

## **CHAPTER 13**

# **AFTER THE WAR**

### ***THE FORMATION OF THE 10TH FIELD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION ( A.I.F.)***

The personnel of the unit had been progressively discharged during the latter months of 1945 and the early months of 1946 and some as late as just several weeks before Anzac Day 1946. A small group consisting of Kel White, Vern Laidlaw, Laurie Malkin, Ron Sincok, Claude Capstick, Clem Winchester and several others met just prior to Anzac Day, 1946 at the London Hotel in Elizabeth Street and discussed forming a unit Association, participating in the annual Anzac Day march, having a unit banner made and organizing regular reunions. The group met a second time at the same venue and organised the first reunion which was held in the Punt Road Drill Hall, South Yarra on the 28th of June, 1946. The records do not show the number present but the following office bearers were appointed :-

President	Dr S.A.McKenzie	
Secretary	Kel White	
Auditor	Roy De Jarlais	
Committee :	Merv Featonby	Clem Winchester
	Ernie Strevens	Ted Stroud
	Len Martin	

The first function held by the new Association was a smoke night held in July, 1946.

The first committee meeting was held at Anzac House, Collins Street, Melbourne on the 14th of October, 1946. The Association having been officially formed was duly affiliated with the R.S.L. and allotted a place in the annual Anzac Day march.

Another reunion was held that year, again at the Punt Road Drill Hall, on the 4th of December, 1946. There were ninety members present and they consumed three nine gallon kegs of beer. After this reunion the committee realised that future reunions should be conducted so as to attract the non smokers and drinkers as well as those who did and it was decided in future to hold a reunion and annual meeting of the Association together with a luncheon or dinner, after or before the Anzac Day march. When Anzac Day marches were held in the afternoon the meeting and luncheon were held before the march and when the march was changed to the morning the meeting and luncheon were



*Anzac Day March 1978.*

held after the march. This is the situation at the time of writing this history and the Association held it's 53rd annual reunion on Anzac Day 1998.

In 1947, on the 4th of September a dance and social evening was held at the Oddfellows Hall in the city. This was voted a great success despite the fact that a loss of five pounds and eight pence was incurred for the night ! Annual membership fees for members at that time were two shillings and sixpence each. The Federal Hotel on the corner of King and Collins Streets was chosen for the first of the combined meeting - luncheon reunions. At this time the march was held in the afternoon and members assembled at the Federal, held their reunion and Annual Meeting together with a luncheon and then walked down to Swanston Street to join the march. Every year when the march is in progress a group of relatives and friends of those marching, gather at a designated spot just across Princes Bridge on the east side of St. Kilda Road to cheer on the marchers.

The reunions continued at the Federal until 1971 when owing to demolition of the building it was necessary to find another location. The C.T.A. ( Commercial Travellers Association ) at 318 Flinders Street Melbourne became our next venue and we continued there for three years. It is interesting to note that when advertising the new venue it was stated that parking on the street outside the

### *Care, Courage & Camaraderie*

Club was available ! When problems over paying catering staff penalty rates for the holiday forced a move once again, the choice was to The Dorchester in the Alexandra gardens just across Princes Bridge.

A special celebration was held to mark the 25th Silver Anniversary of the Association. The venue was the Hawthorn Club and 69 members were present. A copy of the menu is shown.

Joyce and Ron Woff supplied flowers and decorated the tables magnificently. Ted Young called on our President, Dr Mick Dunn and his wife to cut the birthday cake with a Japanese sword. ( No one was injured in this episode ! ) It appears that when the surrender of the Japanese at Ambon took place the swords belonging to the Japanese officers were confiscated and distributed amongst the Australian troops. It is not known how many were surrendered on Ambon but "Ambon News" dated 16th of October, 1945 reported that at Koepang on Timor the tally of Japanese swords so far was 1,500 odd ! Some of our members still have these mementoes.

The Office Bearers and Committee of the Association in 1977 were :

Dr D.J.M. Dunn	President	E.P. Young	Vice President
A.M. Sharp	Secretary	A.A. Kenny	Assistant Secretary
V.L. Laidlaw	Treasurer		

### COMMITTEE

J. Bacon	R. King	J. Stiglich
K. Gordon	J. McGill	C. Winchester
R. Handley	L. Malkin	R. Woff

The Dorchester proved a very convenient location and reunions continued there until 1981 when, again owing to the Dorchester no longer opening for business on public holidays, it was necessary to find another location. So the next move was to The Travelodge in St. Kilda Road just opposite the Shrine of Remembrance. The staff here look after us very well and a more convenient location could not be found. In 1984, owing to a mix up in the bookings it was found that the Travelodge was not available on the 25th of April. Jeff McGill and Vern Laidlaw worked hard and obtained a booking at the Outrigger Restaurant at the Motel Palm Lake in Queen's Road opposite the Albert Park Golf Links. The reunions continued there for the next three years when owing to declining standard of service and the difficulty some members were experiencing in getting to Queen's Road by public transport, it was decided to return to the Travelodge. Although they now have a new name we hope to be able to continue there for the foreseeable future.



I MARRIED YOU FOR  
BETTER OR WORSE  
"THIS IS BETTER"

# 10<sup>th</sup> AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

## 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### 25th Anniversary Dinner Invitation.

7 P.M. TO 7.30 P.M.

SOPUTA SAVOURIES AND SHERRIES

7.30 P.M.

#### SMORGASBORD MENU

SANANADA	SANDWICHES	FINSCHAFEN	FRIED FILLET
LAUNCH JETTY	COLD HAM	MORESBY	MORNAY
SIKI COVE	SALAD	BUNA	DEEF CURRY
LAE	COLD CHICKEN	ORO BAY	RICE & MINCE STEAK
POPINDETTA	PARTY PIES	THEATRE LEFT OVERS	SAUSAGES & BACON
LANGERMAK BAY	ROAST LAMB	JUNGLE	CHEESE & GREENS

CAMPAIGN COFFEE

DRINKS SERVED BY PALMERS PAPUAN PROWLERS

FROM THE BALIKPAPAN BAR

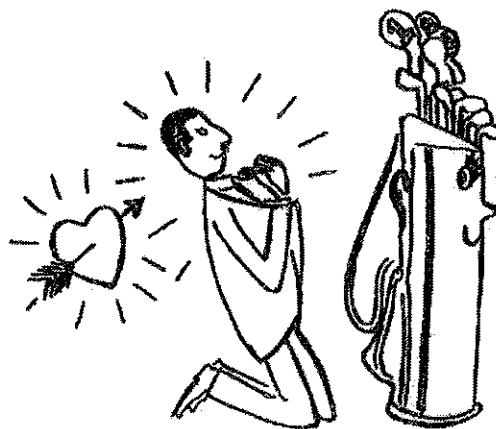
INCLUDING JUNGLE JUICE, SUPI AND SAKI

B.A.P. OPEN TILL MIDNIGHT

AFTER



BEFORE



*Jack Cox's Send Off Card*

*To Cox and Crew we say adieu  
But hope its not for long,  
We'll miss your guile and ready smile  
To lose you seems all wrong.*

*But then instead it must be said  
There is a brighter side,  
No constant talk on our Shrine walk  
No Cooxy there to chide.*

*In our golf match you play off Scratch  
And spray the balls afar,  
Too bad you stand to play left hand  
You might have been a star.*

*And so you go and we don't know  
When we shall meet again,  
One thing we'll say, come Anzac Day  
We'll be together then.*

With best wishes to:

John, Betty and Brendon

18.6.1971.

Our present Office Bearers and Committee are as follows :

Dr Mick Dunn	President	Ted Young	Vice President
Dick Holmes	Secretary	Vern Laidlaw	Treasurer
Ken Stanley	Assistant Secretary		

#### COMMITTEE

Jack Bacon	Noel Norton	Bob King
Laurie Malkin	Ken Gordon	Alan Sharp *
Ron Woff	Wattie Tully	

#### LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs Glad White	Vern Laidlaw	Alan Sharp
Bob King	Dr Mick Dunn	Laurie Malkin
Jack Bacon	Ron Woff	Ted Young

\* Alan has expressed his desire to retire from the Committee owing to family commitments.

### *BOB AND MARJ KING'S HOSPITALITY*

For many years Bob ( Kruger ) King and wife Marj and their family have hosted a post reunion "open house" party at their home in Fawkner and many members have availed themselves of their hospitality. Perhaps the value of this get together is best expressed by repeating the notice which appeared in the 1971 issue of Tenth Tit-Bits :

*AFTER MARCH GET-TOGETHER - This will again be held at Bob King's residence, 28 Princess Street, Fawkner, immediately following the March and a "cordial" invitation is extended to all members to share the fellowship and hospitality ever present at this show.*

*We are ever grateful to Bob, Marj and family for the venue and organisation which must entail lots of thought and work.*

These functions sometimes known as the "Fawkner Follies" where everyone was treated like a "King" continued until 1997 when it was decided to invite wives or a family member to attend the annual reunion luncheon.

### *ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC*

In the 1960's when many members had young school children a family picnic was arranged for the third Sunday in February. It was first held at Queen's Park Healesville and proved a very popular event. This was a delightful time of the year for a day in the beautiful surroundings of Healesville and many members and their families availed themselves of the opportunity to relax and enjoy the company and to get to know each other's children and families. In 1971 there was an attendance of 75 people. Gerald Frogley was a soft drink

manufacturer in Healesville and supplied drinks for the children. Others organised games etc.

The 1971 issue of Tenth Tit-Bits tells of an "unfortunate incident" involving one ex Sergeant, Bob Crawford, occurring at the 1970 picnic. It is related in verse as follows :

Did you hear about our "Snatch"  
Who's currently sporting a Patch  
Right on the seat of his pants  
No - not caused by white ants  
He was taking a catch  
In our cricket match  
He bent too low  
Something had to go ! !

The article goes on to say, *"There's no doubt about our Vice President ( Ted Young, Men's Wear proprietor ) - he was right there with an offer to supply another pair off the rack, at a discount Bob Hawke would have been proud of - or so I heard."*

As unit members aged and families grew up it was suggested that a spot closer to the city would make it easier for some members to attend. Jell's Park in Glen Waverley was chosen for the 1983 picnic and the response at the new venue was great with over sixty adults attending and grandchildren everywhere.

In 1992 the picnic was moved closer in still to the Doncaster Municipal Gardens in George Street, Doncaster, where Wattie Tully and his wife Peg would be up early on the day to reserve a space and barbecues, have the area swept and the unit banner displayed. By 1998 with most members children in their forties and fifties and the grandchildren having outgrown family picnics it was reluctantly decided that owing to lack of support this function would no longer be held.

### *ANNUAL YARRAWONGA WEEK-END*

Some time prior to 1974 Kel and Glad White had visited Joe and Sylvia Strudwick at Yarrawonga and it was suggested to Kel that members have a week end at Yarrawonga. This was further discussed at a social evening at "The Swagman" in July 1974 held to celebrate the fiftieth birthdays of a number of our members. The night was enjoyed by all and one of the highlights was a re-enactment of the famous Rimmington "limp"; a ploy during service days which earned Bruce many a remission from route marches. During the evening Joe and Sylvia Strudwick again raised the matter of a Yarrawonga trip, at the same time submitting a very interesting timetable and list of activities which could be engaged in. A decision was taken then and there that this would take

place on the week-end of 25th to the 27th of October, 1974. Eleven couples converged on Yarrawonga on that week end and a full and varied program of entertainment, interesting tours, a country ball, some shopping, dinner dance in the evening, church service next morning ending with a casserole lunch at Joe and Sylvia's before leaving for home.

The weekend was voted such a success that it was decided to make this an annual event. These outings have continued until the present day. An example of a typical "Yarrawonga" weekend is best described by taking the following straight from the 1989 edition of the Tenth Tit-Bits written by Sylvia Strudwick. Twenty seven people participated. Sylvia writes,

*"Friday, 21st October was arrival day and after settling into the motel, shopping etc., it was off to the R.S.L. for an evening meal, a tilt at the poker machines and plenty of talking.*

*Saturday a hired bus and a tour which included the old gold mining town of Eldorado, Buller's Winery, All Saint's Winery at Wahgunyah, Lunch at Corowa R.S.L. ( and another go at the Pokies ), back to Yarrawonga then off to the R.S.L. for tea. Sunday lunch was held on the lawns of the motel, the ladies prepared salads and Bob King cooked sausages and rissoles. Evening meal proceeded in much the same fashion with entertainment being provided by Neville Stephens.*

*Monday morning was departure time again and as each car made off, farewells were said and "see you again next October".*

Everyone was pleased to see Joe Strudwick looking so well because Sylv tells us, *"Joe had three by-passes in June at Royal Melbourne Hospital and for a time I thought October wasn't going to be on the calendar for this year. However he has made a good recovery and hopes to make it for a few years yet".* Sadly, Joe passed away on the 31st of October, 1990 just a few days after everyone had left following the usual weekend which this time included a visit to Joe in hospital. On that occasion Sylvia wrote, *"It was very heartwarming to see so many of the boys return again to Yarrawonga for Joe's funeral as they had only gone home a few days earlier."*

On the 1997 trip the itinerary included a visit to Wangaratta Hospital where Neville Stephens had been admitted. Again we are indebted to Sylvia Strudwick for the following interesting Tit-Bit. She writes, *"Whilst everyone was waiting their turn to visit Neville a very comical interlude occurred. It is too long to detail here but at the next Anzac Day Reunion get Ted Donovan and Wattie Tully to tell you about the lady who took a fancy to both of them outside the hospital. Turned out she was an inmate of the hospital, originally from the Funny Farm."*



*TENTH TIT-BITS*

Probably nothing has done more to keep the 10th Field Ambulance members together over the past fifty three years than this most informative newsletter. First published by Kel White, the Association's Honorary Secretary in 1968 and still going strong in 1998. Our members are now scattered throughout Australia and even overseas and Tenth Tit-Bits keeps us all, especially those not able to attend reunions, in touch with one another. When Kel died in 1974 Ron Woff stepped in to the breach. Ron has continued until the present and has been a most capable editor. He has been ably assisted by his wife Joyce and family. While employed, Ron was able to use the facilities of the V A C C Insurance Company. Since Ron's retirement his son in law has generously offered facilities available to him to continue the production of this most valuable medium. It's contents have been drawn on extensively by me during the production of this history. Many members have written to Ron or other office bearers saying how much they look forward to receiving Tenth Tit-Bits in the mail each year. At the last count Tenth Tit-Bits was being mailed to 121 members and widows of deceased members.

Some of our members have moved north to Queensland and New South Wales to warmer climes. When Jack ( Horra ) Cox and his family left Victoria in 1971 they were given a send off. A farewell card was given to Jack, Bet and Brendon with the following poem inside :

To Cox and Crew we say adieu  
But hope its not for long,  
We'll miss your guile and ready smile  
To lose you seems all wrong.

But then instead it must be said  
There is a brighter side,  
No constant talk on our Shrine walk  
No Coxy there to chide.

In our golf match you play off scratch  
And spray the balls afar.  
Too bad you stand to play left hand  
You might have been a star.

And so you go and we don't know  
When we shall meet again,  
One thing we'll say, come Anzac Day  
We'll be together again.

**Lieut.Colonel Ted Palmer.**

Sometimes it is not until a person's death that you hear of a hitherto unknown side to that person's life. This is particularly true of our esteemed Commanding Officer, Lieut.Colonel Ted Palmer. His late widow Mrs Lesley Palmer kindly sent the Association a copy of the address given by His Honour Mr. Justice Selby at Ted's cremation in August 1982. It is reproduced here -

*" I am proud and grateful to have been asked to speak at this sad time. If I were asked to say what I thought were the most admirable qualities a man could have, I would find it hard to put them in what might be called an order of merit but they would certainly include courage, integrity, unselfishness and humility. These were qualities which Ted Palmer possessed in abundant measure.*

*I first got to know him in the dark days of the war - the first quarter of 1942. He had joined the survivors of the Rabaul garrison who were trying to make their way back to the New Guinea mainland. As time went on, men grew weak with hunger, with fever and with deadly fatigue. Ted suffered with the rest of us but in his quiet way he showed us the true meaning of courage and of greatness. If a man became too weak to carry even the weight of his miserable pack, Ted would carry that pack in addition to his own. When we halted for the night and boiled the taro roots which were to be our evening meal, he would refuse to eat his pathetically small portion until he had tended the last of the wounded and desperately ill. When we set out in the morning he stayed behind until he had treated the last of those who urgently needed his care. When his small stock of medical supplies ran out, he improvised with wonderful ingenuity. A tin of axle grease which he found at an abandoned saw-mill became an ointment for tropical ulcers. He ground up coral and rusty nails and boiled them in water to make an iron tonic. It is only because of his unstinting help and his inspiration that many of us are alive today..*

*Throughout it all he never lost his sense of humour. One day we were going down a winding, muddy track he missed his footing and fell down the steep slope, finishing on the track below. When we reached him he got to his feet laughing, and said " I just thought I'd take a short cut."*

*Another time when he was shaking with fever, he swam a fast-flowing river barely reaching the far bank. It was our third river crossing that day. As he lay gasping for breath, he laughed again and said " To think I used to tell my patients that they must stay in bed for at least twenty four hours after their temperature became normal." His way of making light of things which seemed to us near disaster was one of the things by which he kept us all going when going seemed to be futile and all but impossible.*

### *Care, Courage & Camaraderie*

*When we reached the stage where we could go no further, the men were gathered into three separate groups and every week Ted would visit each group, travelling by canoe and walking along the jungle track to tend and encourage the sick and wounded. Desperately sick men were kept alive by the knowledge that he was coming and all their thoughts were "when will Major Palmer come?" and he never failed them.*

*In the long nights in New Britain, with no lights and no other way of passing the time, Ted and I would sit under the stars and talk for hours. Always his talk would come back to his family and his pride in them and his love of them shone out. How fully that has been reflected in the patient care and understanding which his wife Lesley has given him in his long illness.*

*After he had been rescued and recovered his strength he served in Borneo where he was known as Jungle Ted and became a legend amongst the sick and wounded.*

*Today some harsh things are being said of the medical profession but it is still a great and noble calling with a proud record of service. Ted Palmer typified all that is best and finest in that profession.*

*In Shakespeare's play "Julius Caesar", Mark Antony paid generous tribute to his former enemy Brutus in words which are so often quoted.*

*" His life was gentle, and the elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world 'This was a man'!"*

*Spoken of Ted Palmer these words would be truly apt.*

*To his family, I offer my deep and sincere sympathy. May I offer you the small place of comfort which must come from the knowledge that all who mourn him today will always hold his memory with affection and great regard. To have known him has been a rare privilege. To have been regarded as a friend is something for which to be grateful all my days."*

### **Kel White**

Another is Kel White. Kel passed away ( far too young ) on the 15th of April, 1974. Ted Young conducted the RSL Service at the East Bentleigh Presbyterian Church and later at the Springvale Crematorium and delivered the following Eulogy as a tribute to Kel from all of us who knew and loved him.

*We are assembled here today to pay a last tribute to a fellow member and friend  
- Kel White.*

*At this time my words are not adequate to describe my feelings - what can I say to you who knew Kel as a personal friend - for this he was to all who knew him. We can go back to our early days during the war when - as an 18 year old - he, like many of us, joined the service, and in those days Kel soon became known for his infectious laugh and his ready wit.*

*You would say he never had an enemy in the world, but, if he did have an enemy it was himself - he put twice as much into each task as anyone else. Even in those early days, his concern for others showed through; caring for the wounded and sick in the areas of New Guinea and Borneo; for his diligent care and devotion to this duty he was given some recognition in being promoted to corporal.*

*But it was after the war and the formation of the 10th Field Ambulance Association that we recognized his full worth. Kel, with some of his friends, met and formed our Association. Kel was elected Secretary, a job he held till now; even through his severe heart attack some three years ago, he was still our 10th Field Ambulance Association Secretary. The functions he organised to weld us into the close association of fellowship and comradeship that we have with one another will live on till the last of us are no more.*

*The Rotarians have a motto, "Service above self". Kel White lived that motto out to the full. Many members of our unit laid their troubles on Kel's shoulders, for he was a man of action and had a deep concern for his fellow man. If he had a hate, it was for the red tape that he had to wade through to solve the problems through Repat. or Heidelberg, or any other place where he needed to go to for assistance. Many people we know he helped - many of those he helped we do not know. Only you the individual will know of the assistance and guidance, his ready smile and cheer, which he shared with you.*

*"Tenth Tit-bits", a yearly news sheet that we have come to look forward to, has for the past seven years been compiled by Kel, apart from the period he was in hospital, and we all know the work and effort which went into that - 12 foolscap pages this year, giving news of the other fellow, extracts of personal letters, some good news, others of misfortune, plus many other items of interest.*

*I think it was pre-ordained that he write his own epitaph, for Kel asked me to write an article for the front page this year. I submitted an article which I considered appropriate, but Kel rang to say he would save mine until next year for our 30th anniversary. He said, "Hope you don't mind, but I have put a 'smile' on the front page of Tenth Tit-bits. I could say many things about Kel, but he sums it up himself in these words:-*

## A SMILE

*A smile costs nothing, but gives much.  
It enriches those who receive, without making poorer those who give.  
It takes but a moment, but the memory of it lasts forever.  
None is so rich or so mighty that he can get along without it.  
None is so poor but that he can be made rich by it.  
A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business, is the countersign of friendship.  
It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it is nature's best antidote for trouble.  
Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away.  
Some people are too tired to give you a smile.  
Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.*

*Kel was an inspiration to all.*

*Our deepest sympathy goes to Glad White, Jenny, Debbie and Ian and also to Jack Bacon and family.*

## LEST WE FORGET

All who knew him can testify of the many times Kel took the lead to start up a song on a blistering hot route march or to give an encouraging word or smile on the troopships on our way to New Guinea when there wasn't much to be cheery about and in many other less than cheerful situations where Kel could bring out the "silver lining behind the cloud".

The following snippets have been obtained from various sources:

**Dr Gavin Johnson** was elected President of the A.M.A. in 1972.

**Dr Emmett Spring** became an eminent Melbourne Orthopaedic Surgeon.

### **Dr John Sands**

We are indebted to Dr Adrian Paul for the following tribute paid to Dr John Sands who passed away on the 23rd of January 1980.

*"I have had sad news of John Sands death yesterday. He had carried on these past few years with chronic obstructive airway disease. Recently a pelvic growth was discovered. The final episode was a secondary growth on the brain.*

*There is a brief account of his achievements in Who's Who of Australia. He managed to combine a busy consultant practice with Royal College of Physician responsibilities, Consultant Physician at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Clinical Lecturer in Medicine, Sydney University, Chairmanship of John Sands Holdings Limited ( The Greeting Card Group ) until taken over and a director of the Bank of New South Wales. You will recall he married Lesley Brand, Bill's sister and they had a son and a daughter.*

*In the death notice - a simple one without titles, degrees etc. all that was added was ' It droppeth like the gentle rain from Heaven '. Truly his life epitomised Portia's quality of mercy."*

**Ted Young** was elected as a councillor of the City of Oakleigh at a by election held on 23rd of January 1971 and remained on the Council until 1979. He was proprietor of a Mens Wear shop in Atherton Road, Oakleigh.

**Jack Caldwell** was President of the Board of Management of the Moorabbin Hospital. He was also a Vice President and Life Governor of the Monash Medical Centre.

**Jack Chenhalls**, our Staff Sergeant dispenser after the departure of Norm Douglas, operated a Pharmacy in Sandringham for forty years from 1951 until July 1991, when he retired and closed his shop.

**Wally Page** was also a Pharmacist in Sydney.

**Ken Stanley** at the time of his retirement in 1981 was Treasurer of the City of Melbourne. He was also Treasurer and a Board Member, and since 1979 a Life Member of the Portsea Camp formerly known as The Lord Mayor's Camp which over many years has provided beach holidays for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Alan Sharp**, who worked for the State Electricity Commission of Victoria was Secretary of the Australian National Committee of the World Energy Conference whose aim was to promote the development and peaceful use of energy resources. As Secretary Alan represented Australia at three International Executive Council meetings, in Copenhagen and Banff, Canada and also represented the Chairman of the Australian National Committee in Mexico.

**Lloyd Champion**, a keen sportsman who participated in unit football and cricket teams was still playing cricket with the Cheltenham Church of Christ Cricket Club in 1972. At that time he told the golfers, " I'm not old enough to have to keep a ball still to hit it !" He has been and still is actively associated with the game as an administrator. He is Senior Vice-President of the Moorabbin Cricket

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Association and Chairman of the Junior section which in 1972 had sixty under 14 and under 16 teams playing. He has also served on V.C.A. Junior Cricket Committees.

### *FROM NURSING ORDERLY TO DOCTOR*

The work which our members were engaged in during the war years of helping and nursing the sick and wounded inspired a number of them to pursue this career in civilian life. The Department of Post War Reconstruction together with the Melbourne University made special arrangements for returned service men and women wishing to enter the medical course at the Melbourne University by relaxing the normal requirement of having passed the Matriculation examination. Generally a person having passed at School Leaving standard in the subjects normally required at matriculation level was deemed to have complied with the pre-requisites for entry.

The Department of Post War Reconstruction gave assistance to full time trainees, not only in medicine but in other courses also, by the payment of fees, a book and instrument allowance, and a living allowance, which where applicable, included a dependant's allowance.

The members from our unit who availed themselves of this opportunity and subsequently became doctors were:-

Ross Hayter  
Frank McArdle  
Jack Trembath

John Lawrence  
Joe Manton

Ted Lee  
Paul Mathews

As in the army there were a lot of unsung heroes doing less spectacular jobs like the cooks, the hygiene men, the Q.M. staff, clerks etc., so also in civilian life the majority of our members were "ordinary" men trying to get ahead in their jobs, raising families and being useful in their communities or wherever their sphere of influence extended. We do not forget them.

### *WELFARE*

From early in the Association's history the Office Bearers and Committee were forward in supporting any member of whom they became aware was either sick or had suffered a bereavement or who had other personal or financial problems. There has always been either a Welfare Officer or a Welfare Committee to attend to the needs of less fortunate members. Examples of their work are in visiting sick members in hospital, contacting widows of deceased members and offering condolences or help, attending funerals and taking a part if requested and generally keeping in touch and supporting any member or dependant who

is in need, The Association also helps financially with an annual donation to Legacy who in a wider sphere do similar work. Firstly David James and Clem Winchester and latterly Jack Bacon have very capably carried out the duties of Welfare Officer. In 1997 Jack Bacon was made a Life member of the Association in recognition of his services.

Merv Featonby was connected with Legacy for many years. He was installed as President of the North Gippsland Legacy Group in October 1972. He had been a member of Legacy for nine years and was formerly Secretary -Treasurer of the Alexandra -Yea Group.

### ENTOMBING THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

A full bus load of Victorian members and their relatives travelled to Canberra for Remembrance Day on the 11th of November 1993 to participate in and watch the ceremony of entombing the UNKNOWN SOLDIER. Bob James from N.S.W. and Bob King from Victoria were asked to carry the unit's banner at the ceremony. Here is Bob James report :-

*" Last year prior to the 11th of November the Australian War Memorial on behalf of all Australians undertook to exhume the remains of an Australian Unknown Soldier from a battlefield cemetery in France or Belgium. While it was in this region of the world that Australia suffered it's greatest loss of life in war - the Memorial regarded the Unknown Soldier as a symbol of the sacrifice of all Australians who served and died in all conflicts.*

*To make this a national event the Memorial asked as many Ex-Service Associations as possible to form a guard of honor for the Unknown soldier during the last stage of his journey up Anzac Parade to his final resting place in the Memorial Hall of Memory.*

*Bob King and I were asked by our Association if we would undertake the job of banner bearers. We both agreed and considered it an honor to represent the 10th Field Ambulance ( A.I.F.) on this great occasion. Bob from Victoria and myself from N.S.W.*

*The ceremony was a solemn occasion carried out with due reverence befitting such an event. We who carried banners, were lined along the entire Anzac Parade forming a guard of honor. The coffin was set on a gun carriage and as it passed we were able to reflect on this great moment when one unknown Australian soldier representing the thousands of young lives lost in battles around the world was in such close proximity. It was indeed a very moving experience as the cortege moved by us, the banner bearers in their turn fell in behind and became part of the procession and continued to the parade ground in front of*



*Care, Courage & Camaraderie*

*the Australian War Memorial where we broke off to listen to the service that followed.*

*At the completion of the service the Unknown Soldier was carried into the Memorial, passing the Pool of Reflection and Roll of Honor and was laid to rest in the tomb at 11 A.M. I feel that the Prime Minister summed up the purpose behind the interment of the Unknown Soldier very well. The reason being not to glorify war or peace, or to assert the soldier's character above civilians' or one race or nation or one religion above another, or men above women, or the war in which he fought and died above any other or one generation above any that was or will come later, but the Unknown Soldier honors the memory of all men and women who laid down their lives for Australia.*

*This tomb is a reminder of what we have lost in war and what we have gained. We have lost more than 100,000 lives and with them all their love of this country and their hopes and energy, but we have gained a legend - a story of bravery and sacrifice and with it a deeper faith in ourselves and our democracy and what it means to be an Australian."*

#### **AUSTRALIA REMEMBERS V.P. DAY**

The year 1995, being the 50th anniversary of the end of the second world war brought many anniversary celebrations. The 10th Field Ambulance Association decided to invite members wives and widows of deceased members to their annual Anzac Day reunion. After the march, in which thirty two members participated on a cold morning, they repaired to the Travelodge where 93 members, their wives and widows of deceased members spent a very happy afternoon. One member, Ivan Goldsmith attended for the first time. The Veteran Affairs Department had given the Association a special **Australia Remembers** grant which was used to defray the costs of travel for interstate members to attend the reunion and also to enable widows and incapacitated members to attend. It was also used to produce a video of the reunion which included some of the songs sung by the Metronomes.

Margaret Holmes made and decorated a special 50th Anniversary birthday cake and life member Glad White was invited to cut the cake. This she did on the condition that she be invited back in ten years time to cut the next one! Thirteen members of the unit accepted invitations to give a thumb nail sketch of various aspects and episodes of army life fifty years ago such as the cook's missing finger bandage ending up in Don Braine's meat balls as told by Alan Patrick. After the formalities and the luncheon Ted Young showed slides of unit personnel ( all looking so youthful ) made from photos taken during the war. Altogether a most enjoyable day.

On the actual day, Tuesday, the 15th of August 1995, there was a ticker tape parade from the Arts Centre in St. Kilda Road to the Town Hall in Swanston Street. The story of the 10th Field Ambulance participation in this parade is best told by Ted Young as follows :

*" On Tuesday 15th August 1995 in bright sunshine 'Kruger' King and his daughter Marcia took our unit banner into town for the tic a tape parade : Marcia and her family came from Kyneton especially to be with Robert Henry "Kruger" on this day and Justin carried the banner as Kruger's grandsons have usually done on Anzac Days.*

*We lined up with 1st Corps troops just outside the Arts Centre in St Kilda Road and as we waited a number of our unit members joined us ... Jack Bacon, Dave James, Russell Thompson, Ken Stanley and his wife Marjorie, Ted Young and his wife Esma as well as Kruger and his family. The sister of one of our late members turned up - namely Tui Beggs ( Nee Osborne ) - Johnny Osborne's sister, and joined in the march. Tui was pleased to speak with Rus Thompson and remembered Johnny talking about various names Rus recalled as John Osborne's mates. So we all waited as the crowd built up, and the marshalls were running around trying to make some order out of chaos.*

*Then at 12 noon The Last Post was played through loud speakers, two minutes silence, then Reveille ... you could have heard a pin drop in St Kilda Road and Swanston Street, with the many thousands of people remaining silent for the full two minutes. Then there was movement on the station and the Parade started. We moved off eventually after muscling in on the moving line - with Marcia, Alison, Esma and Marjorie holding the ropes on the banner the boys were carrying and us fellows and Tui Beggs under it.*

*What a sight as we moved up Swanston Street towards the Town Hall. Thousands of people - not a spare space to be seen, and bits of paper floating down from a great height; and as we walked it appeared as if every school kid in Melbourne and suburbs were there in school uniform with their teachers. We saw Don Ludlam and his family and Lil Bacon in the crowd, also Joyce Shepherd, June Rea and Marj King who were sitting in the V.I.P. seats allotted for our unit - near the Town Hall. Right from the Arts Centre down through Swanston Street and onto Lonsdale Street where the march - or walk - ended, people crammed into every vantage point, cheering the marchers and shaking hands wherever possible.*

*Kruger and I went to one of his old haunts for a quiet beer - then a walk back through the crowds still gathered in Swanston Street to Flinders Street. We tried to watch the dancing in the City Square but the crowd was too thick, so we moved on slowly to Flinders Street station ... Bob took the train home to Fawkner*

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*and I took a tram to the Shrine and walked among the thousands of wooden crosses, with a name printed on each one, that had been planted neatly in rows in the lawns leading up to the Shrine ... and thinking how futile war is. Then a stroll down through the lawns to Weary Dunlop's statue which had been unveiled: what a great man he was - and the statue is life like - as we knew him in later days.*

*Home then by train - a long day - a day of nostalgia - I was pleased to be there - a great success. I would describe it as the biggest day - biggest family day - in our history: truly a day to remember."*

### **MATESHIP**

We are indebted to Alan Sharp who has expressed so ably the mateship which, having its beginnings in the war years, has continued now for over fifty years and still exists in the remaining members of our unit. In 1977 Alan wrote:  
*"The 10th Field Ambulance earned for itself a proud record of achievement during the Second World War.*

*It is true that any organisation is only as strong as its leaders, and the people they lead. The 10th Field Ambulance was indeed fortunate in having the calibre of officers and men it did who worked together so closely and intelligently over a long period of time.*

*The harmonious relationships that existed throughout the war despite the hardships, frustrations and those other elements which are part and parcel of active service is a tribute to all those who were associated with the Tenth Field Ambulance.*

*The spirit of friendship and comradeship has continued throughout the years, and the strong bonds developed through the war are still very much in evidence today. Friendships made so long ago have consolidated and grown over the intervening years, and in many cases, have spread to the families of members.*

*Inevitably, time and illness have taken their toll and we remember those very fine men who have now passed on. However, those of us who have been privileged to continue, acknowledge a genuine regard held for one another, past and present.*

*These days our aim should be to help each other if and when illness or other unfortunate circumstance befalls a member or his family, and it is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that any such circumstance is brought to the attention of your Association's Committee so that appropriate action can be taken.*

*There are few service organisations which have maintained the association of their members as has the 10th Field Ambulance, and we should look upon this peace time achievement with justifiable pride in the same way that we look back on the part played by the unit during the war."*

In 1979 Alan expressed some further thoughts on the subject of "Mateship" which are worthy of inclusion here. He states after posing the question, What is the real purpose of keeping our Association alive? His reply to his own question was, "*I suggest that the glorification of war is the furthest from the minds of our members. Rather we are grateful for the fellowship and lasting friendships which have been developed and nurtured over almost forty years and if there is any benefit accruing from the 1939 - 1945 period, it must surely be what we have today in the existence of our own Association*".

Nineteen years later the same spirit of mateship continues.

### *THE 10TH FIELD AMBULANCE LIVES ON*

The 10th Field Ambulance is still an active unit in the present Australian Army. It is based in Tasmania, with Headquarters at Derwent Barracks, Glenorchy, with a detachment stationed at Paterson Barracks, St. John Street, Launceston. Talking to Warrant Officer Steve Riley, R.S.M. of the unit, it is the only Field Ambulance still existing in the Australian Army. Over 50 years have wrought many changes in army organization. The trend now is to bundle all support troops, including medical into a support battalion. The 10th are a reserve unit and the reservists train on Tuesday nights. The C.O. is Lieut. Col. Bob Patterson - the first non medical officer to command a Field Ambulance. Lieut. Col. Patterson is a Health Officer. The unit is organized into three treatment sections with approximately 35 persons in each section, a total for the unit of just over 100 for the whole unit. Each treatment section has a number of care teams, including a doctor and nursing staff. Fifty per cent of the unit is female.

### *CONCLUSION*

Fifty seven years ago on the 7th of December, 1941 on a Sunday morning, Japan made their surprise attack on Pearl Harbour. This was meant to coincide with an invasion of Malaya. In fact the attack on the east



*Headquarters, St. John Street, Launceston.*

coast of Malaya preceded the attack on Pearl Harbour by about two days. The enemy quickly spread with only light opposition to within 300 miles of the tip of Australia. Australia was in danger. The emergency created by Pearl Harbour caused Mr. Curtin, Prime Minister of Australia to take drastic measures for our defence.

The A.I.F. divisions were recalled from the Middle East and all young men 18 years to 35 years old became eligible for military service. These were drafted into C.M.F. units and hastily trained. We were among this latter group. As Ron Sincock said in his address at our 1980 reunion, *"As I look back we had a variety of people, sons of rich men, sons of poor men, we had religious boys and irreligious boys, somehow in some haphazard selection we were mixed up into transport drivers, nursing orderlies, stretcher bearers, even office staff. But you know all in all somehow they moulded us. In New Guinea we learnt just how much men can achieve if they decide to work together."*

With the enemy on our doorstep, war with all its brutality inevitably caused casualties. There was a job to be done helping these casualties and fortunately we had been trained to do it. Our first Commanding Officer, Lieut.Col. Stan McKenzie saw to it that we got the training. Our second C.O. Lieut.Col. Ted Palmer, a veteran of the New Britain campaign and a well respected and liked man, gave mature leadership in carrying our training into practical effect.

Lieut. General Sir Edmund Herring in a tribute to the Australian forces who took part in the New Guinea campaign stated, *"I feel we owe a great debt to these men, and I cannot tell Australians too often what they suffered and achieved. But for their efforts I believe that Australia would have been today at the mercy of the invading Japanese and enduring the murdering, ravaging, and raping that China and other countries have known at Japanese hands."*

*I would like all in Australia to thank God for their courage, endurance and self sacrifice, which alone have saved and are today saving us from the lust and cruelty of a savage foe."*

Counting the numbers who were either collected and picked up by our stretcher bearers, passed through our evacuation posts or were treated at our hospitals, or received attention at our dressing stations the number comes to many thousands of Australian and American soldiers who were helped back to life and health by members of our unit. Sadly some minus limbs and others with permanent disabilities but many to normal health and strength. In the course of doing this job the diverse members of our unit combined and co-operated in an amazing way. Living and working together in close contact produced a unique mateship which has lasted for over fifty years.