

10th AUSTRALIAN FIELD

A M B U L A N C E (A. I. F.) ASSOCIATION

(AFFILIATED WITH ANZAC HOUSE)

T E N T H T I T - B I T S NO. 22 - A P R I L 1988

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L I F E M E M B E R S

Mrs Glad White
Bob King
Ron Woff

Vern Laidlaw
Dr. Mick Dunn

Alan Sharp
Laurie Malkin

What's your fate in '88? Let's hope that part of it is being able to attend our 43rd Reunion Luncheon - Same time same place. Monday 25th April, Travelodge Motel, St. Kilda Road, on the corner of Park Street, Melbourne, right opposite the Shrine. We were looked after very well last year and have booked the same two function rooms this year. We start gathering from about 11.30am and have been able to keep the cost to \$15, the same as last year. There will be quite a few interstate 'boys' attending, led by Dr. Bill Brand, who will propose the toast to the Unit. So make up your mind now to be there.

The order of the Anzac Day March is Airforce, Navy, Army, so those intending to march can arrive at our usual meeting point - in Collins St., on the north side, in front of Allan's Music Shop a little later, say 11am. For anyone watching on television, we march with the 1st Corps Troops. Thirty six members marched last year and all looked pretty fit.

Highlights of the 1987 Reunion

Fifty one members attended the Luncheon and General Meeting, exactly the same as the previous year, but the weather was much kinder.

As usual everyone had a great time and a wonderful atmosphere prevailed. The loyal toast was proposed by Dr. Ian Wilson, then the President Dr. Mick Dunn called on all present to observe the traditional two minutes silence in memory of departed members. The Secretary then read the names of our 103 deceased members and this was followed by the 'Last Post' and 'Lest we Forget'.

Congratulations to Laurie Malkin on being made a Life Member of the Association. The President and Treasurer proposed and seconded this motion and told of the good work that Laurie has done for so many years as a Committee man and Hon. Auditor.

The Toast to the Unit was proposed by Ted Young in his usual fluent style and he brought back many memories as he presented a "thumb nail" sketch of his army days. These stretched from 23/1/42 to 9/7/46, a total of 1629 days if his demob certificate is correct. After his initial training Ted was drafted to the 10th F.A. and soon afterwards told Colonel McKenzie that he didn't want to be in that unit. The Colonel replied "Son, you're mine and mine you are going to stay".

At Benalla he went AWL to the pictures, was caught and fined \$10 and told "you can't buck John Bull". The fine was equal to 20 days pay or the equivalent to at least \$2000 today. In another law-breaking episode, he and Kel White were "picked up" by the MP's whilst on leave in Melbourne, for wearing shoes instead of their army boots. This time he was luckier for on return to the Unit, Colonel Palmer threw the charges into his rubbish bin - Perhaps next time Ted might tell us of some of the escapades he got away with!

New Secretary - Noel Norton resigned as Secretary owing to ill health and many tributes were paid to him for the job he has done. Noel said that he was willing to give every assistance to anyone who would take on the job, and proposed that Dick Holmes should be Secretary. Fortunately for us Dick agreed and was unanimously voted in. Thank you Noel and congratulations Dick.

Committee vacancies were filled by Noel Norton and the very welcome return of Alan Sharp.

Legacy Donation - We again made a donation of \$100 to Legacy which is little enough in view of the wonderful job they do.

Social Committee - The usually silent member of the Social Committee Bob King, gave a report of activities and asked that more members attend the Yarrowonga weekend in October. He also invited everyone to his home after the meeting and extends the same invitation this year.

General Business - Dick Holmes canvassed the idea of a trip to New Guinea, but the response was not great. Perhaps Horrie Hamer's latest visit may evoke more enthusiasm.

Lastly, news was exchanged of absent members.

Lest we Forget

Five former unit members died during the year and we sadly record their passing.

Ray Meadows	1/7/87	Ron Crawford	4/11/87
Eric Cornell	11/10/87	Bob Mitchell	9/1/88
Dave (Dookie) Johnston	14/3/88		

Ron Crawford was a very early member of the unit and some details concerning him appear later in this newsletter.

Letters from Members, Wives and Widows

16 Lake St., Laurieton. 2443 15/4/87

Herewith \$5 for you to pass on to Vern together with best health wishes. You want to watch it, as I note that Noel, another Committee man, has also had health problems - Good luck Noel.

Well I really appreciate the News Letter - some terrific letters which keep us in the picture despite our distances. Sad though to see the enclosed list growing - how fast the time has flown. I remember once, on a bivouac, up round Yea I think, we went on a rabbit hunt and I stunned a jet black rabbit with my usual stone throwing expertise! Anyhow the rabbit recovered and Ray Frith took it home to his family who apparently thought it was a great pet to keep. Anyway that's just one memory of Ray - a fine and respected Unit Member.

Sorry I can't be with you on the big day, so all the best to all the Unit Members who do make it from an ex Mexican.

Sincerely, JOHN W. COX (HORRA)

Hope to see you this year John we're beginning to forget what you look like.

Morbury Rd., Upper Beaconsfield 3808 22/4/87

Thank you for returning my "bounced cheque" - Maybe you should have sent it to "Horror" so that he could perhaps implant it in his golf balls for that extra distance off the tees, which he would no doubt be praying for at his advanced years?

I won't be able to join you this year for Anzac Day, but will promise you my attendance in 1988. - My excuse this year is that I am taking Meryl and my daughter Janet, to Europe for a month or two

Please give my best regards to the boys, and my special plaudits to yourself, Noel and Ron for a tremendous combined effort of Esprit-de-corps.

Sincerely, ALAN PATRICK

Promises, promises! We'll believe it when we see you Alan.

Strashalan, Erskine Rd., Macleod. 3085 22/4/87

Sorry this is late, but I recently had a hernia and prostrate gland operation in Heidelberg Repat Hospital, and have been more or less tied to the house - a poor excuse. All the best for the 25th. Cheque for \$5 enclosed.

All the best, RAY (POP) COOK

Lovely to hear from you Pop, hope all your 'repairs' are in order.

Thank you for sending the tit bits letter each year, they are always newsy and nice to read of ones I heard Jack mention quite often.

Thanking you, WYNNE WENKE

Our pleasure Wynne, hope you enjoy this one.

21 Duncan St., Punchbowl. 2196 NSW 6/5/87

Please find enclosed my subscription to the Association, which is a small return to you all for the wonderful effort put into 'Tit Bits'.

In case you have not received Geoff Flower's new address, it is 108 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Armidale 2350 NSW Ph. 067729118.

I am still recuperating after a six week holiday at R.G.H. Concord suffering Legionnaires Disease, I almost lost the battle but with the help of my family and friends and wonderful medical care in hospital, I am still here.

I was talking on the phone to Geoff Flower recently, he said I would find it hard to recognise him, as he has not shaved for the past 6 months. Bob James is tied down as a baby sitter and Ken Clinch is a great fisherman, he occasionally gets to Harrington and BUYS his fish!

The Anzac weekend weather must have made your get together a wonderful occasion, I hope there were no sore heads on the Sunday morning.

Well I will conclude now wishing you all the best for the future.

Your friend, LES BEST

Just shows you can't keep a good man down Les, we'd love to see you at this year's reunion.

Sorry I missed the march and reunion, Jean and I were in USA. We went over to see our youngest son John who is working over there for 12 months. His wife Judy and son and daughter are with him in Plathe City, just out of Kansas City. We were away 6 weeks and have only been back two weeks. I hope to hear about the march and reunion so will just go around the corner to see Arthur Holliday. Hope you and your family are all well.

Yours sincerely, EDDIE MOTT

Makes the world seem small doesn't it? Hope 'Doc' could remember what went on.

"The Diggings" Bells Flat Rd., Yackandandah. 3749 10/5/87

Once again the 25/4 has come and gone and my intentions to get down have amounted to nothing.

As I have retired from my medical practice, please note my change of address.

Geoff Flower keeps in touch and as stated in the Tit Bits, appeared to have had a great deal of difficulty settling in into retirement.

When in the practice I treated a lot of the "brethren" and heard news of Jack Urquhart periodically, now living in Wagga.

I have remarried after six years and my new wife has family in UK so we will be commuting over there whilst the capital lasts.

Best wishes, sincerely, ROSS HAYTER

If your're not in UK what about coming down on the 25th Ross, its about time you put in an appearance.

11 Waldron Street, Sans Souci. 4/6/87

Sorry I was unable to get to Melbourne for the March. My excuse this time is I developed a lower leg infection which grounded me for the few weeks over April.

It is always a pleasure to visit Melbourne to enjoy the wonderful hospitality and to revive old acquaintances. Hope I am fit enough next year.

I was sorry to learn of Noel Norton's stay in hospital and I trust he is recovering well. I am sure we all appreciate the fine job he has done as Secretary.

Ken Clinch and his wife were visiting family and I spent the day last week with him. We had lunch at my place then decided to visit Charlie Reddings, one of our members we hear or see little about. Charlie lives at Annandale and has not bothered about a phone, so we were not able to prepare him for our visit. You can imagine he was somewhat taken aback when we arrived at his door. He had not seen Ken for over forty years, however he soon regained his composure and we were able to settle down to a pleasant afternoon together.

Charlie had taken many photographs as one of the unit photographers, of the various war zones, so it was an opportunity for Charlie to let us browse through some of his many albums.

Charlie gets a great deal of pleasure from reading Tit Bits and is interested to learn of any unit happenings. He told me he is age 78. I guess a contender for the Doug Clemens oldest surviving member contest.

My younger daughter Jenny recently presented me with another grandson 'Stephen', making the total six boys and four girls. They are all very active and keep me on the hop and give me lot of pleasure.

Regards, BOB JAMES

Thanks for all the news Bob, particularly of Charlie Reddings. Hope you are heading up a large gang from NSW for the reunion this year.

Unit 2, 54 Bourke St., Maryborough. 3465 28/7/87

Just a line, mate, to see if you would kindly send my new address to Dick Holmes. I have sold my home and purchased a unit, less work mate, I don't want to lose contact with the unit and you being the last Secretary I thought you may oblige. Hoping you are keeping better yourself.

I am, yours sincerely, JOCK DRYSDALE

Good on you Jock, nice to hear from you.

4 Clegg St., Southport, Queensland. 4215 29/1/88

Life is so tranquil in this "Paradis sur mer" - unlike that on Sydney Harbour - maybe I can be forgiven for letting my credit rating slip a notch or two. Would be grateful therefore if you would pass on the enclosed cheque to Vern.

And thanks once again, Ron, for your jottings on all the gang. They serve so well to bring us all together at least in spirit every once in a while. Nice of Andrew McHattie to enquire for me (didn't know you cared Andy!) and reciprocate his kind thought.

Come to think of it, old Andy was one of my favourite characters; a droll man with a gift for the laconic, if not sardonic phrase with which to sum up the human condition in general, and that of the uniformed variety in particular. The old "Doc" Phil Aylwin had the same style in a more boisterous vein, and one can recall some marvellous stuff bounced between them.

Best regards Ron, SYD BIFFEN

Thanks Syd, we now have Phil's address and if he can write as well as he could talk I'm sure we'll get a letter from him for next year.

12 Baldock St., Dookie. 3646 26/2/88

I am writing to you on behalf of my father David Johnston.

He was in your unit 10th Australian Field Ambulance. At this stage Dad is too ill with cancer to write, so I have dropped you this note to explain why you will not hear from Dad.

Please find a cheque for his 1987 and 1988 subs.

Yours sincerely, GRAEME JOHNSTON

Sadly Dave passed away on 14th March and several unit members were able to attend his funeral.

76 Airlie Rd., Montmorency. 3984

Received your letter a couple? of weeks ago but have just got around to answer it.

One story that comes to mind, on the good ship "Maetsuycker" going to New Guinea, four of us, Allan Fox, Pop Cook, Laurie Malkin, used to get together on a serial story known as "The cruise of the the Meatsucker" or "Insanity Unfair". A chapter in turn each carrying on from the previous person's story.

This carley float was lashed down to a big stack of ammo. Only a few feet away was a bofers gun. We were in the harbour I think it was Maryborough. The gun crew were madly practising change numbers using planes flying over to the drome. The Officer in charge shouted "engage the target" then "fire". As we were under the muzzle of the gun when it fired, we were blinded by the flash and deafened, also copped burning powder. We recovered sight in time to see the trace of the shell streamer heading in the direction of plane. Fortunately it missed. The pilot was very upset when he arrived with the bloke in charge of the Air Force, and Navy Chief. According to our spy guarding the door, the pilot of the DC3 said it was bad enough having the Japs shooting at him, he thought "the army was on our side".

Well Dick there's a couple of stories for you. You aren't likely to see me at any reunion. My travels these days are very limited, I visit my doctor every four weeks, that's about five minutes walk away. You would probably do it in 2 minutes.

But for an elderly gentleman! I'll be 73 years old on the coming 13th July.

A. MCHATTIE (MAC) to you

Thanks Mac, what about another two stories next year. Perhaps someone living out near Andy could arrange to bring him to the reunion.

4 Moorhouse Street, Camberwell. 3124 2/2/88

I have received your circular asking about any interesting or amusing experiences that occurred during my time with the 10th. As a matter of fact I was not a member of the unit as such, but was attached to it for about a month at Lae, as a member of the N.G. Sea Ambulance Transport Company. A word about that may of itself be of interest. The unit consisted of two officers, the O.C., Alf Barnett, and myself, and about 40 OR's, mainly medical orderlies. Our boys manned the barges bringing casualties down from Finschafen, a job I believe the 10th had had to do prior to our arrival. Those not working on the barges were absorbed into the work of the 10th. Later we were attached to the 106 ccs at Finschafen and then the 2/2nd. I transferred from there to Angau with whom I remained for the remainder of the war.

Yours sincerely, MURRAY VERSO

Thank you Murray. I believe the 10th pioneered Sea Ambulance Transport.

275 Beach Road, Black Rock. 3193 4/2/88

When I spoke with you earlier this week, I realized just how long it was since I last attended a Committee Meeting and a reunion. For this I offer no excuses. However, because of my present state of health I think it would be in the best interests of all if I officially resigned from the Committee so that the vacancy can be filled by a more active member.

Hopefully I shall be fit enough to meet with you and the boys on the 25th April. Before then I shall put together some memories of the old days and send them to you.

Kindest regards, CLEM WINCHESTER

We certainly hope you are well enough to get to the Reunion Clem.

26 Ivy St., Hampton. 3188 10/2/88

Thank you for sending the notice re picnic at Jells Park.

There is only a slim chance of Norma and I being able to attend as there is an unusual weekend, Friday night to Sunday 19-21, at the Evangelisation Society of Australia (E.S.A.) at Marysville.

Norma and I have been invited to attend and have accepted.

If we leave E.S.A. early enough on Sunday afternoon we may call in at Jells Park on our way home. We would love to see you if we can make it.

Thanks again for the notification.

Yours sincerely, ARTHUR BATCHELOR

If there's an E.S.A. Meeting on the 25th Arthur give it a miss and attend the reunion.

PO Box 111, Ringwood. 3134

When Dick asked me to write a few words of my experiences in the 10th F.A. I hardly knew where to start. My experiences do not match those of other members who had a more varied life than me to record as I was transferred out of the unit at Oro Bay.

But first that eventful day in August when we boarded the train for Seymour into what was the unknown. When we arrived at Nagambie the warm welcome we received from Colonel McKenzie more than matched the cold day on our arrival.

As it turned out what a great bunch of boys we had in the unit and many friendships were formed to continue not only during the war years but beyond and still cemented today.

Probably the thing that I recall most of all was the trek from Nagambie to Bonegilla, but the day the tents were pulled down the heavens opened up. The officers took camp in the hospital and a number of other ranks took refuge under the hospital, at least we kept dry.

The trek to Bonegilla proved how much we benefited from the training we received, maybe we did not agree with some of the methods at the time but the proof was soon to be seen. One thing I recall on this journey was when we stopped over-night on top of the mountain where the temperature dropped low and a number of fires were lit to keep warm. Some of the transport boys built themselves a hut of some sort. On returning from mess there was a cow lying half in the shelter for warmth, but of course the transport boys were not to be outdone and by some means or other they managed to retake their position.

After our stint at Soputa and returning to Oro Bay I was told I was being transferred from the unit to a Field Engineer unit as R.A.P. Orderly at Port Moresby.

This was a great disappointment to me not only leaving the boys and the unit, but while we were staged at Milne Bay I was approached to transfer to A.N.G.A.U. and made every attempt even writing to D.D.M.S. However all my requests were turned down by the unit as I was required there. So you can see my disappointment at being transferred so soon.

On conclusion of the war I volunteered to join B.C.O.F. (although we were told never to volunteer) and served with the 20th Field Ambulance in Japan for 15 months. This was a wonderful experience and one I never regretted. At the time I was there we had plenty of freedom to travel around and I was privileged to see many parts of Japan particularly in the country untouched by war.

To appreciate the damage inflicted on Tokyo Hiroshima and Nagasaki had to be seen to be believed. On our arrival in Feb. 46 we were stationed about 4 miles from Hiroshima and frequently visited the area.

I have added the last bit as it may be of some interest to you.

I received my discharge on June 3rd 1947. This being my birthday.

May good health be with all members of the unit in the years ahead of us and let us look back on our time in the army with gratitude in that we all returned in good health.

Thanks Dick for the honour of being able to write these few lines of my time in the unit.

JOHN GRANT

Thanks for such an interesting letter John

P/A C/o 3 Geoffrey Drive, Kilsyth. 3137 20/2/88

A short note for Tit Bits. As usual we went to Cairns for the winter, and whilst there, had a visit from Ted and Esme Young. We did our usual tour of the Tablelands, including camp sites. Ted played golf with Bob at the Yorkeys Knob golf club, altogether an interesting time.

On our way down to Melbourne in December, we spent a night with Joe and Sylvia Strudwick at Yarrawonga, and had a most enjoyable time, lots of chat!! We were made most welcome.

Do hope all is well with you and your family, till next time

Your sincerely, MERLE CRAWFORD for BOB

PS Took this to the picnic to give to you, but sorry you weren't there. Do hope you and Margaret had a good trip. We are off this week back to the Gold Coast. Will be there a few weeks before heading (all being well) for Cairns for the winter. So, till later, cheerio.

Thanks for keeping touch Merle - Bob doesn't know how lucky he is to have such a secretary.

52 Lawrence St., Blackburn South.3130 26.2.88

Our apologies for not replying to your invitation for the reunion of former 10th Field Ambulance friends. Gavin had a small stroke recently, is unable to write, cannot read, and with his incontinence trouble is finding life very difficult. We are well cared for by our daughter and husband and in a unit on the lawns of the St. Mirian's Manse and await admittance to Inala Village.

Gavin sends his kind regards. Hoping you had a good day on 21st February.

Yours truly, MRS. GAVIN JOHNSON

On behalf of all members here's a great big cheerio to you Gavin.

58 Belgravia Ave., Box Hill North. 3129 1/3/88

Firstly, thank you for your "welcome home" over the phone yesterday. I finally got away on 5th February and took my son Brendan with me. We were away for 16 days and visited Germany, Switzerland and England. The weather was mostly fine but very cold -2 to 10 degrees centigrade some days, also snow and icy roads, however we were able to travel and covered more than 3,000 kms. by car. More importantly, we had a very successful business trip.

As mentioned on the phone I have received some letters from members and I am glad to be able to pass them on for Tit Bits. I sincerely hope that others will write as there must be countless stories that would be of interest to so many.

Yours sincerely, DICK HOLMES

Here's a chance to say thanks for the job you are doing as Secretary Dick.

94 Berry Ave., Edithvale. 3196 8/3/88

First, I am uncertain how I could ever, adequately, express my gratitude for the support, the help, given to Des. and to me, during Des's long illness, and to me since Des's passing.

All I can say is that my gratitude is very strong and very sincere.

The help given by you, and all members of Des's loved 10th Fd. Amb. has been of tremendous practical support to me during my sadness. Unfortunately, it is not possible to name all of Des's war-time mates.

However, for instance, as an illustration of what I am trying to say, I know how eagerly Des. looked forward to your visits every Tuesday to Como Hospital, and the direct support of Marj. and Bob King to Des., to me, and to our children.

Especially, I will always remember the moving way Ted. Young spoke at the Requiem Mass

Again, Ron, my deepest thanks to you, and to all members of the 10th fd. Amb.

Very Sincerely, JUNE REA

Your letter is appreciated June, as you know we thought a lot of Des.

56 Park rd., Surrey Hills. 3127 31/1/88

Thank you for your notices re the Picnic and request for experiences during War Time.

Firstly, thinking back I nearly always took the outlook that I was on holidays. We were taken to some very nice places, and weren't always in danger. We had various sea trips, and camped in some interesting areas. Not only did we go here and there for free, but we were also paid for it.

I liked the sea that much I felt in the peaceful early hours of the morning and late at night when I could stand alone, that the Universe was mine, as I still did on various cruises I have been on since the War.

You may remember that I was first to volunteer to serve out the meals on board ships, as some of the boys weren't really good sailors and couldn't even stand up without being sick.

There were lots of other experiences, some a bit scary, others quite funny and I still think of them sometimes as the boys made it quite pleasant with their sense of humour. It would take too much time and space to enumerate all the experiences, but I repeat I still enjoyed it all, and like being amongst the boys when possible, so I can look forward to the Picnic and the reunion which I have missed out on for a number of years.

I trust this short letter is satisfactory to you. It has always been my habit to sum up the entire situation and decide whether I like it or not.

I do say that our stay on the Atherton Tablelands was the best part of it all, excepting to me the sea trips.

I hope to see you soon and trust we can have a little chat together.

My best wishes go with this in the mail.

ERNIE STREVENS

Great to hear from you Ernie, I think Atherton would get my vote too.

236 Rossiter Rd., Kooweerup. 3981 2/3/88

Sorry I could not make it to the picnic. I have had an operation (to the veins as they have got sluggish).

You mention that you would like to hear an amusing incident during training days. I thought this, would be interesting.

When the unit was camped on the Atherton Table Lands at Wongabel, it was my turn to buy the buns and milk and put the billy on the ever-burning winnow of Silky Oak and other trees.

I just returned from the canteen and put the buns on the bunk (about one dozen buns) and visited the tent next door for perhaps half an hour. On returning to my dismay the buns were missing. I could not point the finger at anybody so I immediately bought some more and this time I kept a close watch and the thief was spotted descending by its tail, a possum!

Jack Roe, Shorty Haberman, Alan Patrick and I enjoyed our supper after all and some of those frosty nights had some nip in them.

PS You can condense this epistle if you wish - See you on 25th.

Cheers to all the boys, LOU COURTNEY

Thanks Lou, what a tale! See you at the reunion.

18 Pelman Ave., Greenacre. 2190 6/3/88

Your letter received some weeks ago, so thought I had better send you a few lines for Tit Bits, very close now for publication - my how time flies - almost Easter and then Anzac Day. Kath and I hope to be down for big event - we are getting older you know (but who isn't?) I had a birthday yesterday and wasn't 21 again either.

We went on a brief trip to China - Left on 28th September and spent 10 days there visiting 4 cities - Canton, Guilin, Xian and Beijing - a great experience and boy do they work over there - about \$100 a month and 7 days a week and apparently they love it - at least everybody works and no crime there - any problem and they are lined up and you

know what "bang bang". All in all the trip was excellent, scenery lovely - went on the Li River Cruise and saw much from the river - buffalos, high cliffs and all the fishermen at work and labourers in fields. On the shores of the river all pedlars and their wares for sale. The big event was climbing the great Wall of China. We did not make it to the top as walk way was very steep - we got to last lookout and I said "We go in reverse now". Beijing is more modern and growing fast. "Red Square" was a picture with all flowers and shrubs around. We went from Hong Kong to Canton by train, 110 kilometers and what do you know it only took 4 1/2 hours, as bad as the train from Cairns to Atherton. We had a week in Hong Kong on way home and was very enjoyable. You could live there for ever. I was really glad to leave China because the Chinese food was too much - lunch and dinner varied with 8 - 12 dishes each day and so much of it. I was wondering which chow I was going to eat next. So much for that trip.

In June 1987 Rona and Gerald Frogley paid us a week-end visit. As Gerald was still on the walking stick we visited the Queen Victoria Building which is so beautiful now it has been restored and is always displaying something new. Latest attraction is a Jade Emperors Chariot presented by Republic of China - in a glass case to avoid vandals, also a statue of Queen Victoria from Ireland (apparently the Irish had no further use for it). Gerald wan't so hot on his feet and "he was a semi-cripple" so had to carry him at times. We lunched at Bardwell Park RSL most of you would remember this place? from the Sydney week end. On way home we had coffee with Rose Schlinker and then saw Roy De Jarlais - both these friends live reasonably close and any 10th Field visiting always meet them.

In January we had a lovely surprise visit from Doc Holiday - his grand daughter was being married. He rang and said I will be there 10.30 Thursday. So off I trot to Strathfield Thursday morning and saw every bus in from all over Australia and still no Doc. So 1pm I went home and rang Bendigo and spoke to Betty - "Oh yes yes Doc left this morning and will arrive 10.30pm tonight". So well past our bed time Kath and I go to meet Doc who duly arrived at 10.15pm and conveyed him home. Still he had not had enough sitting in a double decker all day, he kept us up all bloody night telling of his travels and, of course, our Sydney grog went down well. Was I glad to go to bed!! Next day to see his family, church at Burwood (I worked there so knew the area well). I might add the day of the wedding the Church looked beautiful and the bride and her attendants beautiful. Doc had to find his own way home. "I know where to go" he said. Sometime that night in comes Doc "dry as a what's his name", been on the "lolly water" all afternoon - so on with the Tootheys Draught again. He did say that he got lost on the way home and for some unknown reason had found "Enfield R.S.L." and, of course, knocked off a few. "Amazing what places can be found in the dark!! On Sunday our daughter, Pamela met us and we went for a harbour cruise - it was a delightful afternoon as there is no harbour like this in Melbourne, or the world for that matter. On the way home we met up with Roy and had our tea at the Roselands Bowling Club. We then despatched Doc on his way home from Strathfield. I think he had a very heavy schedule here that week end - I am sure he did - but it was good to see him. Our only regret was that Betty was not well enough to visit us too. However, when next anyone is talking with Doc just ask him about the "GREEN DUCK" - what a story and we all heard enough of that tale in Sydney to last us many years.

Having despatched Doc on Sunday night I was aroused by a noisy phone in early hours of Monday morning (about 6.30am) and who was it "Kruger" (he had arrived at Greenacre PO and only had phone number) - and requested "For Christ sake come and rescue me". By the way we were waiting on his call as he had informed us he would be coming. We were pleased to see him but the reason was distressing - Bob Mitchell had passed away. Its strange, isn't it one of our members in Sydney passes on and we have to be told by the Group in Melbourne. However, Bob, Kath and I attended the service and was a large attendance as Bob Mitchell was a Mason, Bowler and R.S.L. Member. - He was cremated. After the service we went back to the house for a talk with Wyn, Ron (brother) and Ed, Wife and boys (the son). Wyn was more than pleased to see Bob and myself in attendance from the Unit. Tuesday we arranged to meet Roy, but what a mix up and hold up. Finally went on to pick Rose up and have lunch about the hottest day of the year and no air-conditioning at the R.S.L. and no Roy. We ate and left and went back to Roy's and found him home, so were able to enjoy his and his son's company for a couple of hours. We left and after picking up Bob's bag put him on the coach to Melbourne. Well we enjoyed seeing both Bob and Doc, but hopefully they and their "better halves" will accompany them to Sydney at some future date.

Had a couple of days at Terrigal recently, that is on the Central coast. Kath and Pamela spent a week there so I took them up and returned for them. Pamela was recuperating after an operation and is well on the road to recovery now, and back to work next week. Also been to Dalmeny on South Coast to collect Kath's mother who will stay with us till we go to Melbourne. I am putting this letter together at the bowling club as I am on duty as duty officer and things are quiet at the moment. Hope this arrives in time for publication.

I have a cutting from "Daily Mirror" dated 11/11/87 - Ted Palmer mentioned in parts and he really had a good wrap for the way he helped survivors out of Rabaul. It would be of interest to most of our Unit.

Well I have typiste cramp, so will have to stop and have quickie to stave off thirst.

Regards to all, MURDOCH McMILLAN

Thanks for all the news Murdoch. The article is interesting but far too big to put in Tit Bits. Will have a couple of copies at the Reunion

42 Graham Place, Box Hill. 3128

The following notes are the result of a visit that Joyce and I made to Finschhafen last November to visit our son Ian and his family. Ian is a Medical Officer in the 150 bed Lutheran Hospital at Butaweng. Butaweng is the general area around the waterfalls and swimming hole that you remember so well and is also the name of the river that flows on from the pool about 800 metres to join the Mape and then on into Langemak Bay. Ian's house is located in the triangle at the junction of the Butaweng and Mape Rivers. It is a very attractive place.

Finschhafen today consists of a scattered group of settlements and villages situated near the sea extending from Scarlet Beach in the

North to well South of Dreggerhafen, a distance of approx. 40 k. Finschhafen is a sub-province of Morobe Province with administrative headquarters at Gagidu. It was at this point that the 20th Brigade Group of the 9th Division landed on 2nd October 1943.

Finsch is a very isolated area accessible only by sea or air, this means that it is politically free of many of the problems that plague other parts of P.N.G. The "rascal" problem doesn't exist, it also means that there are no tourist facilities.

The lapse of time - nearly 45 years - makes it somewhat difficult to relate to the whole locality, for example our camp site near Siki Cove is a coconut plantation with high grass between the palms that makes it very difficult to explore. It takes some feat of memory to visualise the camp with Jack Cox doing pencil sketches of his tent mates and the table tennis players in the rec. hut.

About 2 k. along the coral road (there are very few sections of sealed road) there is a road off to Sattelberg and beyond. On the way one passes a memorial cairn erected in memory of Sgt. Tom Derrick and the 9th Division. The highest point of the mountain is usually enveloped in cloud, it is cool and damp. Sattelberg was captured on the 25th November, 1943. I remember Alec Reith telling me of a trip he made up the mountain and of the complete destruction of all the buildings there.

A further kilometre or so south along the coast road is a road off to Heldsbach. The enormous mango trees still bear profusely and the view across to the sea remains the same but all the buildings are post war. A very large slab of concrete seems to be the only evidence of the old building that housed the C.C.S.

A further 9 k. to Finschhafen Harbour. In this area, from Heldsbach to Dregger the Americans built a four lane highway and had twenty six cinemas in one small area. At Manebar Wharf at Finschhafen Harbour Joyce and I boarded a coastal passenger ship, (it must have been from here that the unit embarked for Australia in 1944) and sailed out of the Harbour, it was quite a moving experience. The particular boat, the "Mimose Express" sails Madang, Finschh, Lae and Oro Bay. I was tempted to go down to Oro Bay but as the stay there is only for two hours it didn't seem worth the effort. Had it included a visit to Morobe I would have been more interested.

Another 5 or 6 k. down the road is the Finschhafen airfield on which two aircraft a day land from Lae every day except Sundays.

A couple of days in Lae was quite interesting. The Lae war cemetery is very impressive and beautifully maintained. The old airfield still exists but is no longer used by commercial aircraft which means that travellers must make the Lae to Nadzab leg by road, some 45 k.

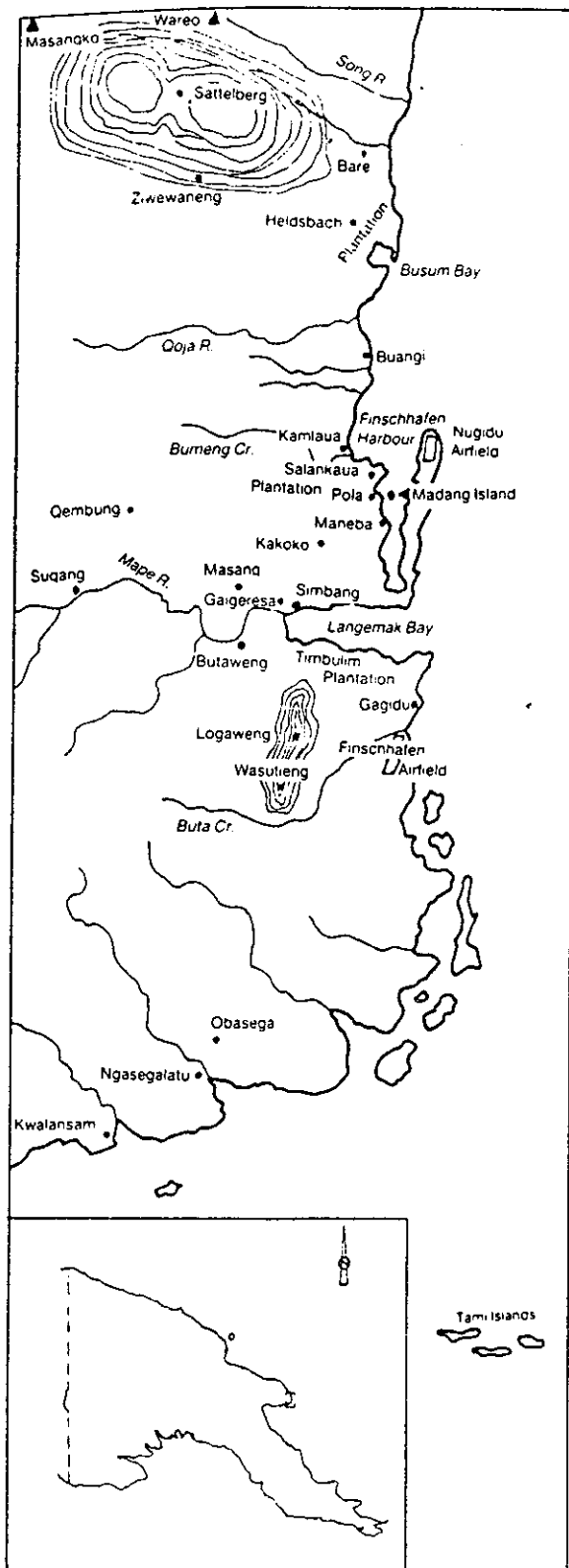
It was Lae to Nadzab and return that I experienced my first trip by plane. Doug McLerie and I filled in an afternoon off by hitching a ride on a D.C.3. piloted by an American "Biggles". The plane was loaded with dozens of drums of petrol, loosely tied together, a fact we only discovered when inside the plane. The clatter of drums was terrifying, only the pilot and his mate enjoyed the situation.

I remember that at Lae I shared a tent with Merv Blow among others. Merv was pretty adept at making jungle juice, not with high octane aviation fuel, but a pretty powerful brew nevertheless. Merv stored his J.J. in soluvac jars placed in any and every spare space in the tent. One night during an air raid a number of Merv's precious jars exploded one after the other, a kind of chain reaction I suppose. Apart from the noise that was indistinguishable from Jap bombs, the broken glass and lingering smell didn't do much for my morale and considerably less for Merv's. The theory was that the vibrations from the nearby air raid siren gave the jars the nudge they needed to become active.

Well Dick I think I had better leave it here.

Yours sincerely, HORRIE HAMER

This certainly brings back memories, just the mention of those mangoes makes my mouth water - thanks Horrie - looking forward to more on Anzac Day.



Finschhafen proper.

Plantations

The Finschhafen Plantations, 1904-1939

Finschhafen today consists of a scattered group of settlements and villages situated near the sea and extending from the Ginggala Islands in the south to Scarlet Beach in the north. People living in Gagidu, Timbulim, Butaweng, Logaweng, Maneba, Salankaua, Kamlaua and Heldsbach regard themselves as living in Finschhafen. Finschhafen proper, however, is the actual area around the harbour basin, which is called Maneba and Salankaua. The inner harbour of Finschhafen is able to take small coastal vessels, while the big overseas steamers anchor near Nugidu point.

The Finschhafen plantations consisted of Heldsbach, Salankaua, and Timbulim. Here the basis was laid for the assistance of missionary activities.

Heldsbach

The idea of starting a coconut plantation near the Busum creek was perhaps a secondary thought to Johann Flierl. While in charge of Sattelberg mission station, he realized that Finschhafen was too far away to serve as a base from which goods from the coast could be transported to Sattelberg. Would not Busum be an ideal place for a coastal base, from which supplies could be carted by ox carts to Sattelberg? A school could be opened to take the overflow of pupils from Sattelberg. Cattle could be raised, and additional food grown for the Sattelberg schoolboys. Perhaps a plantation could be started to provide young New Guineans with work near their home. Johann Flierl was a practical man. He immediately wrote a letter to the German Colonial Administration, asking for land around the Busum creek. Within a few weeks he received a reply, saying that 500 hectares could be granted, providing the Mission started to develop a coconut plantation within five years.

Land not actually in use at that time was regarded as Crown land. Even if he wanted to, Flierl could not deal with the New Guineans directly. He was not even allowed to pay any compensation in cash. He therefore paid the people in kind, carefully noting the names of the 44 villagers who had some claim on the land.

Yarrowonga Report

A report on the October exodus to Yarrowonga has always been handled by June Stiglich but unhappily June didn't make the trip this year and I promised to fill in. June did a wonderful job - hope I can do it justice.

Names of those who attended:-

Pat & Roy Dickson	June Rea
Rona & Gerald Frogley	Marge McGill
Bob & Marge King	Joe & Sylvia
Doc & Bet Holliday	Les & Lynne Williams (friends of Phyl Lovett)
Ted Donovan	Wattie & Peg Tully
Laurie Malkin	Jack & Nance Allen
Phyl Lovett	
Joyce Shepherd	Eddie Tyler and Maureen arrived Saturday

Some of our old regulars were missing this year - Neville Stephens had a trip to surgery for repairs to a corroded pipe, Ted & Esma Young cancelled out on the Thursday - seems Esma came down with a nasty wog (not Trimbole tho') June Stiglich has not been all that well after being so seriously ill through the year and gave this year a miss.

We all greatly missed Jeff McGill, Des Rea and Bill Shepherd, who have always been part of our October for the past 14 years. Great to see the dear and special widows of these boys, who are gathering their own "muster" upstairs and preparing the red carpet for the rest of us in our turn.

After booking the courtesy bus for 6 pm Friday night, we all went to the Services Club for a Smorgasbord dinner. Came home on the 9.30 pm bus and headed for the cot. Saturday morning - we boarded the bus Joe had hired for the tripping around. Here I wish to mention the generous donation of \$100 from the 10th Social Committee towards the cost of the bus. Firstly, everyone had a "look see" at the new unit Joe & I now live in after the sale of our home. Then we headed out along the Murray Valley Highway to Rutherglen and turned off for Chiltern. Mindful of the cost, Joe was trying to keep the kilometers down and detoured off on to a dirt road which didn't look like it was going anywhere. To cap it off - it was stinking hot, everyone wanted to go behind a tree and the bus stalled. Many and varied were the comments, none of which complimentary - about the driver, the bus and "where the hell are we?". A few got out to stretch their legs whilst others too numerous to mention delivered instructions on how and what to do. Joe eventually got the bus to go and we once more found a bitumen road and headed for Yackandandah. Unfortunately the "mayor" was otherwise engaged and we weren't able to have our Shire luncheon. We were looking amongst other things for the historical "dunny" featured in Melbourne newspapers, which is now classified by the National Trust. Passed the Pottery and Handcrafts business run by Jeff Dermer's son. Dr. Ross Hayter lives just out of town we have since learnt.

We left Yackandandah and turned towards Beechworth for lunch. During lunch Ted Donovan and a few helpers organised a Sweep for the Coxplate or Coxedge Race.

After everyone was fed, watered and twinkled - we all boarded the bus again and headed for the Browns Winery at Milawa. We had to hurry here because the next stop was for the Wangaratta hospital to visit Neville.

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 & 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 from the hospital, originally from the Funny Farm.

Back to Yarrawonga around 5.30 pm to 6 pm and Kruger cooked up a stack of sausages and hamburgers - enough for Sunday night too.

Sunday saw us all having a BBQ lunch at the Anglican church Fete in Mulwala. Between 10 am and 2.30 pm - they raised \$2543 - not bad eh! Incidentally girls - nobody was lucky in the raffles - better luck next time.

Home again to the Motel where we all gathered to see the Video June Rea has had made of all Des' movies over the past 14 years, covering 10th gatherings at Healesville, Jells Park, Yarrawonga and the glorious 10th boys marching.

There were many sad moments and tears flowed unchecked. What a wonderful foresight Des had to leave some fantastic records of all our doings. June had it all set to some lovely music interspersed with some of Des's favourite tunes and singers. Our missing mates are always very close to us on this weekend.

After the girls had a bite of tea - we booked the bus for 7.30 pm and went over to give the pokies a dollar or two. Some of the boys were a bit seedy and had gone to bed when we arrived back at 10.15 pm. All headed for bed and had a good rest.

First away in the morning were Rona & Gerald. Gerald had an appointment in Melbourne for 11.45 am to have his stitches removed.

Gradually all farewells were said and all cars were gone by 10 am.

After stacking everything away and sorting everything out. I put a load of washing through - we had a bite of lunch - would you believe - cold snags and salad - then we both had a nap - in separate places. I woke up at 5 pm - "dopey and stupid" as usual.

Ho - Hum - Roll on 1988. 1987 hasn't been a very good year - has it girls? Up with Father O'Leary's Velvet Cream.

Cheerio now - we both love you all, SYLVIA & JOE STRUDWICK

Family Picnic - 21st Feb. 1988

The family picnic was held once again at Jell's Park; total attendance was 75 persons, weather was great; June Stiglich and family were easy winners with the best attendance (13).

Birthday boy - was Long-tack Grundy. Marj King made a special birthday cake with trimmings, everyone present joined in and sang "Happy Birthday" to Harold who responded with a brief speech.

Marj, what a lovely thought and we thoroughly enjoyed the cake.

Horrie Hamer produced some beautiful and interesting photographs; and memories were revived of Dreger Harbour, Mape River, Siki Cove, Langemak Bay, etc. This was followed up by some Committee members requesting Horrie to give a short talk on his visit to P.N.G. at our Annual Reunion and show some slides. Another good reason for members to attend at the Travelodge on Anzac Day.

VERN LAIDLAW

Bits and Pieces

Thanks to Les Williams and Don Ludlum we learnt of the death of Ron Crawford and the following information about him. Ron was an early member of the unit, but as an artist he was opposed to war and managed to get out. He was a very successful artist of the Max Meldrum School and since his retirement Don Ludlum had been learning from him. A self portrait by Ron has been selected for the Doug Moran National portrait prize, which carries the largest prize money in the world of art, over \$200,000. There are thirty finalists and we will all now have an interest in its outcome.

Jack Cox recently won the Australian Veterans Tennis Title in Tasmania, you beaut Horra!

Vern Laidlaw gets around a bit and calls on country members whenever he can. Here are his comments on three such people.

Jack Urquhart - whilst returning by car September 1987 from Canberra I did a slight detour to Wagga Wagga and I am happy to relate that I met Jack, whose health I believe is good considering he survived a serious car accident.

Jack is still carrying on with readings from the Bible, and telling people in the streets of Wagga more of the rewards we can achieve with "love and faith in our lord".

Jack Standerwick - Bordertown, Sth. Aust. - Jack is keeping reasonably well, any members passing thru are assured of a welcome at the Standerwick residence plus an enjoyable cuppa and chin wag.

Keith Davey - Koo-Wee-Rup - Keith and his wife are both looking well. Although Keith's retired, he really looks well so I've come to two conclusions; his wife really spoils him and being a tanker driver must have been an easy life.

Lest We Forget

They shall not grow old
As we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them
Nor the years condemn
At the going down of the Sun
and in the Morning
We will remember them.

1.	Bruce Pascoe	08/03/43	57.	Bob Adeney	20/03/78
2.	Jack Pigram	04/07/45	58.	Claude Capstick	09/04/78
3.	Ted Dunnel		59.	Jim Drysdale	24/05/78
4.	Don Hiddleston		60.	John Stretton	24/06/78
5.	Jack Kelleher		61.	Dick Rhodes	10/11/78
6.	Peter Todd		62.	Dr. John Sands	23/01/80
7.	John Bagshaw		63.	Jack Bateman	17/08/80
8.	Harry Cowen		64.	Jack Wenke	03/09/80
9.	Dr. Douglas McFarland		65.	Roy Rasmussen	10/09/80
10.	Albert De Lantye		66.	Tom Heaney	
11.	Dr. Stan McKenzie		67.	Ted Monot	01/01/74
12.	Noel Smith		68.	Lindsay Sampson	21/11/81
13.	George Morley		69.	Norm Douglas	09/01/82
14.	Jack Thompson		70.	Jack Best	19/02/82
15.	Bernie Cousins		71.	Wal(Jock) Lovett	17/04/82
16.	Angus McKenzie	02/07/57	72.	Col. Ted Palmer	05/08/82
17.	Russel Behrens	1958	73.	Frank Dobbie	20/03/76
18.	George Jenkins	1960	74.	Jack Stiglich	07/09/72
19.	Harold Hay	1960	75.	Ted Nicholas	10/01/83
20.	Jack Spokes	1961	76.	Ern Milton	
21.	Bill Reid	03/03/61	77.	P. Hill	
22.	Jim Lyall	07/03/61	78.	Ron Sincock	05/03/8
23.	Norm Hart	27/08/61	79.	Bill Jones	14/12/83
24.	Bill Lyskey	16/11/61	80.	Charlie Worboys	23/12/83
25.	Dr. Harry Francis	20/11/61	81.	George Williams	
26.	Alan Fox	Feb.1962	82.	Dr. Joe Manton	30/05/84
27.	Ken Phillips	11/05/62	83.	Les(Bull) Martin	12/07/84
28.	David Felstead	25/07/64	84.	Neil(Bunny) King	31/07/84
29.	Eric Veith	Jan.1967	85.	Bill Sturge	30/03/84
30.	Bob Smith	21/02/67	86.	John(dooley) Garlep	11/10/84
31.	Dr. Alan Hewitt	1967	87.	Tom Eadie	
32.	Clarrie Sanders	24/03/68	88.	Dr. Adrian Paul	10/02/85
33.	Martin Smith	20/03/68	89.	Ron Vernon	May 1985
34.	Alf Saunders	Feb.1968	90.	Bill Allen	1985
35.	Les Wilton	23/07/68	91.	Bill Shepherd	26/10/85
36.	Henry Uebergang	Apr.1969	92.	Roy McKim	24/11/85
37.	Clive Mathews	Apr.1969	93.	Harold Mollison	03/01/86
38.	Les Paul	1970	94.	Harry Tozer	1985
39.	Stan Murphy	Apr.1971	95.	Alan Kilpatick	24/04/86
40.	Gerald Black	Feb.1972	96.	Ted(Bluey) Stroud	09/06/86
41.	Jack McGill	26/10/72	97.	Ray Frith	13/07/86
42.	Alan Tate	14/03/78	98.	Ted Tyrell	15/07/86
43.	Arthur Hunt	03/05/73	99.	Leo(Mick) Rea	14/11/86
44.	Arnold Lovell	12/05/73	100.	Jeff McGill	20/11/86
45.	Harry Gaudion	18/07/73	101.	Fr. Jim English	08/12/86
46.	Keith Goslett	23/01/74			
47.	Kel White	15/04/74			

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| 48. Charles Craigie | 12/09/74 | 102. A.G. (Mick) | |
| 49. John Osborne | 29/10/74 | Arnott | 01/01/87 |
| 50. Dr. Frank McArdle | 12/12/74 | 103. Des Rea | 09/04/87 |
| 51. Alf Swales | 26/01/75 | 104. Ray Meadows | 01/07/87 |
| 52. Ralph Hallum | 20/05/75 | 105. Eric Cornell | 11/10/87 |
| 53. Cyril Evans | 25/07/75 | 106. Ron Crawford | 04/11/87 |
| 54. Jim (Bluey) Davis | 04/11/75 | 107. Bob Mitchell | 09/01/88 |
| 55. Sam Chaffey | 1976 | 108. Dave Johnston | 14/3/88 |
| 56. Cliff Drury | 02/01/78 | | |

*RAY Zampie
STAN HERBERT*

That's the lot - hope we can fit it all in - greetings one to another.

RON WOFF

17 Summerhill Road,
Beaumaris. 3193

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