

AMBULANCE (A. I. F.) ASSOCIATION

(AFFILIATED WITH ANZAC HOUSE)

TENTH TIT-BITS NO. 21 - APRIL 1987

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Vern Laidlaw
Dr. Mick Dunn

Alan Sharp
Ron Woff

Dear Members,

Greetings one and all; its that time of the year again!

Firstly and most importantly we have a change of venue for our 42nd Reunion - Luncheon 1987. This year on ANZAC Day - Saturday 25th April we return to the Travelodge in St. Kilda Road, (cnr Park Street), Melbourne right opposite the shrine. The management there has set aside two function rooms just inside the main entrance and assures us that the meal and service will be first class. The charge by today's standards is a very moderate \$15. There is adequate parking in and around the motel which is also easily accessible by public transport. This year we are hopeful of having a good representation of interstate as well as local members.

The change of venue was requested at last year's reunion as the Palm Lake Motel was proving a little hard to get to by public transport and left a lot to be desired in the overall service provided.

Please come along and help make this an even more enjoyable day - don't keep putting it off or you may never make it and then you'd be sorry!! Those not marching usually arrive from 11.30 a.m. onwards. Also don't let the cost of the day put you off - if any member feels that he cannot afford the luncheon please

contact one of the committee for help. This is important. Fringe Benefits may not have totally disappeared!

For those fit enough and so inclined The March presents an annual challenge. We assemble as usual in Collins St. on the north side in front of Allans' Music Shop with the 1st Corps Troops, and our Unit Banner is always prominent. The order of March this year is Army, Navy, Air Force, so we should assemble by 10.30 a.m.

It is worth the little extra effort and is thoroughly enjoyable.

ANZAC Day tradition continues the Reunion to the Fawkner home of Bob and Marj King. Further details at the Reunion.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 1986 REUNION

Thirty two members marched and fifty one members subsequently attended the Luncheon and General Meeting.

The march proceeded despite the heaviest deluge of rain ever recorded during a march and needless to say we all got pretty wet. However that did not spoil the day but it did produce some ingenious ways of drying off when we got to the motel where the Reunion was being held. Doug Potter was seen drying his socks by means of the hot air hand dryer in the toilet, whilst most of the committee dried their shoes and socks by the air conditioning vents. Funny to see the "top table" conducting the meeting in bare feet.

The motel staff let us down badly by not producing any drinks until we moved to the lunch room about an hour after arriving. Consequently the only dry thing about ANZAC Day for us was the Loyal Toast!

Despite all this a great atmosphere was achieved and this was aided by the presence of former Officers Mick Dunn, Emmet Spring, Ian Wilson, Alec Reith, and Merv Featonby plus interstate members Arthur Rockett, Ron Handley and Murdoch Mc Millan.

The Toast to the Unit was proposed by Merv Featonby with a most interesting and comprehensive "mini history" of the Unit. Merv mentioned that he was one of the first persons that most members met going back to Kew Drill Hall days and including the inflow of the 18 year old "Boys Town" Group early in 1942. Merv told how the Unit had had the word 'Service' stressed during training but commencing with our time at the 2/9th A.G.H. at Moresby the word 'Compassion' was added and he believed these two words - Service and Compassion made our Unit a great one. He referred to the many areas of New Guinea where we served, Buna, Sanananda, Poppendetta, Oro Bay, Morobe, Lae, with special mention of our Sea Ambulance transport detachment. His one regret arising out of the New Guinea campaigns was that despite his recommendations no O/Rs received any awards for meritorious service.

Merv was posted away from the Unit when he went to the Tablelands but rejoined to go to Morotai and take part in the Salikpapan landing and then on to Ambon. He concluded his Toast by quoting appropriate words from the Harrow School song "Forty Years On".

President Mick Dunn responded thanking Merv for the memories and sentiments, recalling old times and pointing out that fellowship is what the Association is all about.

LEST WE FORGET

We must sadly add ^{ten} ~~nine~~ names to our Honour Roll this year, and mourn the passing of the following mates :-

Harry TOZER	1985	Les (Mick) RAE	14/11/86
Alan KILPATRICK	24/4/86	Jeff MCGILL	20/11/86
Ted (Bluey) STROUD	9/6/86	Rev. Fr. Jim ENGLISH	12/12/86
RAY FRITH	13/7/86	A.G. (Mick) ARNOTT	1/1/87
Ted TYRELL	15/7/86	Des RAE	9/4/87

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS, WIVES AND WIDOWS

16, Lake Street, Laurieton 2443. 20.4.86

Dear Ron,

Thanks as usual for the highly informative News Letter - always anticipated with interest and I'll admit some sadness for old comrades gone.

The purpose of this note primarily is to thank you for your wellwishes. Actually I'd planned our trip down to coincide with Anzac Day - would have been in Melbourne now. However as an aftermath to an operation I had 10 years ago had to go into hospital for a "bladder-neck" re-section and will be tied up on surgeon re-checks till after the 30th. However I've got enough energy back to be playing tennis and golf so hopefully its a thing of the past to be soon forgotten. Had some success in a Queensland Tennis Tournament (aged) putting out last years winner and also the bloke that represented Aussie at the Crawford Cup in Europe last year - so I'm pretty lucky all round as in January I went to Sydney for Country week with a Manning valley team (Not not veterans) and it won its section for the 1st time ever - better cut out this immediately. Son Brendon (24) looks like getting married next September to a nice lass who works in 2RE Radio. She's a bit of a dream-boat so I hope it works out well for them both - One of the main things is that Bee and she get on fine - a big help.

Saw a few of the boys this year but have missed seeing Ken Clinch who rang from somewhere in Harrington whilst I was out playing in a Golf Tournament. Don't know how long he's there - perhaps he'll ring again.

Well Ron, regards to all and best wishes for the usual great success of Anzac Day Reunion - may be I'll make it next year. Was good to read of Horrie Hamer, remember me to him if he turns up.

Cheers. John.....J.W. Cox

P.S. Geoff Flower has gone back to Armadale - that's his 3rd recent move - needs a bit of land around him. I feel - just couldn't settle. I guess we'll see he and Joy back at the coast for "hols" every now and again.

Keep up the good work "Horror". I know you are in good golfing form after the win we had over Ian Wilson and Bluey Young when you were down at Christmas. (Wonder if they did buy us a Tatts ticket!!).
Would you advise us of Geoff's new address when he settles please.

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4, Clegg Street, Southport 4215 20.4.86

Dear Ron,

Thank you for the '86 edition of Tit-Bits this week, and to know that I am still on the mailing list - apparently in the dislocation of changing address I missed out on last year's and would be grateful to receive one if a copy is around.

— At this distance in time and geographical location, it does the old heart good to hear of and recall with affection the personalities that those names embody. —

Kind Regards to all.

Syd. Biffen.

P.S. Am enclosing cheque to cover this and last year's sub for Vern.

We'd like Tit Bits to make you "home sick" so that you could come to the Reunion Syd - What about it?

75 Miranda Road, Reservoir 3073 17.4.86

Dear Ron,

I appreciate your yearly journal (tit bits). Its always nice to read the various letters. Some of the names ring a bell, but its hard to picture them. I was from the 15th F.A. and did not know a lot of the chaps overly well.

I ran into Bob King at Mulwala a couple of years ago and told him I would get in touch, belatedly I'm afraid. Anyhow, regards and best wishes to all and please accept donation to T.B.

Yours truly,

George Bruce.

Great to hear from you George. What about mustering the rest of the 15th Boys and come to the Reunion 'en masse'.

Lot 20 Maule Street, Wingen 2337 22.10.85

Dear Vern,

Enclosed is my annual sub for 1985/86.

I am now living in a small village on the New England Highway 20 kms north of Scone. My wife Jean and I are pretty proud of having built the cottage ourselves.

We are not far from the town of Aberdeen so I looked up Bob Roughan who lives at 80 Bedford Street, and he looks well and has been retired for a couple of years. Les Best and his wife Irene have recently visited us for 4 or 5 days. He also is retired and on a pension. Bill Sheffield and his wife Pat will be visiting for a while at the end of November.

We would love to see anybody passing along the New England Highway. Our phone is 065-450344 for instructions where we live.

Give my regards to those who remember me. Jean and I still reminiscence about our visit for Anzac Day some years ago. Maybe we will repeat it some day.

Well Verne best of everything to you and the Association. Good luck.

Ken and Jean Clinch.

Thanks for such a newsy letter Ken its good to hear from you and of those other members.

40 Coreen Street, Jerilderie 16.4.86

Dear Vern,

Not much to write from here, actually nothing. Firstly please thank Ron Woff for sending Tenth Tit-Bits very very interesting. Anzac Day this year is going to be my greatest. I can go to Dawn but unable to March. Professional advice is that I have a plastic hip done and suggested I have it done before X'mas. However I suggested after X'mas but I have not been near them since. Had a couple of operations X'mas before and would have preferred after X'mas. Went to a doctor the prior X'mas who took blood test result he told me I had a big big problem so sent me on to Albury where they convinced me I had cancer. However a couple of operations and all disappeared. I was not as sick as they said but they made me feel sick.

I have a brother in Wangaretta who often sees 'Ming' Stevens and I get news of Des Rae from him. Football is my job now - timekeeping for Jerilderie Football Club 6 hours every Saturday. Three games start 10.45 Finish 5 p.m. 6 hours sitting in box. Had to go to Numurkah last Saturday, 3 hours travelling and 9 hours sitting. Getting good at it, not the timekeeping but the sitting business.

The purpose of this note Vern I'll put some money in and you will fix it up. Do you know? It is 11 years since I appeared. I do not know where those years got to. Its a must next year. Time is certainly getting away and my thoughts often stray to you all on Anzac Day.

My regards to all the people and finally thanking you.

Jock Roe.

Jock I like the last piece where you say "Its a must next year" - Well now thats this year! - Forget the football for one Saturday and come and join us - please.

20 April 1986

Dear Mr Laidlaw,

I would like to inform you that Ern will not be attending this years March and reunion as he suffered a slight stroke. All is well now, but I feel that day would be too much for him as yet.

Please find enclosed his Assoc. Subs.

Norma Utting.

Thank you for writing Norma, we all wish 'Pluggger' well and hope that he can make it this year.

"Strathalam" Erskine Road, Macleod 3085 20.4.86

Dear Vern,

I'm afraid Ray will not be at the luncheon on Friday. He's not really well enough but will not let on to anyone that he is not very fit. Most of his troubles are attributable to his war service and they are now affecting his heart. Any change of his routine upsets him.

Wishing you and the members of the Unit a happy get-together.

Regards,

Muriel Cook.

Sorry to hear that 'Pop' is not too well. I'm sure that on reading your letter some of his closer mates will be in touch. Regards from us all.

8, Wenke Street, (P.O. Box 12) Walla Walla, N.S.W. 20.4.86

Thanks for the annual "Tit bits", Vern - the Roll of Honour continues to mount and was sad to hear of Harold Mollison's passing recently. Greetings to anyone who may have memories such as Horrie Hamer etc. Am still hoping to get down one day for April 25th but priorities this end seemed to still prevail.

Warm greetings to all.

GFB (George Brown)

Glad that you are still hoping George but what about making it a reality. This is the year!

536 Box Road, Jannali 2226, N.S.W. 19.4.86

Dear Vern,

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$5 being subs and \$2 to General Fund.

I received 10th Tit Bits and was pleased to hear the good news of doings of the various members.

But however it is sad to read the growing list of deceased members.

I see you have been having a bit of a rough trot but hope you are well on the road to good health again.

I will not be able to be down to Melbourne for Anzac Day. Will be thinking of all the 10th members. With best wishes to all.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Mitchell.

We remember your visits down here Bob and would all like to see you again (Plenty to see as I remember!)

52, Lawrence Street, Blackburn South 3130 20.4.86

Dear Vern,

I trust you have completely recovered from your illness and give thanks for it.

I regret that I will be unable to attend the reunion this year, as I have been ill again, but am on the mend now. Also my second son is bringing his family to see me on 25/4/86. Anzac Day is one of the few times he is off duty.

Please convey my apology and good wishes to the boys. I hope to see you all next year.

Sincere regards,

Gavin Johnson

P.S. Please note my change of address.

Sorry to hear of your illness Gavin, we all wish you well and hope you will be well enough to come along this year -- We appreciate the difficulties though.

Thanking you for writing.

31, Beach Road, Rhyll, Victoria 3923 24.1.87

Dear Noel,

Before X'mas a friend of mine in business in Sale told me of Ray Frith's death. Ray's brother, Eric, told of missing Ray very much.

So I wrote to Eric Frith, expressing my condolence, and asked him would he be good enough to write (if he felt able) an account of Ray's illness and of his last days, and would he write with the thought in mind that his letter could be conveyed to all of Ray's mates of the 10th Field Ambulance.

Enclosed is Eric's reply. You will notice the 36c stamp enclosed, so obviously Eric is expecting a reply. It would seem fitting if Eric were to receive a reply from the Committee, eh? So I'll leave it with you, Noel.

I take this opportunity of thanking all concerned for the Annual 10th Tit Bits, and especially Ron Woff, who in his inimitable style has the happy knack of putting it all together so delightfully. All good wishes.

Sincerely,

Cliff Watkins.

What a nice thought Cliff, as you know we had lost track of Ray when he left Macklesfield. I will send Eric a copy of Tit Bits in acknowledgement.

272 Guthridge Parade, Sale 3850. 2.2.1987

Dear Cliff,

Sorry for the delay in answering your letter; just kept putting it off.

Thanks for the kind words and sympathy, I miss Ray very much we were not only brothers but great mates so also were our respective wives. Ray was nearly three years my senior. Apart from the war years we saw a great deal of each other and in all that time I never knew him to do anything mean, or to tell a lie, he was generous to the extent of being over generous, and one could go on, but I suppose its sufficient to say Ray Frith was a great bloke who could always be depended on.

Now what happened to Ray?

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He sold his dairy farm at Nambrok and bought 12 and a bit acres of bush with a couple of springs and permanent creek and a lovely house not quite completed at Macklesfield. Ray and Winnie developed the natural beauty of the area and used to have disabled children come for day visits to see native fauna and flora in its natural environment, a great pleasure for all concerned until the sad day that Win was told she had cancer.

Despite the fact that their son-in-law is a Professor at Peter Mc Callum and only top surgeons operated several times, Win suffered severe pain for two years, then died. It would be a general opinion of all who knew Ray and Win that there would not be a more devoted couple, they lived for each other, and the death of Win really spelt the death of Ray, he was in a bad way, its really impossible to imagine but Ray's nerves were in a bad state and was under the care of Ansley Mears (I think thats how its spelt) a Melbourne nerve Specialist who also just died. Soon after Win died Ray sold the Macklesfield property and bought a house in Canterbury Vic near where his daughter and family live. Ray's health was a great worry to us all and it was his daughter who persuaded him to go to Tassie for a couple of weeks holiday which he did and thats where the unbelievable happened. Ray was fretting his life away and some kind sympathetic lady took him under her wing and 8 months after the passing of Win Ray remarried.

Its not for me to say if it was the right thing or not but certainly his family were most upset and this only added to Ray's problems. He with his new wife spent a few days in our home which was great and we all got along fine, then they went back to Hornsby N.S.W.

Despite the close relationship of the two families, during Win's illness she did not want to see anyone and this wish was understood and accepted, then after her death Ray spent most of his time with his family and doctor. He was a member of the Camberwell Vic. R S L and also at Hornsby. It was not long after his stay with us that he had the heart attack and went into the Hornsby Hospital. When I rang the head Sister told me that Ray was doing so well that that day he was leaving intensive care and going to an ordinary ward and thats what happened.

However in the early hours of the 13 July 86 Ray had a bad turn and Robin (his new wife) was called to the hospital. Ray opened his eyes smiled and said "I'm sorry to bring you in at such an early hour" and shortly after that Ray died.

He was buried with Winnie at the Macklesfield cemetery a private burial. Often I meet people who knew Ray well and they ask after him and just can't believe he has gone -- nor can I.

Thanks again for your concern and please convey to the members of the 10 Field Ambulance my thanks for being such good mates to my brother for so many years.

Kindest regards,

I am, Yours truly

Eric Frith.

Thank you for your letter Eric. Those who were more closely associated with Ray will certainly appreciate the details and share in your grief.

R.O.Holmes, 58 Belgravia Avenue, Box Hill North' 3129 29.1.87

Dear Noel,

Firstly, thank you for the reminder received about the Annual picnic/barbeque.

Margaret and I will do our best to be present and greatly look forward to seeing you and hopefully many others.

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Unfortunately I haven't much of interest for 10th Tit-Bits. However you may be interested to know that Margaret and I had a wonderful trip during May, June and July last year to Jordan, Israel, Greece, Italy, Austria, Germany, Holland and via Belgium and France to England and home via Hong Kong.

We went with a group totalling 69 and the object of the trip was to visit the Holy Land which we found greatly interesting. The tour organized by Walk thru' the Bible Ministries was splendidly conducted with excellent leaders who were most informative. We enjoyed weeks and weeks of lovely weather and amazing contrasts in scenery from deserts in Jordan to the magnificent Austrian Alps.

It has been good to see Neil Gerrand lately. He informed us that Lloyd Champion's wife died recently. Our much sympathy goes out to him and his loved ones.

Last Saturday, 24th, was the forty-fifth anniversary of my introduction to "Boys Town", Nagambie Road. Typical of the hot summer days there, the wind started to blow late in the afternoon and the dust smothered the tents and the contents to say nothing of the food in the cookhouse. What an initiation! Captain Butterworth the O.C. "Boys Town" called a parade and all of us, still in our civilian clothes, were told that rag pips meant the same as metal pips and that we had to obey the orders of the young lieutenant standing beside him.

Fortunately for me, George Sangster came into our area and found me and we went over the hill to the 10th Field Ambulance, my first experience with a wonderful unit! I have often wondered if any of the unit have considered a group trip to Papua New Guinea? If any are interested maybe it could be mentioned on the 25th or in Tit Bits.

I do hope you are keeping well and look forward to the reunion on Anzac Day.

Very best wishes.

Dick Holmes.

For someone "without much of interest" you've done very well Dick - I wonder how many would be interested in a trip to New Guinea? We'll certainly talk about it on Anzac Day but probably most feel that "HOLMES is where the heart is"!

Lot 20 Maule Street, Wingen N.S.W. 2337. 25.6.86

Dear Noel,

Whilst in Sydney for our get together a couple of months ago, Bob James gave me Harry Lozer's telephone No. As soon as I got home I rang and rang but no answer, then I rang from time to time for another long period and eventually got an answer. It seems the person answering is a recent tenant in Harry's house and Harry was deceased 12 - 18 months ago. This person said he would get the estate trustee to give me a call and give me the date of Harry's demise - I had heard nothing after a long wait so I rang again tonight to be told that the trustee felt it was none of my business and if I wanted the information then I should apply to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. So we can only assume Harry's death occurred about the end of '84 or beginning of '85.

We have been suffering some very low temperatures - 6 to 7 degs most mornings. It is extremely dry and being so dry we have had no snow. Our water situation is

desperate so we will go down and stop in Sydney for about a month hoping it will rain whilst we are away. I have just seen the weather report on the ABC and it seems it is going to get even colder.

Well Noel will sign off.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Clinch.

Your continuing interest is appreciated Ken and as you will see we have added Harry's name to our Honour Roll. If you still haven't got enough water what about coming down here for Anzac Day?

Post Box 103, Yarrawonga. 3.2.1987.

Dear Noel,

Just a note to say I will not be able to come down for the picnic at Jells Park on 15 February as I am confined to barracks for the next month.

Unfortunately I suffered a heart attack at home on 15 January and again on the 17th. After ten days in Wangaratta Hospital I am home, feeling well but tired. The Specialist has told me to keep a very low profile until I see him again at the end of February then he will start me on exercises.

I had several visits from Neville and Nancy Stephens and Bob and Marg King while in the hospital. It was very good medicine and I was pleased to see them.

How are you going Noel after your series of operations? I was only able to speak to you for a short while at Jeff McGill's funeral but I noticed you had lost a lot of weight. That in itself is not a bad thing, in fact I have lost one stone in the past three weeks and the doc says one more stone at a much slower rate should see me in good stead.

Look after yourself Noel and keep up the good work. I trust if all goes well I will see you in April.

Regards for now.

Joe Strudwick

Joe we certainly hope to see you and hope that your recovery is complete. Just one thing Joe - how come Sylvia let you write?!

42 Graham Place, Box Hill 3128 2.2.87.

Dear Noel,

Thanks for the invitation to the picnic at Jells Park. Unfortunately my wife and I have a prior engagement - an obligation that we can't dodge. We are sorry about it because we greatly enjoyed last year's picnic.

I haven't had much contact with unit members over the last year. Although we did have the pleasure of dinner with Dick Holmes and his wife and daughter one Sunday evening.

Joyce and I hope to visit Papua New Guinea later this year and in particular Lae and Finschaven. We will be visiting our son Ian and his family at the Braun

Medical Centre at Butaweng, a place that according to the map is just south of Finschaven Harbour.

The Centre is part of the extensive Lutheran Church activities in that area and has a hospital of 120 - 150 beds. Ian will be one of three doctors at the hospital.

It has been quite a fascinating experience to read the history of the Lutheran Mission work in P.N.G. which celebrated its centenary in 1986.

One of the interesting things to come out of the literature is that following our return to Australia from Finschaven the area became an enormous American base with approx. a million Americans stationed there in preparation for a push on Japan.

It seems that Heldsbach where some of us did duty was a Lutheran School or training centre taken over by the Army. I mistakenly thought it had been a Mission hospital.

It will be interesting to see if we can find Siki Cove and I hope it may be possible to visit Morobe.

I look forward to seeing you on Anzac Day.

Kindest regards,

Horrie Hamer.

Well Horrie it looks as you've got the job of leading Dick Holmes "New Guinea Revisited" trip - Make sure you take your Atebrin tablets every day. Seriously though it sounds as if you are in for a beaut time and we look forward to a full report.

Dear Mr Norton,

Please convey to all concerned the sincere thanks of myself and family for condolences on the death of my husband Leo.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Rea.

3/133 Charman Road, Beumaris 3194. Tel. 584 6062.

Dear Noel,

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to thank all Jeff's Unit friends for their kindness to him, and us, during his illness prior to his passing. Please accept our heartfelt gratitude. Jeff enjoyed that last trip to Yarrawonga so much, but without the help and encouragement he received it would not have been possible.

Sincere thanks to all who attended his funeral, it did help so much to have all his "mates" around at such a time.

Yours sincerely,

Marj McGill.

War Service Home, King Street, Caboolture, Queensland 4510. 24.2.87.

Dear Noel,

I received your letter in January. Thanks for the invitation to Jells Park for the annual picnic\barbeque.

Sorry I could not travel that far. If I knew I had cancer after they took my kidney out in Sydney, was in a nursing home there, would not have left there. The wife did everything she could for me still get a letter from her, I will be 76 tomorrow, still in the land living. Have you heard anything of Sergeant Stroud? He and I are the only ones left after the four of us had to go behind the Jap lines with ten CIA chaps. We had to get Japs alive. That is not allowed to go in your army records, so an R S L chap told me.

All the best to all the men who served in the 10th Field Ambulance.

Good health one cannot buy Noel,

From Bill Schlenker.

Looks as if you are the only one left now Bill so keep it going - Thanks for the letter. I had not heard of this episode before. Wonder if anyone can add to it.

76 Airlie Road, Montmorency 3094.

Dear Noel,

I received notice from you about the unit picnic some weeks ago but letter writing has become a hard task at my age.

I would like you to include in the coming 10th Tit Bits - Notice to all members that I was their guest on last Anzac Day Reunion. I got to my feet and surprised made a speech to the mob. Vern Laidlaw arranged it all about three weeks before the due date. I arrived at the Palm Lake Motel by taxi; though in Punt Road it was more a like a boat. I was met by Vern and went in to meet a very wet Ken Gordon and Jeff McGill. Very quickly the crowd built up. I had some trouble, I knew all the faces but had some trouble putting names to fit. I had a wonderful day and came home by taxi. All paid for by 10th Field Ambulance Association.

While writing this Noel two names out of the past are in my mind. Have you any knowledge of Ray Frith? The other you might not know as he left us at Moresby. Sid Biffen left as an orderly for a construction unit a Wau, Building an air strip or a road. I met him after the war at a barby spot in the Dandenongs.

I had a week at Repat Heidelberg just before X'mas. I went there for an E.C.G. and chest x'ray. But after about 8 hours delay I was admitted to a surgical ward and had a rebore to the water works. I had a good deal of muscular trouble since then and walking is very difficult but I am gradually getting better.

Thats about all from me Noel.

Andrew McHattie.

What a coincidence that you should mention Ray Frith and Sid Biffen; with news of each in this edition. Lets hope that your letter inspires one or two others to come to the reunion.

Les & Irene Best, 21 Duncan St. Punchbowl 2196, Sydney. 14.3.87

At last I am able to write and thank you for your invitation to the Annual Picnic, which until now I have been unable to answer.

On the 27.1.87 I was admitted to Repat Hospital Concord, and I was discharged last Wednesday 11.3.87. I have been treated for Pneumonia, after all the tests possible in hospital with no results, they decided to take out my gall bladder, for which they apologised later as that was not the cause of my condition. I had a week in intensive care ward, where I had to fight like hell to survive. Anyway I am now home trying to make good some bed sores I collected plus the pain of the operation.

Noel, I had told Bob King, my wife and I had intended to come down on Anzac Day to be with you all, unfortunately this will not be impossible. You may be kind to let Vern Laidlaw know that I have contacted Bob James and he will let him know the latest.

I have always been sorry tha I had not contacted the Unit after the war and kept in touch with you all, but that sorrow turned to pleasure, when my wife and I plus the help of friends were able to entertain such a wonderful bunch of friends, that arrived by bus from Melbourne, I doubt if any of us will forget that day, I will always remember it.

Well Noel I apologise for the writing, hope you can read it. I will now close wishing you all have a fine and wonderful get together on Anzac Day. Wish I could be there. Give my regards and best wishes to all.

Your friend,

Les Best.

Sorry to hear of your illness Les and that you and Irene won't be able to get down this year. Set your sights on 1988.

25 Tulip Grove, Cheltenham 3192.....25.2.87

Dear Noel,

I feel a little like a prodigal in need of easing his conscience for being so tardy towards those who over the years have refused to allow the friendships we shared as members of the 10th Am. drift apart. That in effect is what the association does, and for myself I do very sincerely thank yourself, Mick and office bearers for the time and energies you devote to this end.

Preparation and posting of notices does not just happen without effort, but I can assure you they are appreciated and for me 10th Tit Bits bring back memories of events and stories associated with the writer as well as updating their current news.

With more flexibility in my time now I hope to present myself again for vetting at the dinner on Anzac Day. Actually I nearly made it to Jells Park, but as President of a cricket association engaged in a challenge match against a neighbouring association the time I had allowed to go to the picnic got squeezed out.

Cricket administration in the local scene and at senior levels in which I have been involved for many years is my retirement outlet for mental and social stimulation and provides me with a lot of personal satisfaction.

Looking forward to renewing friendship on the 25.

Lloyd Champion.

Great news Lloyd, we hope that you are not the only 'Prodigal Son' to return to the Reunion.

18, Pelman Avenue, Greenacre 2190. 1.3.87.

Dear Noel,

It is news time again so hope this note arrives on time. First of the month today and not far off to Anzac Day, all being well we will be down to see you all again. Getting older as each year approaches you know, have a birthday next week so am nearly 3 score and ten, my how time goes by. You wouldn't credit it but it is actually raining today, first we have had since God knows when, not like old Melbourne here you know, we only get rain occasionally and of course it had to be on bowls day, so no game today. Was good to meet up with all the gang last year when they came over for the night, we had a great time at Bardwell Park RSL and of course the barby next day, should make it an annual event but next time, more time please, however it was great and I think all had a great time, what with getting lost and taking wrong cabs and breakdowns etc. Have not heard from or seen any of the lads of late so don't know how they are going, seen Rose Schlenker on a few occasions, she is reasonably well, Bill is still in Queensland. Received your note re picnic, hope all had a great day and weather was kind to you. The footy should be starting next weekend so we will be able to watch the big game on TV of a Saturday, the SWANS will give them heaps this year, I have been out to see them and have given them the right drum for this year, so watch out Mexicans. Been very hot here. January was a beauty, every day over 30 deg, the rain today has given us a cool change, so will be able to sleep again. Heard a little joke the other day a clean one too and it goes something like this, "a little mouse died and went to heaven and after being there about 2 weeks St Peter said to him "how do you like it up here little mouse", he said "oh, it is great but isn't it a big place", St Peter said, "yes it is but I can fix that for you, I will get you a pair of roller skates", the mouse was happy running around on skates, then a big pussy cat died and he went to heaven and after a couple of weeks St Peter said to him "how do you like it up here Mr pussy cat. The cat said "it is lovely but oh what a big place it is". St Peter gave him a pair of roller skates and a couple of weeks later he ran into Mr Pussy again and said to him "how do you like it here now"? Pussy said, "it is just great and the best part about it is "THE MEALS ON WHEELS WHICH I GET", end of story.

Well Noel I think I have just about run out of news and we both hope to see you all on the 25th, regards to all.

Murdoch McMillan.

Trust you to be interested in a story about a PUSSY Murdoch!

Look forward to see you on 25th.

YARRAWONGA 1986

October once again, that means Yarrawonga. Nothing to wear, mustn't take too much. But does that matter so much. So long as we're all there together.

Des and June Rea were unable to be present this year, but Jeff and Marj McGill braved it (a mammoth effort).

What did we do there this year? The same routine and as much laughter as usual. ... until the wee small hours.

Friday night we went to the R S L Club for a Bistro meal and pokies or sit and talk round the tables. Four of us even played carpet bowls. Then caught the specially catered bus back home to chat on for a few hours. Saturday there was a bus trip to Jerilderri. Firstly we went to see Jock Roe then to the hotel for lunch and then on to the Golf Club where the ladies played the pokies and the men sat and talked. Ted Young "ran" a Caulfield Cup sweep, which was won by Teddy Donovan, Joyce Shepherd and Pat Dixon.

Then it was time to hop aboard the bus again and home to a B.B.Q. tea and chatter in the unit.

Sunday - church call at 6.30 a.m. Pathetic response. B.B.Q. lunch at the fete then back to the motel for a "sing song". Rona Frogley played the violin beautifully, the ladies all sang along (not so beautifully - ask the men).

Sandwiches and cakes for tea plus left over sausages etc.

Monday. It was time to pack up and wend our way home once more.

Ted and Esma Young look like being regulars now and we were honoured by Ted Donovan's presence. Even dedicated a song to him. Ask him and I'm sure he'll sing it for you.

Thats all for now.

June Stiglich.

BITS AND PIECES

A big thank you to Noel Norton for carrying on as Secretary through the year despite several visits to Hospital. The good news is that he has recovered well and will be at the Reunion - the bad news is that he will probably ask to be relieved of the Secretary's job.

Treasurer Vern Laidlaw is still recovering from his visit to hospital last year, he too will be at the Reunion but won't be marching! Vern tells me that we have 108 financial members and in view of rising costs he wouldn't mind if you sent \$5 subscriptions this year instead of \$3. Incidentally Tit Bits goes to 161 members (last count).

Steve Langton suggested that members wear name tags at the Reunion so if you have a name tag of some description please wear it, we will endeavour to have some "blanks" available. You'd all still remember Steve though - I'm sure!

Bob James sends regards to all. He wrote a letter which arrived too late for last year's Tit Bits. It contained an account of the visit by the Victorian contingent, but as this was exhaustively covered in last year's Tit Bits I haven't published your letter Bob.

If anyone is visiting the Australian War Memorial Archives in Canberra and wants to look through our Unit History the file number is 11/12/34.

At Bluey Strouds funeral Len Martin told me how both he and Les Lindley attended a service to commemorate the 50th Annivesary of Father Jim English's ordination as a Priest. He was ordained in Rome in 1936. Len was going to write a fuller account of proceedings but in view of the subsequent death of Father Jim it did not seem appropriate.

John (Killer) Caldwell is President of the Board of Management of the Moorabbin Hospital and noticed that the Acting Casualty Superintendent was a Dr Tim McArdle. Sure enough Dr Tim is a son of our late member Frank McArdle and was very keen to hear details of his father's wartime activities.

This year's picnic was again a great success with 18 members attending, two members' widows and heaps of children and grandchildren. Doug Clemens was there and asked who is the oldest surviving member of our Unit - I forgot to ask Doug his age but it is in the late seventies - Anyone eighty yet?

In July last year my wife Joy and I met up with Bob and Merle Crawford on the Atherton Tablelands and "found" our old Campsite at Wongabel, thanks to the help of the current owner Brian Sager. I say found because you would not recognise it as all the Army roads are completely overgrown, areas are fenced and trees and undergrowth have taken over. There is still evidence of one or two old kitchen areas (the grease traps are a hazard in the undergrowth) but apart from that nothing is recognisable. Brian crashed us through head high lantana and waist high grass, fences etc. bringing us to the little oval which was near the Campsite and this had been cleared and the cricket pitch is still in reasonable condition. Over a picnic lunch on Brian's verandah we got rid of a few leeches which had become "attached to us". We were most grateful to Brian Sager for his friendly assistance.

Hope you've enjoyed this year's TIT BITS - thanks to all the letter-writers, please keep those letters coming, and a special cheerio to any who are sick.

RON WOFF

17 Summerhill Road,
Beaumaris 3193.