

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Richard (Dick) Sullivan received a Comfort Package or a Money Order from the King Island (Tasmania) War Service Fund, and then corresponded with the Fund.

In August 1940, the Island Fund was formally approved to operate independently from the State of Tasmania. It was run by a group of volunteers, led by Mr John (Jack) Marshall. John was an ex WW1 soldier, also the President of the local Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA), founded on King Island in 1919. This is now known as the Returned and Services League (RSL) and the King Island RSL Sub branch is still in operation.

The fund distributed packages to locals who had enlisted and other people who had no connection with King Island. As a mark of respect 139 service personnel wrote letters of thanks, totaling approximately 530 letters – they form the basis of the collection. Further information on the Fund and its operation can be found on the Community Page.

The challenges for a service person during World War 2 to write a letter was to firstly find the inclination (often directly related to their mental condition due to combat), time, paper, a writing implement and a place under cover. Occasionally a letter was typed and the paper ranged from high quality to loose scraps, and as the war progressed supplies dwindled. With letterhead paper, naming a unit or organisation, do not assume that was where the person was when writing. Paper was borrowed and passed on to mates. Occasionally, a Telegram was sent where the emphasis was on brevity as each word added more to the cost.

The standard of writing is directly related to the standard of education and sometimes a friend or a Chaplain would write a letter on a person's behalf. Many of the letters were addressed to Mr Marshall (or just Jack), his wife, a member of the voluntary committee, or the RSSAILA. Some letters are very brief while others are detailed and mention other people, or events they have witnessed. The Marshall's also lost their son John while on Active Service, and some writers asked about John or acknowledged his death to the family.

For most of the war, letters were subject to censorship and this is often observed in a cutout section on a page – if the other side was written on it was also deleted. Many letters have the initials or the signature of the person who checked them prior to posting.

What follows is a scan of the original letter and a typed transcript, based on the original. Grammar or spelling has not been changed or corrected, and if more than one letter was written they follow in date order. Some of the original letters, although stored correctly, are very faint and fragile, but all have been included along with undated letters. They are perhaps the only surviving documents written by this person.

Dick wrote three letters to the Fund, the first probably on 15 December 1942. He initially enlisted in the Army in October 1941, but joined the RAAF in August 1942 without being discharged from the Army. The 'system' must have caught up with him as he was discharged from the Army in September 1943, remaining in the RAAF until January 1946. Currently, without the availability of his RAAF File, it is difficult to date his last two letters, both written on 28 December (to different people in the Fund), but most likely in 1944.



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

WITH WHICH IS AFFILIATED

R.S.L. War Service Fund, The Salvation Army and Y.M.C.A.

88059

ACI SULLIVAN A.T.

GROUP 9

SIGNAL SCHOOL

RAAF

POINT COOK

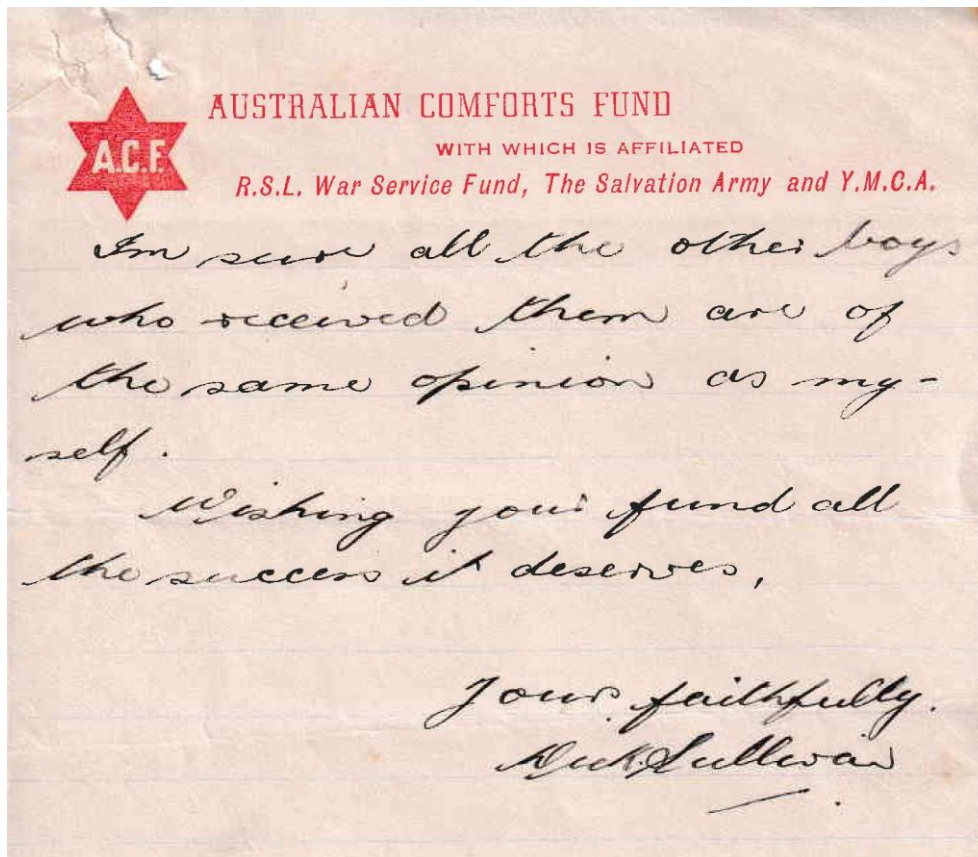
TUESDAY 15th DEC.

The Secretary,
King Is. War Service Fund
Gurrie:

Dear Sir,

Just a line
to thank you for the Christmas
parcel and kind thoughts
which I received whilst I
was stationed at Ballarat.

I can assure you that
it was well appreciated
especially knowing that it
came from your fund.



88059
AC1. SULLIVAN R.T.
GROUP 9
SIGNAL SCHOOL
RAAF
POINT COOK
TUESDAY 15th DEC. [1942]

The Secretary,
King Is. War Service Fund.
Currie:

Dear Sir,

Just a line to thank you for the Christmas parcel and kind thoughts which I received whilst I was stationed at Ballarat.

I can assure you that it was well appreciated especially knowing that it came from your fund.

I'm sure all the other boys who received them are of the same opinion as myself.

Wishing your fund all the success it deserves,

Yours faithfully.
Dick. Sullivan



R. A. A. I. Station

88059

L.A.C. SULLIVAN R.T.

GROUP N881

A.F.P.O. 71

Townsville Ahd.

28th Dec.

The President,
King Is. Sub. Br.
R.S.S. & A.I.L.A.

Dear Mr. Marshall,

I wish to
acknowledge receipt of your
Christmas card together with
the canteen order. I may
say that this last Christmas in
New Guinea was only made
enjoyable through the organiz-
ation such as yourselves.

So wishing your Branch and
members every success in the
New Year.

Yours truly
R. Sullivan

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L.A.C. SULLIVAN R.T.
GROUP N 881
A.F.P.O. 71
Townsville Qld.
28th Dec.

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Townsville Qld.

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Dear Sir,

Just a few
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Xmas parcel received on about
the 23rd of this month. It
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contents were very much appreciated,
especially knowing that it came
from your fund.

Wishing all your members every
success in the New Year;

Yours truly

R. Sullivan.

RJS

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