no burial. Alfredo Jose Dos Santos had bequeathed his body to Sydney University for medical research.

I can only hope that they will appreciate what precious clay they have been given.

UNIT HISTORY BOOKS

Sales have been steady at about 20 a month. At the 30th November we still have 200 to sell which gives us 13 months for a complete sale. I am confident this can be achieved.

As repeatedly said in the past

'All the Bull's Men' is a quality publication and at \$60. Plus postage of \$10. Is a good buy. Ring me any time on 08 9332 7050 and a book will be on the way the next day. This applies to anyone on our Courier list.

Thank you for your support for the book over the past 3 years. **J W CAREY**

COURIER NEWS

As readers would be aware the WA Branch, which is the only Association Branch is winding up in December 2010. God willing only four more Couriers will be produced. I appeal to members who would like to contribute to these last issues to do so. Past memories, especially of a humorous nature would be preferred. By all means let us know how life is treating you without too much emphasis on health problems which most of us have in varying degrees.

Don't forget now.

J W CAREY

COURIER DONATIONS

Patsy Thatcher, Tom Pulliene, Warwick Tobin, Mrs Teague, Keith and Val Hayes, P Lee, Clare West, Lucky and Doreen Goodhew, Rhys and Joyce Davies, Bob and Margaret Smyth, Dick Darrington, Jim Lines, and Verna Cranfield.

TRUST FUND

Patsy Thatcher	\$	50.00
Tom Pulliene	\$	50.00
D Wardman	\$	40.00
Mrs Teague	\$	50.00
Mrs S Parker	\$	70.00
Keith and Val Hayes	\$	50.00

Thank you for your continued support.

BIRTHDAY BOYS

George Shiels	September	17 th	88
Bob Smyth	October	5 th	92
John Chalwell		20 th	86
Dick Darrington		31 st	87
Bulla Tate	November	29 th	87
Leith Cooper	December	8 th	90
Kel Carthew		12 th	87
Fred Stewart		18 th	97
Paddy Wilby		19 th	88

A Happy Birthday to you all.

To our readers a

*Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year*

from

Evelynne, Earle, Tom, Dot and Jack.

member, helping to organize the variety of functions, and serving on the committee in various capacities, over many years, including a term as President.

Every two to three years the 2nd 2nd Commandos would go on Safari. This was usually a trip to the Eastern States, each time to a different state. Len really loved these trips and always looked forward to the next one.

He has left his family with some wonderful memories.

Michael remembers one year, watching his grandfather marching in the ANZAC day parade in the City. When his grandfather spotted him, a couple of rows back from the barrier; he broke away from the march and made his way to Michael to give him a legacy pin, then he returned to his contingent and resumed marching. You can only imagine a child's delight.

Michael and Michelle also remember going to the Commemoration service for the 2nd 2nd in Lovekin Drive in Kings Park in November each year.

Len and Betty were well known for their happy hour. Len had built a special room which affectionately became known as the "Bagley Bar", and at Happy Hour people would drop in. His grandchildren Michelle and Michael have very fond memories of that time, they remember the astro turf, the fun around the pool and the freezing cold glasses.

Being such a social person, Len loved company and spent many hours at the Mandurah RSL. When Betty passed away he missed her dreadfully but continued to meet up with friends at the RSL.

Len adored his grandchildren, Michelle and Michael, and much to Pam's dismay, would feed them lollies and cool drinks. He was delighted when Michelle was born, she was the first female born in the Bagley family for 72 years, not only that but he had beaten

his younger brother in producing a granddaughter.

Gavin feels so lucky to have had him as his Dad and Pam felt he was like a father to her also. They and their families will miss him so very much as will all his friends from the 2nd 2nd and the Mandurah RSL.

His Loving Son Gavin

Len was a good soldier and got on well with his section mates. His contribution to the Association in the WA Branch was outstanding. At different times Len served as our President, Vice President, Secretary, and Editor and on the committee of the Courier team when Arch Campbell was editor.

He and Betty attended many a safari. A good speaker Len was a readymade MC and served in that capacity for our functions Australia wide for over 40 years. The passing of Betty in May 2006 was keenly felt by Len and he did not enjoy the best of health in his later years. He will be sadly missed.

Babs Langridge, Dorothy Maley, Julie Ann Jackman, Keith Hayes, Jim Lines, Dick Darrington and Jack Carey represented the Association at his funeral service in Mandurah.

Gavin delivered a loving tribute to his father and Brian Bush representing the Mandurah RSL sub branch also paid a fine tribute to him. As a member of the Mandurah 2/2nd, Len Bill Howell and others worked well together to develop a flourishing sub branch. Sadly they have all passed on.

May He Rest In Peace

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to Gavin, Pam and family.

Lest We Forget

J W Carey

Vale – Peter Campbell – WX 11299

Peter passed away on 26th October in the Esperance Hospital. He was 88.

The following Vales have been kindly produced by the family.

Peter was born to Colin and Mary Campbell in the Beverley district on the 18th January 1921. The 6th child of 8 children. The family grew up in Corrigin then Wongan Hills and finally moved to a dairy farm at Brunswick Junction.

Peter left school at the age of 13 to work for Goldsborough Mort and at 15 was sent to Carnarvon to work as a jackaroo with the Burt family at Brickhouse Station. Peter's love of horses had started at a very early age and was to endure until his final resting day, still having a horse in training for the Esperance races. With his brother Sandy the boys bought a block at Bengier to run cattle and from there jointed the elite 10th Light Horse. In full battle gear the Regiment rode from Naval Base to Perth to parade down St George's Terrace all at a standing trot. A very proud moment. At 20 Uncle Peter joined the Northam army camp and it wasn't long before volunteers were called for a hush-hush operation. Peter became one of the 2/2 Commando Squadron. His unit did their training in Wilsons Promontory and Katherine and finally were taken by cattle trucks to be shipped to Dili in Timor to fight as a guerilla unit. Here Peter turned 21. His unit was stranded in Dili for 12 months and no one knew where they were and they were listed 'missing in action'. They fought the Japanese and lived off the land in appalling conditions. Friendships were forged here that would last a lifetime. Coming home on leave Peter was immediately sent to New Guinea for a period and eventually invalided out of the army in 1943.

In 1945 Uncle Neil asked Peter to 'go North' to try prospecting for gold in order to afford

to buy their own station. After travelling the North country they ended up at Emerald, a gold mine outside Menzies where they met Tom Talbot who owned Southern Hills Station. Tom was impressed with the young men's' eagerness and drive so when they told him they didn't have any money but would like to buy his station Tom said 'that didn't matter, they could pay him later' and so the men finally achieved their dream and became station owners in 1947. Neil drove their first mob of ewes from Yarrabubba Station, north of Menzies to Kalgoorlie where they were put on the train to Norseman and Peter drove them the last 100kms to Southern Hills. In 1949 he married Pat and subsequently had 3 children. 5 years later Peter and Neil were allocated a conditional purchase block at Gibson. They were offered any of the country so the men rode all over the area until they settled on the land alongside the Jennabillup creek.

The family moved to Gibson in 1957 when Peter had a home built of Ravensthorpe stone of which all the bricks were hand made. The subsequent years saw the clearing of the land and pastures applied but it became very obvious that the sand plain was just gutless sand. The arrival in Esperance of the Chase Syndicate and Art Linkletter who introduced trace elements saved the new land farmers. Pastures flourished as the men grasped on any new idea that came their way. Peter understood that clover needed to be obtained so he bought a block to grow just clover and started a clover seed works to supply the district with this much needed seed. The men bought a block at Scaddan and ventured into cropping. Neil became the machinery man and Peter stayed with livestock with their partnership lasting them all their working lives.

The Gibson Soak hotel was a favourite haunt and on occasion when it looked like

clothes.

Alfredo, Francisco, who looked like the actor Anthony Quinn, the elongated Pedro, the tiny cripple Fernando, Julie... rifles on their shoulders, knives jutting out of their belts.

Two of them living near Dili airport noticed that the Japanese left their anti aircraft guns unguarded when rain fell. One rainy night they sneaked out, took the guns off their mountings and pitched them into the harbour.

Pedro worked as a mechanic for the Japanese until they noticed their petrol supplies dwindling at an alarming rate. They finally got round to Pedro's place, checked the backyard and found 44 gallon drums planted like spring flowers. By that time Pedro was on his way to the mountains.

Arsenic and bananas

One deportado whose home I visited on a patrol had bunches of bananas hanging from the front verandah. He had put them there for marauding Japanese impregnating each banana with arsenic from a hypodermic syringe.

One night they brought a Vickers machine gun and ammunition from Dili, the Japanese headquarters. They also brought a map showing the enemy dispositions, everything from barbed wire to brothels.

Another night Alfredo, Pedro and the cripple Fernando lifted an entire wireless station transmitter, receiver and generator from under Japanese noses in Dili. When I asked Pedro how they got it past the sentries, he drew a bony finger across his throat and made a gurgling noise. It took 30 natives and 10 horses to carry it back to Australian headquarters.

Sometimes we would sit in a Portuguese official's house in the mountains and the official would say: 'Alfredo, Pedro, Fernando here is a notice offering a reward

for you'.

'I have been told to arrest you if I see you'. Much merriment, then more talk of their beloved Lisbon. Out would come the guitars and fiery liquor. Alfredo would sing the Marseillaise in Portuguese or perhaps Soldado que vais para a guerr, about a soldier going to war. While the cloud drifted below cloaking the violence, they would all sing Valencia and Lo Paloma. Toasts to victory and calls for 'Death to the Fascists'.

Fernando the cripple was to die the hard way. With his crutch under his arm he fell from his horse while trying to escape after an attack. The Japanese cut his throat and tied his still living body behind a horse. They did not leave much of Fernando, who had been sent into exile with Alfredo in 1927.

Evacuation came eventually and the deportados came to Darwin on the destroyers with the Australians.

I lost touch with Alfredo, but met him again in a Sydney street one day in 1957. He married an Australian. The Federal Government granted him citizenship and full repatriation rights and he needed this for he carried to the end of his life a bone exposing ulcer he received in escaping from a Japanese ambush.

Although an amnesty was declared, he never went back to Portugal, preferring Australia. I visited his relatives in Lisbon a few years ago and took a look at the bleak gaols which had held him as a young man.

Last Tuesday his widow, two sons, friends, relatives, members of the 2/2nd Commando Squadron Association, the NSW Commando Association and the Arncliffe RSL gathered at a Crown Street funeral parlour not far from the Surry Hills home of Alfredo Jose Dos Santos.

Bequeathed His Body

The Australian flag covered his casket, which was a fitting tribute to a man whose

try one of his famous pies.

Les Halse – Les had his 90th birthday on the 8th December. His family celebrated this great occasion during the week. Well done Les.

Isobel Servante-McCaul – it was nice to see Isobel at the Commemoration Service with her son Peter. She looked well and was pleased to meet up with old friends.

Peter and Sue Epps – both were at the service. Sue has had a tough year but looked well. Peter is flat out in the building business. The passing of Jess was hard on the family but the memories are treasured.

Ida Murray has moved to Bunbury and is very pleased with her new set up at Unit 47 Woodstock, 146 Strickland Street, Bunbury. We hope you are happy there Ida.

J Carey

Greetings All,

TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

Just a short update on the seed program for Timor Leste. I have finally managed to get a shipment of seeds delivered, two days after the last courier was sent I received notification they were ready to go. I am waiting feedback on the distribution of the seeds and hopefully it will be wide spread. I have ordered a new lot of 20,000 seeds for next year and with the process in place they should arrive smoothly. I should take this opportunity to thank Conoco Phillips (a mining company) for transporting the seeds from Darwin to Dili free of charge, Mike Gallagher who is on the ground in Dili and Yates for putting the packages together. It has taken a while to get this process in place and hopefully all future shipments will run smoothly.

To all members of the 2/2 members their family and friends Loris and I wish you all a

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Bart Mavrick

**Chairman and Administrator
Independent Trust FundGO WITH
Merry Christmas and a Happy New**

GO WITH GOD ALFREDO

This article is taken from the November 1971 Courier written by Frank O'Neill one of our former members.

At 8 o'clock last Sunday morning Alfredo Jose Dos Santos died in Sydney

He had been a Portuguese revolutionary, a political exile, an AIF soldier and an Australian citizen.

He was gentle, compassionate and tolerant, and I record his death at the age of 72 with deep, personal regret.

Alfredo suffered much but he did not complain.

In 1927, when he was 27, he became a political exile, deported from the Portugal where he was born to the penal colony of Portuguese Timor.

For 15 years he was one of a strange band known as deportados, lonely men eeking out a hand to mouth existence.

Then, in 1942, the all conquering Japanese swept down through the Dutch East Indies and occupied Timor.

Everything to lose.....

Alfredo and other exiles joined the Australian guerrillas holding out there.

They formed Australia's only 'International Brigade'.

The Japanese were triumphant everywhere. The exiles had nothing to gain by fighting them and everything to lose, including their heads.

I remember them well in their ragged

the hotel was going to be closed Peter and a group of Gibson men bought the hotel and kept it running until they could eventually sell it, keeping the wonderful Soak alive.

Peter bought farms at Speddingup and Condingup and worked them all together with Yonga Downs at Gibson.

Peters love of fishing was legendary and any chance he had he would be off in his little tinny.

Pat and Peter had great personal tragedy in losing their son Mark at the age of 29 and then their eldest son John shortly after his 50th birthday. They rose over this immense grief to get on and enjoy a wonderful retirement together. Pat and Peter did their fair share of travelling overseas and in their latter years travelled extensively around and around and around Australia. Each year they thought it would be the last time that they headed north for the winter but again this year found them in Carnarvon to escape the cold in Esperance and to share wonderful times with their many friends.

Peter's love for horses followed into the racing circuit and he was one of the founding members of the 'races' in Esperance. Here he trained and raced many horses with relative success. At his passing he had a horse in training called 'Arcade Attraction' which Pat will race this season in Esperance.

Peter will be sadly missed by his many friends and neighbours. He was an integral part of the farming community and many younger men acknowledge his mentorship and support.

Ian Campbell

ESTELLA'S POEM

I used to go to pops house to visit him awhile, every story he told me ended with

a smile.

Pop was always wishing to go early morning fishing. Whiting, herring, skippy and bream, the fisheries department didn't scare him!

Horse racing was pops favourite thing, but poor old Nan had to put all the bets on.

Pop was always interested in what we had to say and we will miss him each and every day.

Pop you have always had a gentle touch and we all love you very, very much.

Pop we love you we always have and you will never be forgotten.

By:

Estella Starceвич, (Great Grand Daughter)

2nd November, 2009

The sadness of growing old is the inevitable passing of our good friends. Peter was a wonderful friend and a great neighbour.

I first met Peter when I went to Southern Hills Station to shear his sheep with Ian Styles and Dick Hobby.

Not only was Peter a good friend and neighbour he was also my mentor. Always ready with advice, assistance and encouragement. He was a true pioneer. A commonsense man who did not enjoy the continual change and introduction of rules and regulations that applied to farming practices. His motto – Just Do It.

Initially Peter acquired a CP block – Yonga Downs at Gibson which he developed successfully. He worked this simultaneously with a Scaddan property with brother, Neil.

Peter watched with interest the development of the sand plain and realized that growing clover was essential to produce good pastures. He started a seed cleaning business at Gibson to ensure the district had adequate supplies of clover

seed to cultivate and harvest.

The Scaddan property was used to venture into cropping. Neil was the machinery man and Peter the livestock manager. This partnership lasted all their working life.

Peter also bought and farmed properties at Speddingup and Condingup.

The Gibson Hotel was a favourite haunt for locals and when it looked like the hotel would be forced to close, thus losing the liquor licence Peter, with several other locals decided to buy it. This group continued to trade until it was able to be resold, hence the Gibson pub is still operational today.

My block adjoins Yonga Downs and over the years Peter helped us in many ways. He was always a positive thinker and could come up with a solution to most problems that seemed insurmountable to me. His advice always – Just Do It!

Peter was very interested in the horse racing industry having owned and raced many horses over the years. He taught me a few bad habits in this area. Often he would travel to Kalgoorlie to watch his horse race. He usually had some humorous tale to tell – such as the time he lost all his money with only enough loose change to buy he and Pat a pie for tea at Norseman on the way home. Other times he would return home victorious stating he had won enough money to pay me for the shearing!

Peter's love of fishing was legendary and any opportunity that came his way he would be off in his little tinny. On one occasion he went fishing at Blue Haven and when finished decided to row around Dempster Head to the bay rather than carry the boat up the sand dunes to the road – bad decision. It took a long time and we made little headway through the rough sea and swell. We had to abandon the idea and still had to carry the boat up the sandhills.

Peter and Pat did their fair share of travelling

overseas as well as around Australia caravanning. Once a year they became grey nomads, hooked up their caravan and headed north to escape the cold Esperance winter. This occurred for more than twenty years and they made many lasting friendships. As recent as this year they made the trip to Carnarvon to share wonderful times with their friends.

Peter and Pat have suffered much personal tragedy and on each occasion

they have risen above their grief and maintained a positive attitude.

They have been marvelous role models for Marian, myself and our daughters over the years.

In conclusion I extend my deepest and sincere sympathy to Pat, Julie, Gus and their families.

Peter will be greatly missed by us all.

May he now rest peacefully with his sons and family who have preceded the way.

Dick Teasdale

There was a big attendance at Peter's funeral service held in Esperance on Monday 2nd November. Vince Swann represented the 2/2nd and Linda Loughton and Julie Ann Jackman flew down from Perth on the day. The Bowers, Poyntons and Campbell families were very close.

Peter served in No 2 Section which included Joe Poynton, Roy Watson, Don Hudson, Neil Hooper, Tony Bowers, Merv Ryan and others. All fine soldiers and sadly now no longer with us. Peter was a great Australian and will be sadly missed.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to Pat and all the family members.

Lest We Forget

Lieutenant I S Scott was a member of the Army Service Corps attached to 'Sparrow

was a very experienced war correspondent. The third member was a British correspondent of tremendous proportions named Dickson Brown. He was making more than heavy weather with the terrain in Timor, and was chafed to hell by the time he got to Force HQ. Parer was completely lacking in terror, and wanted to get the real picture but the camera equipment of those days was heavy and we just could not guarantee to give him the security required for him to get into the fighting areas. He most reluctantly accepted a heap of mockups as near the real thing as possible. The resultant film, 'Men of Timor', made it all over the world and helped Damien Parer to become what he really was, the greatest photographer of them all.

Don Platoon moved from the Cablaki to Same, which was quite a large Post nearer to the coast, and just below a defensible saddle in the mountain system. Here I had patrols in all directions with small fixed patrols to the north of the town. By now health was the main problem, the long arduous campaign had taken the fullest toll. Everybody was stones below normal weight, they had ceased to live on the reserves and their nerves were just capable of doing tasks by rote. It was not abnormal to see patrols moving out with their shorts, tattered as they were, under their arms as dysentery made their use impossible, just drop off the side of the track and let go of the mucus and then stagger on. The most pitiful band of troops imaginable. Bellies had shrunken to the size of what meals were available. The end of the Company appeared to be in sight as this state of affairs could not go on much longer.

Although the 4th Ind Coy had arrived on the 'Voyager' to relieve us, it was not long before they were getting into the same condition as we were due to lack of food and overwork.

C D DOIG

PARS ON PEOPLE

Life can be unkind to people as they grow older. Such has been the case of many of our veterans and their good ladies. Comments on their health problems may upset some readers but I'm sure we all admire their courage and the strength they show often under great pain. God bless them all.

Henry Sproxtton – after spending 3 months in Hollywood and eventually making it back home he had a bad fall on the 14th November resulting in a broken hip and an operation. Henry is now back in Hollywood and is on oxygen 24 hours daily but still hopes to make it back home before Christmas. He reckons you cannot beat home food.

Wilf March – Wilf has had a pretty tough 10 years and as time passes the days are becoming even tougher. Family support and Lorraine's loving care make life bearable but only just. Lorraine says Wilf has lost a lot of weight and sleeps poorly. Our prayers and thoughts are with you both.

Olive Chalwell says John though losing weight is eating well but the lack of activity is slowly taking its toll. She hopes to have a break in Busselton in the New Year and the family support is wonderful.

Iris Rowan-Robertson who had the misfortune to break her right wrist in August and is still having physio every week. Her grand children and great grand children are the light of her life. She still drives but not a lot and has her off days – don't we all. Iris sends her Christmas blessings to you all. Thank you Iris.

Arthur Marshall tells me he has to have a walking stick to get about. At 87 Arthur is still working making his 300 pies which go off like hot cakes. If you are passing his way in Harvey drop in and have a yarn and

Col Spence was to return to Australia. Major Callinan was to become CO Force. Major Laidlaw was to take over the 2nd company, Capt Baldwin was to be 2 i/c to now Lt Col Callinan, and Capt Don Turton was to be 2 i/c of the 2/2nd. Capt Dave Dexter had 'A' Platoon, Capt Tom Nisbet 'B' Platoon and Capt Gerry McKenzie had taken over 'C' Platoon from the displaced Capt Boyland and I was to take over 'Don' Platoon from Don Turton but without extra rank. Don Platoon had been formed on the island by using the Sapper Section under Sgt Gerry Green, A Section, No 10, consisting mainly of reinforcements received just before the Japs landed in February 1942. This was under the command of Lt Campbell Rodd and Sgt Max Davies had a further Section made up mainly of chaps who had come from the Dutch end. My Platoon Sgt was the immortal 'Smash' Hodgson. I had left one pony load of tobacco with Capt Dunkley's hospital, and gone forward with the other pecco to what was to be my headquarters on the Cablaki Mountains. Smash, who was as rugged a smoker as I was greeted me like a long lost brother when he sighted the pony load of tobacco. He said, 'Col, nothing for it but heavy smoking'.

You didn't have to be an Einstein to work out that this Cablaki area was as barren as a bird's arse. The only visible food was Kow Kow (sweet potato) and not too much of that. The lads of Don Platoon were in a pitiable condition, half starved, over worked, rotten with dysentery and had their fair share of malaria. Cripes it broke my heart immediately to have to keep this forlorn crowd on continual patrols and guards. It was at this moment that the Japs started to foment a native war in the area by using Dutch natives and local turncoats to throw our resistance into disarray. When first landing in Timor my impression of the natives was that they were a crushed

crestfallen crowd without a thought of warfare. I was smartly disabused when coming to Cablaki to see a victorious party returning from a foray against their enemy with several severed heads still dripping blood on the ends of their spears. It was as gory a sight as was my horror to see. This went on for days and days and the stench of rotting bodies in the kunai was just about unbearable, and it was only the firing of the bush which helped to dispose of the bodies and relieve some of the fetid smell.

All the while these lads had to bear this on practically empty stomachs, and make sure that the war was not turned against us. I felt that if morale was to be restored it was necessary to spell these Sections one at a time if only briefly. I advised Company HQ of this and they were not impressed, but I stuck to my guns and started by relieving the Sappers under Gerry Green as they had been in the thick of it from the word go under Don Turton, who was a tough task master. Luckily for him, and unluckily for the Sappers, he had not got malaria and had retained a fair degree of fitness. The Sappers benefitted from a brief respite from constant patrols and guards, and I was able to spell each Section in turn and used Smash to lead patrols into special areas to try and keep constant contact with the enemy.

Soon after I took over Don Platoon, two journalists and a movie cameraman arrived from Australia to get a story to put the population of Australia in the picture. The fact that the 2/2nd Ind Coy had resisted when most others had given in had made some glamour for us in the Australian press and the eyes of the top brass. So the story had to be told in film and words by the experts. The cameraman was Damien Parer whose reputation as a war correspondent and photographer was exceptional. Also Bill Marian from the ABC

Force' in West Timor in 1941/42. Ian managed to make it back to East Timor in March 1942 and was entitled to become a member of the 2/2nd Association as provided in our Constitution. Due to an oversight his name, Ian Sydney Scott, was omitted from the list of names of those who joined us from West Timor and appeared in 'All the Bull's Men'.

Some years on Ian contacted me and advised of the omission. I apologised to Ian which was the only thing I could do.

Ian enjoyed the Courier and was a generous contributor to its upkeep.

Ian passed away in September just short of his 92nd birthday. Brian Robertson has kindly provided his Eulogy.

Vale – Ian Sydney Scott

Delivered by Commodore Brian Robertson AM RAN rtd, Northern Suburbs Crematorium, 15th September, 2009.

Ian referred to his single room with his chair and TV as God's Waiting Room. So welcome to Ian's departure lounge.

Some might say we should not be unduly upset at the death of an old man who has lived a long and productive life but how can we not be sad to lose our last parent, a grandfather, good mate and great Australian.

Ian Sydney Scott, also known as Dad, Pappy and Scottie, was a father to Bruce and Helen, grandfather to Ben, Kylie, Sean and Ashleigh, an astute business man, a courageous soldier and WW2 veteran.

Ian was born to immigrants Joe and Jessie Scott from Kilmalcolm, Scotland on 19th September, 1917. He grew up in Five Dock and Haberfield, and attended Newington College 1930-34.

On leaving school he joined the family coal broking business and apart from the war years he spent over 60 years as a coal

broker.

At the outbreak of war Ian joined the militia and in June 1941 he enlisted in the AIF and was deployed to Townsville, where in his words 'they held the line'. He was assigned to a unit known as Sparrow Force as a lieutenant in charge of supply and transport. Sparrow Force was the code name for the Australian garrison stationed on Timor.

On 12 December 1941 Sparrow Force deployed to Koepang the capital of West Timor where the Force took up defensive positions around Koepang.

Sparrow Force has been referred to as a 'doomed battalion' because it was a small and lightly armed force deployed in the path of the highly mechanized Japanese military machine. But Ian's story is one of survival.

The Japanese invaded on 20th February, 1942. Ian could well have ended up a POW as his unit of 1,300 men surrendered after three days of fighting against more than 5,000 Japanese troops which were backed by bombers, fighters and light tanks.

Most surrendered, but Ian joined a small group who decided to evade capture. They had with them a truck and a utility, and into them climbed about 30 men in total, and they 'just kept going' east towards the border with Portuguese Timor. On their way they blew a bridge over the Mina River to slow down their pursuers.

On 22nd February, 1942 after the surrender of the Australian troops, the Australian Government noted him as missing.

Ian's group of 30 waited for evacuation which never came so they joined up with the guerilla fighters in the 2/2nd Independent Company in the mountains of Portuguese Timor.

The conditions in Timor were very tough as a force of about 400 men was existing in the mountains with very little to eat. Ian's

typical diet was rice and sweet potato 3x a day. Like most men in the unit he became ill with malaria and amoebic dysentery.

The signallers were able to build a wireless transmitter, nickname 'Winnie the War Winner', which is on display at the AWM and on 18-19 April, 1942 they were able to contact Darwin. At the end of May RAN vessels began landing supplies.

After six months in Timor Ian was evacuated back to Australia. In later years he complained that he had to walk across coral to embark in the RAN ship and his naval rescuers made him sick because they gave him jam and bread when he was only used to a rice diet....always one to give the navy credit!!

As a result of his service Ian suffered bouts of malaria for many years and skin cancers for the rest of his life.

At the end of the war Ian returned to the family coal business.

Post war years were happy days of parties, playing tennis and golf and meeting a certain young lady called Joyce Colyer who he married in 1948, sadly Joyce passed away in 1998 leaving Ian to live on his own for the last 11 years.

After his father Joe died in 1964 Ian continued to expand the colliery business which became very successful. As a salesman he inspired trust and made many friends. One of his good friends said he got on well with difficult customers – probably because that friend was the difficult customer. Ian was always a model of diplomacy and decorum – smartly dressed, attentive and engaging.

Ian had an office in Martin Place at Chalice House, just around the corner from the Hotel Australia – it may have seemed to some that he spent more time in Hotel Australia than in the office making a buck – of course Ian said it was essential PR

meeting with clients.

He was a generous and gracious host of lunches and dinners even though he would joke when he ordered the soup that someone had to keep the cost down. He never failed to entertain his guests who always had a great time.

He was a member of the Concord Golf Club, the Australian Golf Club and in later years played bowls as a member of the Neutral Bay Club and Warringah Bowling Club.

He was a serious gambler betting on the horses every Saturday. \$2 each on 7 races. Even on the day before he died he put money on a horse called My Girl Helen. Helen is his daughter so you can see it is a very scientific selection process. Some Saturdays were good, some bad. He often backed horses that were still running after sundown. He never failed to blame his losses on the poor advice of his bookie – also his sister in law Joy Colyer.

He was a meticulous diarist and note keeper. He could tell you the time and date he gave up smoking and when and where he last visited a specialist. His memory was outstanding to the end.

He had a great sense of humour, often dry but always witty along with a brilliant turn of phrase. He was never happier than when he was in full flight giving a spray to politicians or referring to the life saving advice from doctors as 'what would those pin heads know'. Even recently he would inform us that a nearby patient had died by point and gesturing like so.....

He adored his grandchildren and always tried to be involved in their sporting activities. They will remember him I am sure as a wise grandfather with a great sense of humour who brightened their lives.

I met Ian in 1967 not long after I met his daughter. In those days he had a big

Many thanks to you and your wonderful 'Team' for keeping us all up to date with current activities amongst members and friends.

Regrettably I have had to slow down and the forthcoming hot weather is intimidating, therefore please express my best wishes to all members and friends for the coming festive season and a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year. Hoping 2010 will be kind to us all.

Yours sincerely,

Clare West, Watermans Bay, WA.

Dear Jack – We would like to thank you for your cards, letters, flowers, phone calls, prayers, notices and to those of you who were able to attend Pegs funeral. The love, support, sympathy and generosity that we received from family and friends during this sad time is greatly appreciated.

Ted has spent the last eight weeks in Hollywood Hospital with a bad chest infection. He has responded well to the antibiotics and is feeling much better. He is now waiting to be transferred to a transitional care facility in Bayswater or Yokine for further rest and recovery. Thank you for sending cards, bringing flowers, telephoning and visiting, we are sure this all helped with his recovery and lifted his spirits.

Judy and Boots have spent the last 35 years living in Yanchep. Their daughter Donna and partner Glenn live in Nhulunbuy and have two beautiful daughters Ashleigh aged 13 and Taylah aged 11. Donna works at Woolworths as a HR manager and Glenn is at one of the mining companies. Clint their son and partner Di live in Collie with their two beautiful daughters Krystina aged 3 and Marnie aged 6 months. Clint runs his own electrical business and Di is a receptionist at the vets.

Barry is living in Maylands and has been a

constant support to Ted and Peg during this last year and especially to Ted since Peg's heart attack, fall and passing away.

Susan and Paul have spent the last 24 years in Bayswater. Their son Jai now 22 years old has just completed his first year at ECU doing a BA in communications and is also working at an engineering plastic company in Belmont. Daughter Annikka, 21 years old is currently working at Miss Mauds in Morley and is doing a hospitality and operational course.

So before the man in the red suit comes down our chimneys we would like to wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and the very best for 2010.

Cheers, **Ted, Judy, Barry, Susan and families.**

Being short of copy this passage from Colin Doig's 'The Ramblings of a Rat Bag' is well worth repeating:

NOVEMBER 1942

I left Ossu with two pony loads of Viqueque tobacco. This was probably the best cured tobacco on the island as the leaf was high grade and it was cured in honey and shredded excellently by the women folk. Each pony carried a peco (62 lbs), so I would have plenty of nicotine to fill any aching voids in the future. I arrived at Force HQ at its newest location, a place called Assureka (literally interpreted as Home of Dogs), obviously sited by Lt Col Spence on a precipitous mountain point with a downhill getaway in any direction. Very clever of the CO as he apparently worked on the theory, 'make certain your heels won't let your hide get hurt'. There I met Lt Col Spence, Major Laidlaw, Major Callinan, Lt Eric Smyth, Dr Henessy of 2/4th MO Capt Baldwin and a few others. I was told that there had been a massive reorganization of the whole force and the 2nd Ind Coy. Lt

Roslyn Moor, Haberfield, NSW.

Dear Jack – thank you for the extra (2) Couriers I received. I will send one to Helen, they will enjoy it. Lovely report on Alan, he was a great man and very much loved by a lot of people. As Joan Fenwick mentioned, we all miss him and his phone calls. Not a week went by without him ringing and we also rang him. Lovely photo of him at John's funeral.

Vanessa also said there was a lovely report on him in the NSW Commando News. If you have not got it I can send it'– he deserved all the accolades.

All the Kenneally families are well. We all miss John so much and we talked a lot about him and the rugby league grand finals. He loved that time of the year.

It is still very lonely, but fortunately the family and friends are great.

Hope you are keeping well and everyone over there.

Take care will keep in touch. Look after yourself. **Nora Kenneally, Yagoona, NSW**

Dear Jack – enclosed is a cheque for \$100.00 so use it where it is most needed. Things have been a bit stiff lately but I am getting there slowly. I wish all what they would wish for themselves especially good health. Cherries have been in blossom so should be an early harvest, everything is looking great now that the dust has settled. Young has been a good place to live – it has never gone backwards in the 59 years that we have lived here. With a bit of luck I might make my 85th birthday on the 7th November. I am still getting grandchildren and a new one is on the way.

Goodbye for now – Yours sincerely,

Tom Pulliene, Young, NSW

Dear Jack – please find enclosed a cheque for the amount of \$100. for a copy of the book 'All the Bull's Men'.

As I explained to you on the phone my wife Helen and I are going to Queensland in the next few days and will not be returning to our home address until early December so it would be appreciated if you could post it in late November.

My wife's father was Stan Whitford who was a member of the 2/2 Commando's and since his death some years ago your Association has been kind enough to forward a copy of the Courier to our home address. It is without question a very interesting and enlightening read and the Association is to be congratulated on producing such a great periodical.

With the extra few dollars perhaps that could go towards the cost of postage over the last few years or to any cause you might think appropriate.

Thanking you once again. Kind regards —
Patrick Lee, Benalla, Victoria.

Dear Jack – ages since I wrote so at last here I am. Enclosed cheque for \$100. being payment for another 'All the Bull's Men' book and what is over for the Courier or whatever.

A mate of ours does a lot of odd jobs for us, he is an ex army bloke so we are giving him a Xmas present. We would like to wish all the 2/2 Commando's, their wives and family and friends a beaut Christmas and a Happy New Year. Doreen and I are keeping fairly well, some old age aches and pains but nothing real bad.

One of our grand kids, Steven was married to his beloved Amy two weeks ago and it was a lovely beach wedding and about 170 people attended.

That is all for now.

Doreen and Jack Goodhew, Garbutt, Qld.

Dear Jack – please find enclosed a money order for \$20. being for two late subscriptions for the informative journal etc.

influence on my activities'– in the navy we call it control by veto. He vetoed a lot. Over the years he has continued to have considerable influence in the lives of all his family members. He could always give an unmistakable opinion without saying a word. Ian has been a big part of our lives and he will be missed greatly.

So my friends all that we can do is give thanks for a full life well lived and say farewell to Ian in the same way that he would close a conversation...Cheers for now.

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to the Scott family.

Lest We Forget

We regret to advise of the passing of three our precious ladies, they being;

Ivy Paull widow of Terry.

Wyn Thomson widow of Alex.

Peg Monk wife of Ted.

The Association extends its sincere sympathy to the Paull, Thomson and Monk families.

News of the passing of Frank Park in NSW. Frank was the brother of Jack Hartley who changed his name to join the army. Frank was 83 and attended many of our safaris. He served in the RAAF in WWII.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Maria Hartley and family.

May He Rest in Peace**60TH COMMEMORATION SERVICE REPORT**

Ideal weather conditions prevailed for our 60th Commemoration Service held in Lovekin Drive on Sunday 15th November. The attendance of over 100 people was our best for many years and it was pleasing to see so many family groups including

children and young people present. Only five veterans were well enough to attend, they being Bob Smyth, John Burrige, Dick Darrington Jim Lines and Jack Carey. I'm sure the remaining 13 were there in spirit.

President Jack declared the service open at 3pm welcoming all present and then inviting Sergeant David Hayes who was in charge of the Catafalque party to take up their positions around our Memorial. What fine looking men they were. Wreath laying followed with Mrs Margaret Smyth laying a beautiful double red diamond wreath at the base of our Memorial. David Lewis the Chairman of the National SAS Association of retired SAS men also laid a lovely wreath kindly donated by the renowned SAS Regiment.

The addresses followed one by John Carey and the second by John Burrige, now in his 92nd year, who was in top form. Both addresses were well received.

Mrs Anne Green read the Remembrance Prayers and Mrs Liza Howell then read the names of our fallen. Liza had kindly made the trip from Mandurah with her young daughter Cassie as Ray Howell had taken ill.

All stood and said the Ode which was most impressive.

Lance Corporal David Scott then sounded the Last Post which he does superbly and the Catafalque party presented arms. There was one minute's silence. David Scott then sounded the Rouse, Cassie Howell led the singing of our National Anthem and the Catafalque party retired to loud applause.

The Marshal, Mr Bart Mavrck took over and organized the march. Bob Smyth and Dick Darrington took part and in all about 40 marched and did a good job. Bart is a top marshal.

The salute was taken by Jim Lines, John Burrige, Jack Carey and Sergeant David

Hayes (SAS Regiment).

It is not possible to list the names of those good people who attended. We can only hope we will see you again on the 3rd Sunday in November, 2010 – God willing. It was nice to have Ian Nisbet (Tom's son) present and also Bernice Thomas (Herbies daughter). Family groups included the Turtions, the Hassons, the Howells, the Poyntons, the Bowers, the Burridges, the Epps, the Langridges, the Paynes, the Crossings, and regulars in Dot Maley, Sandra Mack, Nellie Mullins and many others. God Bless you All.

The Association sincerely thanks all those who helped on the day. The Botanic Gardens & Parks Authority and Ranger, Jenny Sutton, the Special Air Service Regiment, David Scott and members of the Catafalque party, Sig Shaun Bell, Bart Mavrick, Anne Green, Liza and Cassie, Bob and Margaret Smyth, Dave Lewis, Melita Cherry, John Carey, Colin Kinnear and Alicia Cherry and any more I may have overlooked. It was a great day.

J Carey

About 30 people attended 'The House' after the service and spent a pleasant hour in comfortable surroundings enjoying a few drinks and a nice afternoon tea. Our thanks to the Staff for making us so welcome.

Editor

ADDRESS by J N Carey

As a small Association we can consider ourselves fortunate to have our own Honour Avenue section in this magnificent park. When it was first mooted in 1948 that there were trees available in Lovekin Drive and plaques could be obtained, representations were made to obtain a block of 50, our request was granted and so our hallowed avenue was born. Plaques' were to cost one guinea and would give the army

number, christian and surname of the deceased soldier and date of death and who dedicated the plaque. For our unit we made the dedication "From his Unit".

A Special Dedication Ceremony was held in November 1949 when the Anglican and Roman Catholic Archbishops of Perth and Presbyterian and Methodist Ministers were also involved. There was a large parade and our Association mustered some 25 members. Our first Commemoration Service was held in Lovekin Drive on 26th February, 1950.

Today 60 years on we gather once again to honour the memory of those young men who paid the supreme sacrifice in World War II.

The men of our unit who gave their lives in the islands off our Northern shores over 67 years ago were deprived of the opportunity to live out a normal lifetime. Theirs was a very brief innings. Apart from their boyhood years, a fleeting youth and a brief taste of young manhood their lives were snuffed out by the cruel fortunes of war. The ages of our Fallen which appear on the plaques attached to the trees bear testimony of this. Walk up and down this beautiful avenue, see for yourself and be ever thankful to these brave young men, who gave that most precious possession, life itself, so that generations of their time and future generations could live in freedom and peace.

While this occasion is one of solemnity it is also one of quiet pride. We, who remain, feel honoured to have served alongside these men. They were our mates and we remember them as they were at that time, young, cheerful and full of spirit.

We should be always mindful of their giving. Long after we are gone the plaques bearing their names will still be here in this lovely avenue for people to see and that is how it should be. God Bless Them

have asked a young Perth film producer, Andrew Nowrajee to organize the filming and another guy, Robert Castigione to do the filming and recording. Robert is in Fremantle and has made several documentaries for television. Andrew has been talking to David Burrige and reading up on the 2/2nd and will be in touch with you re arrangements for the interview. I trust that this is still OK with you. I would like to make it over to Perth for this but frankly it is a bit expensive for me.

I am also filming Ralph Coyne of the 2/4th in Melbourne. He is 90 years old but getting quite deaf now. By the way, I showed the exhibition in Geelong a couple of week ago and a gentleman named Ron Brodie came along. He is 90 years old and as Sergeant A J Brodie in 1942 served with the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL). He tells the story of fighting with the Australians and that out of the 600 KNIL only 223 survived. They were evacuated on the Tjerk Hiddes. I didn't realize so many Dutch were fighting in Portuguese Timor!!!

Finally, I just want to record that you kindly gave me a video of 'Independent Company' which didn't show very well but I think I can get a DVD version. You also gave me a 16mm film which I think is 'Men of Timor'. I can probably get a copy of this in DVD form from the War Memorial in Canberra if I need it. As soon as I clarify all this, I will return your copies.

I trust you are keeping well and best wishes to all your 2/2nd colleagues.

Best wishes, **Bruce Butler, Victoria**

PS: Could you include me on the mailing list for the 2/2nd Commando Courier. I read the copies you gave me on the trip and they were really well written and informative.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Mr Carey

– would you kindly send me a copy of 'All the Bull's Men'. I am enclosing a cheque which I trust will cover the cost and the remainder to help with the purchase of seeds for Timor.

Though I have not had the opportunity to take part in this organisation actively I have been grateful to you all for making the magazine available to me. Norm, my husband passed away in 1987 and it has helped me to know the history of the unit through so many accounts written by his comrades. I was saddened when I read of Paddy Kenneally's passing. His life and example informed and inspired us all to accept the role the Timorese people played in assisting our men at such a great cost to their people'— after all they were let down after the war ended. The 2/2nd though remembered and honoured the promise Australia had given them.

It is to be hoped that the 'Sisters of Mary MacKillop' succeed in their endeavour to have an appropriate award bestowed on the Timorese people such as the "Companion of the Order of Australia" with practical help to their community in rebuilding their nation. They deserve Australia's help and respect.

Regards, **Sheila Parker, Mittagong, NSW.**

Dear Jack – I'm just writing to send a donation from mum (Nancy Teague) for the Courier and Independent Trust Fund.

Mum is quite well considering what she has been through. She still enjoys family get togethers and outings, especially to the sea.

We both enjoy keeping up with all the news in the Courier particularly concerning anything to do with Timor. Jenny Beahan's information about the government trying to re-establish its national museum was wonderful. I hope lots of people send photos and other things of interest.

I hope you are keeping well Jack.

All the best

Timor grasses grow,

Warm the fractured bones of the fighters
who fell.

Timor, flower show,

Beautify the bones of the fighters who
fought for freedom.

Fought til they fell.

One of the nuns who organized the Mass, Sister Susan Connolly is pursuing her campaign to have the people of East Timor awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for its support for the Australians in the Second World War. The ABC's Compass programme is planning to screen a documentary on her campaign for its ANZAC Day edition next year.

A booklet produced for the Mass made an interesting point about the Timorese sacrifices in WW11. Noting that as many as 40,000 Timorese died as a result of the conflict, the booklet said: "No other nation has lost so many civilians as a result of helping Australian soldiers."

Paul Cleary

DEBT OF HONOUR – PHOTO EXHIBITION

Dear Jack – Its been over a month since I had the pleasure of meeting you and discussing the DEBT OF HONOUR photo exhibition that I would like to get shown in WA also to talk about the possibility of doing an interview with you on film for a possible documentary.

After Perth, I flew to Berlin to visit an old friend of mine who unfortunately is very ill with cancer. Then I came back through Singapore to visit my brother. I just got back 10 days ago hence the time taken in contacting you again.

Firstly, let me thank you for seeing me at your home. I also spent some time with

John Burridge Snr and Harry Sproxtton. John is happy to be interviewed but Harry did not feel he was up to it which is fair enough. He had just got out of hospital and wasn't feeling that well.

On the DEBT OF HONOUR photo exhibition, I am working with Central Park Tower in St George's Terrace to have it in the foyer of their building in mid 2010. I have asked an experienced curator, Paul Bridges to help put it together so it looks professional. I have also spoken to Wayne Gardiner from the Army Museum of WA to provide other artifacts from the period. I have now formally written to the museum with the request so they can advise under what terms and conditions these items could be made available.

There is an opportunity to show the exhibition at the City of Melville as they have a friendship relationship with the District of Ermera. Also, I met Anne Edwards of the SAS Resources Trust when in Perth and she said that they were very supportive of the 2/2nd and would be interested in arranging some function that shows the exhibition.

I am prepared to make the exhibition available for other groups to show so I will be talking to organisations who can take this responsibility for touring it in WA as I am unable to manage this from Melbourne.

As I understand it, the 2/2nd Association will not continue in its current form after the end of next year so I personally feel that it would be great to have this exhibition during 2010 to not only honour the 2/2nd Independent Company and the Timorese, of course.

Anyway, I will keep you posted on how the exhibition proceeds.

On the documentary film, all I can do at this time is to film the interview with yourself and John Burridge so at least we have that when and if the full documentary or film is made. I

Time has taken its toll on the Association's ranks since being formed in 1946, 447 have passed on and our membership stands now stands at 52 Australia wide of whom 17 are in WA. We mourn their passing and remember them as they were, fine men and good Australians. The ranks of our precious ladies too have declined. God Bless Them.

We salute our forces serving in Foreign Countries. Unfortunately the average Australian only takes a passing interest in the conflicts our men and women are engaged in, dangerous as they may be. We all admire their courage and wish them a safe return. The SAS men here today have all served in Iraq or Afghanistan and no doubt will be called upon to serve Afghanistan again. Mateship plays a part in their success and survival. May God be with them in times ahead.

It is nigh on 68 years since the 2/2nd landed in Timor. In those 68 years, the people of East Timor have endured much suffering, lost countless thousands during the period of Japanese and Indonesian occupation. Our grieving was always for the East Timorese and we rejoiced when they became the 191st member of the United Nations in September 2002 and officially became known as Timor Leste. Our Trust Fund now in its 17th year is still going and great support has been given to the Timorese people by countless Australian groups in recognition of the help we received from them back in 1942. May it continue. Given time, Timor Leste will gradually overcome their problems – this would be our most earnest wish.

As Australians we live in a great country. It has been an honour to serve our country as a fighting unit and a responsible Association for the past 68 years. Good luck to the generations yet to come and God Bless Australia.

J W CAREY

ADDRESS by John Burridge

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN AND CHILDREN AND ALL FRIENDS OF THE 2/2nd

It gives me great pleasure to say a few words about our wonderful little unit on this, our 60th annual commemoration service.

As the years go by, so the number of surviving members of the unit gets smaller. This however, is balanced by the continued support by folk such as you, who year after year attend our annual service.

What a great little unit it was, and is, the 2/2nd. Despite its lack of size, it has survived when units much bigger in size and numbers have failed to do so. Much of our success has of course been due to many members who have put in time and effort to keep our memories alive. It is not my intentions to mention any individual or family today, as a great number of our



2nd 2nd Commando Association 60th Commemoration
Kings Park, Perth, 15 November 2009

John Burridge

greatest supporters are no longer with us. Our numbers are now so short that we happily welcome ladies on to our committee.

Some of our members served in Timor only. Others joined the unit, missing Timor, but served in New Guinea and New Britain. Many of the original members served in all three theatres of war. To all these men we way 'thank you'—'thank you'.

Today the thoughts of many of us revert to special events during their war service. Particularly we remember those who are no longer with us – many who died in the battles to save our country in time of war, and many who have left us because of natural causes. So that is why we, as a unit, are so grateful to you wonderful friends who turn up year after year.

Collectively we honour the memory of not only lost individuals, but the unit itself. Indeed on such a day as this we are a family— a very proud family and a family seemingly getting bigger every year. Why, I have 4 great grand children myself!

I am not very good at making speeches, so I will come to a close of this short address by asking you to do several things. Firstly, I want every man, sitting or standing, to shake the hand of the man nearest you. Secondly, I want every man and every lady to give his or her neighbour a very happy hug.

And finally, I want everyone here to show their enthusiasm in a typical Australian way. Please clap your hands to show your appreciation of your own presence here today as a family and also in memory of a wonderful unit and association.

Thank you very much.

John Burrige

EAST TIMOR TRIP

– SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009 by PATSY THATCHER

Dear Jack – The trip to East Timor went well, although I came home with a provisional diagnosis of two frozen shoulders, so mobility was zilch and the pain annoying. Fortunately the original diagnosis was wrong as frozen shoulders take forever to get right – up to 18 months. Ultrasound showed both shoulders had a tear each in one of the tendons and severe bursitis (inflammation) in the shoulder joints. Injections of cortisone into the shoulder joints have given me pain free mobility back, which means I can now type that report I promised.

As you know I went to Timor primarily for the 15 year anniversary celebrations of the setting up of the Oan Kiak Trust which awards Scholarships to Timorese orphans. This is the Trust that Col Doig's bequest was so instrumental in putting on a sound financial footing with the ability to expand. As you know the money was invested in Australian and the Trust has been vigilant in only using the interest to fund the scholarships.

Unfortunately our Oan Kiak records were burnt when Caritas (Catholic NGO) in Dili went up in flames in 1999, but I am able to report with some accuracy the number of kids that benefited from 1994 to 1999 and then with precision accuracy from 2000 to 2009.

We began in 1994 with 20 kids awarded scholarships – 10 urban, 10 rural. By 1997 there were 58 children on Oan Kiak scholarships. By 1998 there were 153 kids on scholarships and in 1999 we had 205. In late 2000 we had people trying to find these kids and sadly we only found 31. I have estimated that in excess of 300 kids received help from the Trust fund between 1994-1999. About 150 were on full

recently in Hervey Bay and over the years after three attempts we finally ran them down. They are both in good nick and still lead active lives. They would love to see any of our mates around that's for sure but what is in our 'address book' is a bit limited. Please add the address – 2510 Regan Creek Road, Toogum (also known as Toogoom).

Jewell Soper is still getting around pretty well with the help of a walker. She had one knee replacement which was a success but the second one wasn't. Her retirement village had their Christmas party yesterday and it was a huge success. Her family are all well and they are all keen supporters of the Cowboy football team. She has 15 grandchildren plus 4 great grandies.

Bulla and Jean Tait – Bulla has been in a dementia care facility for about two years now and for some time in high care. Jean calls on him twice a week but he sleeps quite a lot and his memory is not good. Two of her family of three are travel people – one to Vietnam and the other to China.

Lucky and Doreen Goodhew are ticking along okay and in fact Lucky still mows his lawn! They live near the Townsville airport and this keeps very busy. A son had a charter business with a fishing boat at Townsville but he has now moved to Darwin and is still doing his charter work there. He married a Mt Isa girl in Townsville this year.

George and Margo Shiels are well and still as always terribly busy. George still helps with the RSL, Legacy and Lodge. The drought of course has affected his mango trees and his 10 acre farm. One of their four daughters, Jan has returned to Bowen and of course the family reunion has been wonderful.

Lois Davies is well. She had a knee replacement which went well. She belongs to a number of organisations and keeps very busy. Unfortunately the three local

Caloundra 2/2nd families never have a get together. The other two are **Andrew and Mitchell**.

Yvonne Walsh has just returned from East Timor. Her trek 'Solidarity and Respect' was successful and she attended the Graduation Ceremony at our Don Bosco School at Comoro. It included a half hour Memorial Service. The support that Tafe Australia and the South Australian Government is giving the school means that their school year will start from January 2010 instead of October 2009.

We wish all members a Merry Christmas and a happy healthy New Year.

Ron and Lyn, Toowong, Queensland.

Requiem Mass in Sydney to remember Timorese dead, 7th November, 2009

The Sisters of St Joseph held their annual Mass at Mary MacKillop Chapel, North Sydney to remember the Timorese who died in all conflicts. This year's Mass remembered especially the Timorese and Australians who died fighting the Japanese in the Second World War.

In his homily Bishop David Cremin paid special tribute to members of the 2/2 Independent Company who passed away this year. He read the obituaries for Paddy Kenneally and Alan Luby which were published in the **Sydney Morning Herald** this year.

The Mass was attended by Paddy's widow Nora and his son Gerald, who did one of the readings. Many Timorese also attended the Mass and they sang hymns in Tetum.

One particularly moving hymn, **The Fighters Who Fell**, was sung by soprano Nicole Thomson who was accompanied by Rachel Scott on the cello. The hymn was based on the original poem by Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmao, which reads:

We called to see **Mary Bone** and her grandson Brett. It was really nice to spend a couple of hours with Mary. She had knee surgery earlier this year and it still gives her a bit of pain now and again but she still has that lovely Mary Bone smile.

I spoke to **Harry Botterill** a week or so ago. He told me of his grand-daughter's wedding recently at St Kilda. Sharon's parents were down from Queensland and the bridegroom's family from the West. Most of Harry's family were present so he really enjoyed it.

Don and I have not been to see **Leith Cooper** for a while but we talk on the phone now and again. He has settled in at Melaleuca Hostel in Cowes where he says they spoil him.

Don and I went on a coach trip to Canberra 27th September to 2nd October to see Floriade. It was really spectacular. We were able to visit **Joan Fenwick** in her new unit and meet her daughter Anne who was visiting from Brisbane. Joan's unit is very nice and she is close to her church, shops etc.

My daughter Elva and husband Rod have been to Canberra since we were there and called to see Joan who was pleased to see them.

Ed and Dorothy Bourke have just returned from visiting family in Queensland.

Mavis Broadhurst had contact with them recently.

It is always good to read all the news in the Courier and I especially enjoyed reading the account of Babs Langridge's trip on the train to Brisbane from Perth and home again. It was a great read.

Bert Price's letter brought back memories of the Tasmanian Safari.

We have had a very worrying time over the past two months. My daughter-in-law Cathy has only just got home last Thursday after

14 weeks in hospital. Cathy is Robert's wife. They went to Canada in early June for 5 weeks holiday to visit the family that Robert had spent 6 months with in 1976. He was a trainee with the International Agricultural Exchange Association—Cathy became ill over there and they had to return early. She has had a big operation in which part of her liver had to be removed. Recovery has been very slow and she has a lot of improving to do yet before a course of chemotherapy. It has been a very stressful time for us all especially Robert, Ben and Amy. Cathy has a very strong will and a positive attitude which has certainly helped her get this far.

Colin has been an immense help as he has milked the cows many times and helped Robert with other farm work.

Don and I are keeping well. Don is playing some golf when the weather is suitable. I have judged at 4 flower shows lately and have another one at Traralgon on Friday.

Our children, grand children and great grand children are all well and busy with the little ones growing up too quickly. They are all very special.

We have had 31 inches of rain for the year until now so we are still well below our average. We had good rains in July, August and September so have had a very good spring.

Don joins me with very best wishes to all for Christmas and the New Year.

My special greetings to you Jack – you certainly do a marvelous job with the Courier and I know all will be sorry when it has to come to an end.

Bye for this time. **Margaret Monk**

QUEENSLAND

Dear Jack – hereunder is the latest on some of our Queensland members.

Jack and Val Hanson – Lyn and I were

scholarships and many others received help with books, fees, uniforms, shoes on an ad hoc basis when necessary. In other words the trust fund helped out when the carers of orphans, for whatever reason, couldn't.

At the end of 1999 at the request of Vicki Tchong, a Timorese activist working for CNRT, who was trying to facilitate the return of Timorese people to Timor from several parts of the Indonesia archipelago Oan Kiak Trust funds were used to repatriate some 50 Timorese orphans home from Flores. We also paid \$1,550 for educational expenses for orphans who were receiving schooling from the nuns in Flores. This was a one off gesture because under the terms of the trust the monies have to be distributed to Timorese kids living in East Timor. An Australian Indonesian speaking friend of mine (at her own expense) went to Flores to find the kids and facilitate their return to Timor and to make sure any left were being looked after and educated.

The story since 2001 has been truly heartening. East Timor development Agency (ETDA) oversees our operations in East Timor. As I mentioned in a previous report to you we have two and a half paid staff aided by some 10 volunteers and we own a 4 wheel drive (bought out of investments when they were buoyant) that enables our staff to carry out a mentoring programme all over East Timor. We have scholarship holders in 11 out of the 13 districts, Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Dili, Ermera, Liquica, Lospalos, Maliana, Oe-Cusse, Same and Suai. The kids are mentored four times a year and this process has proved to be very beneficial.

Since 2001 there have been 1,655 yearly scholarships funded (this figure includes kids who in the main began on scholarship in primary school). Currently as at the end of school year 2008-2009 we have 229 kids

on our books a drop from 245 in 2008. To date since 2001, 85 kids have completed secondary high school, an average of 6 years per child. 6 of our high school graduates are attending local tertiary institutions; 3 are studying overseas – Cuba, China and Indonesia; 3 are working with local NGO's and 1 is working part time as one of our three paid Oan Kiak staff. The trust only contracts to fund the kids as far as completing secondary school, but beginning two years ago we have been awarding 3 tertiary scholarships a year (Colin Doig Scholarships) to our graduates wishing to do tertiary studies.

Each year the number of scholarship holders finishing either junior or senior high school is increasing. ETDA which is the largest Timorese NGO involved with education is providing a 1 year English internship programme for around 100 of our graduates. We need to find a way of helping some of our high school graduates into vocational apprenticeship type programmes (mechanics, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc.). We have already decided to draw down on our invested funds to fund 10 kids into these vocational courses, but this is of course at the expense of helping the little kids who are actually our core business, it was them we originally set out to help. There are over 50,000 Timorese kids still not getting to school and what the Trust does is, I guess a mere drop in the ocean.

Spent some time with Kirsty and also visited the school at Dare. At the weekends a coffee shop runs in the Commando museum section of the school. It was quite busy the day I was there and seems to be one of the 'in' places to be at the weekend. Kirsty thanks you for the Couriers you sent up, but she already had a copy so I guess you must have sent her one earlier. At your request I asked her was there anything she

could suggest the 2/2nd Association could help with. Her reply was to help the school if and when it became possible.

On another tack altogether – Dili was cleaner than at anytime I have seen it. There seems to be a sense of purpose and optimism that I have not previously seen in Timor. This was replicated in the districts – I went to the 10th anniversary mass for the Suai massacre – went down through Aileu, Maubisse, Ainaro and home via Maliana and Balibo. For the first time ever I didn't see any child suffering from malnutrition, nor any snotty nosed kids dressed in rags and I hasten to add I was out in the hamlets and villages, not just the bigger towns. The pension scheme seems to be paying off in the beginnings of a healthy grass roots economy in the rural areas. Stacks of food in the markets, although the roads were not as good this time as last time. Traffic lights in Dili blew me away, as did the huge statue of John Paul on the Tibar headland!!!

Visited Rufino, he doesn't keep the best of health, can hardly walk, is quite deaf and can't I think go on for much longer. Can't believe he is 95 years old, but that is what his ID card indicates.

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the football. **Patsy**

The Oan Kiak Trust is to be congratulated for what it has achieved in the past 15 years.

Editor

GREETINGS FROM DILI - SEPTEMBER 2009

Our trek was inspiring and this time we stayed with communities and established connections with local people then we had 5 days touring by 4 wheel drive and we visited Vila Maria, Lete Foho, Atsabe, Bobonaro, Maliana, Batugade, Balibo, Atabae, Liquica, Maubara – camping and staying at guest house and had lunch with

President Horta in remote district of Rairobo on Friday.

He asked about 'the Perth men' and took my phone number for an appointment when he returns from New York security council meetings.

More significantly I have news for Jack and Bob re progress of the Association's Seeds of Life Programme. I will be meeting Sister Guillherminia today.

Mike Gallagher the NT Government representative is back in Dili for a week and told me that the Madres are waiting for advice when to expect the seeds as the planting season has started. The people to people connections are still operating this end and I will be able to get some photos for 2/2nd men as I am here for another month.

I understand the SAS contact person is Bart and he thinks Rotary could take over distribution, however my feelings are that 'if it is not broken, don't fix it' with different people becoming involved, maintain the people to people links that have been in place from the beginning. With my frequent visits I am widely known as connected with 2/2nd and can continue direct connection with the Association.

Just a couple more bits of information for the Men via Jack.

'Sparrow Force House' will be inaugurated 2nd October and Australian Defence Force Coop Programme Adjutant asked me to let you know invitations will be sent to 2/2nd and Z specials – SP House is the lodge and mess attached to the Embassy and it displays the Honour Board— Ron Archer gifted in 2006. So get passports in order and come over to Timor!

I have another meeting planned for this afternoon with ADF Personnel interested in honouring the work and role of 2/2nd Association – I was approached in Sydney

Company at Canungra I was placed in Mal Herbert's sub-section with Tom as 2IC to Mal. I became good friends with Tom and we wrote to each other after the war and the last letter I got from Tom was after his wife died.

On one patrol after Lt Jack Fox took over the section replacing Lt Ken MacIntosh in New Guinea, Mal and Tom became 1st and 2nd scouts, replacing Leo Criddle and myself. They moved along the track and led us into a large camp where two Japs were talking. Mal and Tom shot both and the section cleared the area and met the battalion on the Bogodyin road the next day. Six section had agreed friendship with the original members and reinforcements.

As only one member of the original section is still living in Queensland there cannot be many reinforcements living? There is two that I know of Tom Yates and myself of 6 section.

The South Australian members of the Association received Alan Luby's funeral service information and this small booklet showed Alan as a young soldier.

I rang **Bert Bache** and he is doing okay but unable to read and Sylvia is still having chemotherapy today 10th November, 2009.

I attended the oncologist and he was pleased that my white cells have gone down from 128,000 to 28,000 units and lymphocytes are down to 25,000 which is good news all round for me. I have to see him again in 8 weeks.

Weather here in Adelaide is very hot 38-39 degrees for 6 days then a cool change to 35 – most unusual for spring.

Christmas greetings to all members, widows and widowers of the great Association especially to you Jack for all the good work you have done for the Association over the years.

Kel Carthew, Adelaide

VICTORIA

Dear Jack and 2/2nd friends everywhere – another year almost gone and time to send greetings to all for Christmas and the New Year 2010. I have contacted a number of Victorian members and widows in the last week or so –

Mavis Broadhurst is well and has visited **Win Humphries** who is now living in Heidelberg where she is nearer her family. Win is in a hostel and is happy there.

I have not caught up with **John and Shirley Southwell** since Anzac Day and they both looked well then. They are keen bowlers and I am sure that is what keeps them fit.

Last Sunday was the annual pilgrimage to Tidal River and Don and I went down. It was a great day weather wise and although not a lot there all went well. The address was given by **Lieutenant Colonel Paul Kenny** and he was very interesting. He told me he is very involved with our 2/2nd.

I had tried to contact **Pat Peterson** a number of times earlier that week and eventually phoned her sister Miriam who told me Pat was in the Traralgon Hospital having had surgery for breast cancer. I was able to speak to Pat on the phone and she assured me that she was doing very well and was due to leave hospital in a few days to go and spend time with her daughter Mandy who is a specialist nurse. Pat was disappointed to miss the Tidal River day – possibly the first time she has missed. I am fairly sure that Don and I were the only ones representing the 2/2nd and we both laid poppies at the Cairn in remembrance. I was the odd one out as I was the only woman who walked up to the Cairn.

We went on to Lakes Entrance later that afternoon where we had 4 days holiday in the Big 4 park there and it was very enjoyable.

Regards, **Dick Darrington**

STATE REPORTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

Dear Jack – after my ring around there does not appear to be much of a change from my last report and three months seems to have gone like three days or weeks – that is the trouble with getting older – time flies.

Russ Blanch from Bangalow is much the same and is very disappointed at not being able to garden but he is making up for it by annoying his daughter Ellen with his advice. Ellen has taken to gardening like a duck to water since giving up the business. She is really enjoying it. They have just put in the new seasons plants and from what I can gather it will be the usual show piece.

Beryl Cullen from Kyogle is well and quite remarkable for her age. Still shopping for herself with the aid of the walker. I guess having a chat with old friends' does wonders too. I guess that goes for us all.

Eric and Lorraine Herd are both well as usual which I reckon speaks well for our part of this world. Lucky country indeed.

Edith Jones usually from Barraba but of late touring Queensland. She is a real 'will of the wisp' but in really good health. No word as yet on a date for her return home. Having too much of a good time I suspect.

May Orr of South Grafton is still in good health and sends her very best wishes to all.

Fred Otway still going well. Still playing tennis and showing no signs of knocking off. He said that **Paddy Wilby** is pretty good and in the process of writing a book. Paddy has bad eye sight so how he is writing I don't know. Good luck to him.

Gordon Stanley is pretty much the same. Being well looked after in the nursing home. Joan not the best at the moment. We all wish you well Joan.

Beryl Steen still domiciled in Townsville with her son and daughter in law. Beryl was coming down to Brisbane this week I think to settle her affairs. She has sold her home at Thornlands a suburb of Brisbane. Beryl is keeping in good health.

Another Beryl — **Beryl Walsh** of Kempsey is also in good health and has her sister still staying with her although she has a house next door. It suits them both at the moment. I have probably mentioned it before but they are twins. As a matter of fact her sister worked with me at Maclean about 60 years ago. She was a telephonist. I had just started my first country job after the war at Maclean. After that I came back as postmaster in 1964 and retiring in 1980. Still here for a bit longer I hope.

Nola Wilson of Gilgandra still going well after recovering well from both knee operations. Still very dry out their way and the rain has been very patchy out west with some good falls in some districts and none in others. Nola sends good wishes to all.

Edna Vandeleur of the Sunshine Coast is North of Brisbane and still going reasonably well although suffering from deteriorating eye sight. She does not get around much now – we have all slowed down.

Tom Yates from Kyogle is well but Jean is unchanged and is now out in the nursing home part of the hospital. The legs are the main problem otherwise she is okay.

Our thoughts are with all those with problems which I suppose are part of the ageing process.

All the best to all for the Festive Season which is not far off. Time flies faster each year I reckon.

Happy Greenhalgh, Maclean

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dear Jack – received the Courier and read the sad news of the passing of Tom Martin.

When I joined the 2/2nd Independent

by a former commando who is now a professional with a network of current senior officers: Adrian Harding said he was inspired by my dedication to 2/2nd (written in April) and was contacted by ADF mates who read my piece in Dili Guide Post and with like mind they want to maintain the humanitarian ethos of 2/2nd.

This 'self selection' is the best protection of the Association's role and reputation in Timor and Australia' – So I will report what transpires from initial meeting and keep you in the loop.

More soon, **Yvonne Walsh**

PS: Planning on seeing Rufino this coming week.

A family trip to Ainaro, Timor Leste

It was with mixed emotions that in August, I sat opposite 4 creado's in Ainaro, East Timor, discussing the role each of them played in preserving the lives of the men from the 2nd/2nd in the early 1940's.

I am Johanna Nesbitt, youngest daughter of Edmund Bourke who joined your ranks when you returned to Australia after your East Timor campaign. In July this year, my husband, Peter and I took our 4 children to Timor Leste (East Timor) for a 6 week stint of voluntary work. We were put in touch with the Canossian Sisters, a Catholic order of nuns who originated in Italy, by a friend, Fr. John Fowles of Thurgoona, NSW. The sisters run medical/nursing clinics throughout the country, by chance we were sent to Ainaro, where the 2nd/2nd were hiding out when the Japanese arrived in 1942.

By sheer coincidence, Peter went to visit some elderly citizens in a nearby village, who could no longer trek the mountains to get to the clinic for health care. After addressing their health concerns, he enquired about a toe that was at right angles to the rest of the foot only to be told

that it was injured when the Japanese were here, some 65 years ago. And so a return visit with a video camera, interpreter and a wife was organized.

We spent an hour interviewing the 4 men about their adventures with the 2nd/2nd, of whom they spoke very fondly. 2 of the men remembered escorting the Australians to Betano Beach for their departure, each of them told of escapades nursing sick and injured soldiers back to good health, whilst hiding them in the surrounding mountains. The toe was injured whilst being interrogated by 2 Japanese soldiers in his parents' home. It was a new home, yet to be completed. As luck would have it, the roof collapsed, killing the 2 soldiers. The family somehow escaped with minor injuries, including a dislocated toe, as proof.

Timor Leste is an incredibly impoverished country; life is still so primitive for the entire population but especially in the rural villages. We stayed for 4 weeks in Ainaro and 2 weeks in Los Palos.

In Ainaro, there is no power, running water, sewerage system or shopping centre. Life is hand to mouth. They survive on subsistence farming, they eat what they grow or trade. Their days are so occupied with survival tasks; there is very little opportunity to do anything else. They begin their day carting water, they then set a fire, go to their gardens, which may not be nearby, pick what they are going to cook/eat for the day then return home to prepare the food. All the while they will be caring for any number of children, often not their own.

The culture is strongly dependant on family infrastructure; they look after their own until their dying day. There is great dishonour if you don't provide for your elderly relatives, they could teach western society a thing or 2 about the importance of family life.

The medical situation in Timor Leste, as

we fondly came to know it, is dire. Any knowledge base that had been built up effectively left with the Indonesians in 1999. There are health centre's manned by partially trained nurses and a collaboration with the Cuban government where all of their medical students get sent to East Timor for a 3 year stint. Unfortunately their medical skills leave a lot to be desired, often scaring off the locals to the point that the Cubans have very little to do. In Ainaro, they show no initiative or interest in improving public health, instead staying home most days counting down the days until their departure.

Timor Leste has one of the world's highest maternal and infant death rates in the world. 1 in 10 children will die before the age of 5, and many mothers are reported to not survive child bearing, although reliable data is not available. They have no access to help. Not only are there very few doctors, but most villagers have no way of getting to a hospital that may be several hours drive away.

Australia is only an hour's flight away from Timor and yet these people, who so willingly assisted the Australian 2/2 Independent Company back in 1942, live in abject poverty. However, many NGO's (non-government organizations) such as Caritas, Care and Oxfam, various governments from around the world and private organizations are trying to improve life for these people. It will take several generations and I fear a lot of aid, as there seems to be very little in the way of resources. There is nothing for an ever growing number of youth, to do. There is very poor education, and poor infrastructure.

Before we left Timor Leste, we had the privilege of meeting Major Michael Stone, from the Australian Army, who is Jose Ramos Horta's, personal assistant and

advisor. He showed great enthusiasm and interest in the discussions we had with the Creados in Ainaro, and will look into some type of recognition for them. Major Stone is an inspiration to us all. He embodies the true Aussie spirit of friendship, leadership and courage, that I am sure was there 65 years ago with the 2nd/2nd Commandos. He works tirelessly to improve life in East Timor through policy and action.

There are many stories to share about our time in Timor Leste, from the daily work in outreach clinics to participating in English classes in the schools and in the evenings at the boarding houses and orphanages. Also, the stories shared by the Creados and their families.

Perhaps in the next edition, we will have room for more.

Until then, **Johanna Nesbitt.**

Thanks for a very interesting article Johanna. **Editor**

MEMORIES OF GOROKA REST AND RECREATION

A Platoon moved to the Goroka area for 6 weeks. A well earned R&R break at the Goroka missionary village in late 1943. Such a beautiful place with many vegetable gardens but very few trees growing, just kunai grass plateaus stretching for as far as you could see. The troops were fortunate enough to receive five lots of comfort funds and Red Cross parcels which included tobacco, always in short supply to the smokers, also chocolates and razor blades. We each had 10 bars of chocolates and 10 packets of tobacco. I being a non smoker received more chocolates' in a swap.

I was lucky I received a very rich fruit cake in the mail posted to me by the people I worked for in Bridgetown. It did not last too long as we made quick work of eating it.

We all had a very relaxing life style at the

Goroka Village, taking things easy, no parades just a compulsory Ateblin tablet before breakfast.

There was a swimming pool which was a godsend. Then the Yank radar company invited us to play baseball with a softball and being not too keen with the cricket idea. Many of the Yanks had a reputation of playing with the famous Boston Red Sox and Brooklyn Dodgers. We soon got a team together, anxious to take on the Yanks at baseball. I had heard about the famous Babe Ruth. I was fascinated by the throwing and catching of the ball in one gloved hand.

So to have a go at the Yanks our Aussies baseball team consisted of Bulla Tait, A Marshall, Dick Darrington, J Collins, F Thorpe, R McDonald, A Birch, N Hooper, G Shiels, T Timcke and W Congdon.

The Yanks baseball team – all champions – so they told us and they were really good over the first couple of weeks winning all the games. Their barracking putting us off while we were batting with shouts and remarks – we got them swinging like rusty gates, they just could not see the ball. Every day they arrived around about 2 o'clock saying Aussie do you want to play us – we like our ball game.

Bulla Tait would say lets beat them – then things changed, we started winning a few games with a smooth pattern of play and lots of mighty home runs hit by A Marshall and N Hooper. Somehow the interest of playing baseball was lost by both teams.

We became active in racing the horses. Some 24 were rounded up and a few of the fellows started racing them – next thing jockeys' were needed so we could have a race meeting. We soon had some willing jockeys', myself being one, John Moore a former 10th Light Horseman another.

We had trouble in the handling of the horses they not being used to having bridles or metal bits and saddles on them. We lined the

horses up and started the race and the horses would tear off up the strip with none of us having any control of keeping them racing straight down the middle. A few jockeys fell off. I was lucky, my horse was the only one to complete the course. After a couple of tries it was decided to round up and rest the horses for the following day and to try again. Dave Dexter finally had us and the horses ready once again to race the mile 'The Goroka Handicap' – all the horses behaved well and I won the race easily on my horse 'What a Bastard' by Vagabond ex Maiden. Johnny Moore was second on 'Cough Mixture' by Orderly ex Nursery and I forget the names but there were some beauties thought up and I received 6ozs of tobacco for the winning prize. All the horses were rounded up and driven to Dumpoo.

We had the Dental Companies' two dentists carrying out work on the troops. The next two days it was my turn to have my teeth examined, polished and cleaned. I had just finished my dental appointment and happy that I didn't need any extractions and heading back to the hut to inform Charlie Pierce who was next in line for a teeth job and it was there that I noticed 20 fellows with the horses taking a great interest in seeing two Zero fighters strafing the airstrip at Bena Bena about five miles way. You could hear the gunfire. They disappeared from there and everybody said they had gone and not to worry but low and behold the Zeros were heading straight for us.

A mad rush for the slit trenches, the Zero fighters banked about 40 feet above us and we could see the pilots as they fired a short burst of gunfire into the kitchen and administration huts. The dentist's chair had two shots through it. Luck was on our side, no casualties but they frightened the hell out of everybody.

A week later all A Platoon was needed in Faita after a wonderful R&R.