

## **The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund**

During World War 2, Alfred (Mont) Yeomans 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.

Mont wrote eight letters to the Fund starting in February 1941 through to May 1945. Some are brief while others cover training of a RAAF pilot and the type of planes that were used. He also addresses the climate in New Guinea and the effect on air crews.



408065  
L.M. Yeomans. R.M.  
Course 6.P.  
No. 1 Service Flying Training School,  
Royal Australian Air Force,  
Point Cook.

Mon. 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb.

Dear Mr. Marshall,

I received the bantien order from the King Island Comforts Fund last week & I would like to thank you and the committee for the many things you have sent me. I appreciate it very much.

I will try & tell you a little about what we are doing here so that you can get an idea of the life. after two months elementary flying training at Western Junction we were transferred on the 9<sup>th</sup> January to Pt Cook for two months Intermediate Training - some in the twin engined anison bombers & the others in single engined Demons.

The station here was well above any of our expectations, the conditions here being a hundred per cent on the station at W.J. Reville is at 6-15 & flying & lectures start at 7-30. Our course is divided into two groups & while one squad fly the other attends lectures. We fly in the morning one day & in the afternoon the next day & so on. Those attending lectures finish at 4-30 in the afternoon & then they are allowed to play any sport they desire until





No. 1 Service Flying Training School,  
Royal Australian Air Force,  
Point Cook.

tea time while those who are flying usually finish about 5-00.

although there is more work, that is, theoretical work, here than at the junction, there is no compulsory study at night. They leave that part to us. Pictures are held four times weekly in a quite up-to-date theatre & the show is different each time so that we are not lacking in entertainment. A concert party usually comes down once a week also. However it is impossible to see everything & work also.

The senior I.T.S. are having a "Wings" parade on Thursday when they will receive their Wings. From then on, we become Senior I.T.S. & in a month's time should be receiving ours. It certainly will be a great day for us & I am looking forward to it more than anything else.

I have been placed on ansons & up to the present have had about twenty hours - half of which have been solo. On Wednesday night, we start night flying & after a bit of dual we have to fly solo so we should have a bit of fun. Flying certainly has got into my blood & I enjoy every minute of it.



No. 1 Service Flying Training School,  
Royal Australian Air Force,  
Point Cook.

The other weekend I happened to meet "Beery" Nation from the Forestry Dept, in air Force uniform. He was called up with the last batch of air Gunners & is training at Somers where I did my Initial Course. He should be shifting to Ballarat this week.

How is Jack getting on these days. I hope he is enjoying himself over there. Today I received a letter from Frank Bishop. He is in the Workshops somewhere in Egypt & seems to be looking after himself.

Please give my regards to all the family

Yours sincerely

Mont. Yeomans.

408065  
LAC. Yeomans. A.M  
Course 6.P.  
No. 1 Service Flying Training School,  
Royal Australian Air Force,  
Point Cook.  
Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb. [1941]

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Please give my regards to all the family

Yours sincerely

Mont. Yeomans.

F/Lt. A.M. YEOMANS.  
Officers Mess  
R.A.F.  
CRESSY.

6-10-42.

The Committee  
King Island War Service Fund.

Dear Friends.

Please accept my sincere thanks for the bantam Order which I received a few days ago. also if I am not too late, & I am afraid I have no excuses to offer for not writing before. I wish to thank you for a parcel which you sent some time ago.

Mother told me that some of the boys had arrived back from overseas & I am jolly glad to hear it. My only regret is that I couldn't get across to the Island for my last leave & so meet them again. However, better luck next time.

I hope you will forgive this short & uninteresting letter but I must close now.

So cheerio & once again, thanks very much

Yours sincerely  
A.M. Yeomans

F/Lt. A.M. YEOMANS.  
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F/Lt A.M. YEOMANS.

RAAF

CRESSY

12/12/42.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Just a few lines hoping you will convey my thanks to the War Service Comforts Fund committee for the parcel I received last week.

I would have liked very much to go home sometime this month but the plane seats are all booked up well into January. at that time I will be too busy to get leave so it looks as if it will be sometime in February before I can manage it.

Please excuse this very short note as I am due to lecture in a few minutes.

Hoping this finds you and the family in the very best of health & wishing you all a Merry Xmas & a Happy New Year  
I am

Yours sincerely

Mont Yeomans.

F/LT A.M. YEOMANS.

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FLY R. M. YEOMANS  
Royal Australian Air Force

BAIRNSDALE

3/6/1943

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Just a few lines to let you know I received a parcel from the King Island War Service Comforts & I wish to thank them very much for it. It is nice to get something from King Island occasionally & to know you people are still thinking of me.

It seems sometime since I was over there on leave & I daresay it will be some time still before I can get over again. Now that I am married I spend all my leave up in Melbourne. I miss flying over there now too. This place is just too far away to include those trips in our exercises. However I am still on the same old job & may find it possible to look the place over again one day.

I hope you are enjoying good health Mr Marshall, also your family. Please give them my regards

yours sincerely  
Mont Yeomans



F/LT. A.M. Yeomans.  
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE  
BAIRNSDALE  
3/6/1943

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Mont Yeomans



408065  
P/Lt. A. M. Yeomans.  
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE  
BAIRNSDALE

2/11/43.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Just a few lines to let you know I received a parcel a few days ago from the King Island War Service Committee. I would like to thank you and the others of the committee for thinking of me.

As you can see by my address, I have not been shifted yet but the time is drawing very near and although there is no set date for my posting I do not think it will be outside three months. I am only waiting on a replacement now.

Richard Hooper has been down here doing a course with us and will be passing out tomorrow.

How are you now Mr. Marshall, and your family? Please remember me to them all.

Well, I'm afraid I must ring off now so deio for the present

Yours sincerely

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F/LT. A.M. Yeomans.  
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Yours sincerely

Mont.



30/3/44.

F/Lt. H. J. YECMANS.  
Section C.  
Group 569  
RAAF  
TOWNSVILLE.

Dear Mr Marshall.

Yesterday, I received a very welcome parcel from the King Island War Service Fund and I would like you to thank the committee on my behalf please. I would like you to know that all the items included are very useful up in this part of the world. I believe condensed milk can be obtained up here from the cookhouse but one must be a past master in the art of scrounging and as I cannot classify myself in that category - just yet, anyway - the tin set up is greatly appreciated.

I do not think it would be exposing any military secret if I told you a little about myself. The same thing is in the papers practically every other day so he goes. I am now in New Guinea attached to the Americans, although my address is as

above. You have noticed, possibly, in the papers, that RAAF are now training on the largest four engined bombers yet in this area. I am training here as a co-pilot - I cannot qualify as a captain just now because I have not completed one operational tour in this area. I will be glad though when I am able to become a captain of one of these aircraft. I like them & it has always been my ambition to become captain of a really large heavy bomber. I will feel then that I am really getting somewhere & doing something worth while.

This place is sure a blackman's country. I'm dashed if I know why they can't fight wars in a civilized climate. The heat is terrific here during the day & as we are supposed to wear long sleeved shirts, long trousers & gaiters as an anti-malaria precaution, we just about drip away. I'm afraid shorts are all we wear when we are not working.

The other day I was sitting in the cockpit of one of our machines trying

to decipher which was which on the instrument panel - there seem to be thousands of clocks, dials, knobs & switches (It is all very simple of course when you know how) It wasn't really hot at the time but the perspiration was just rolling down my legs & arms & dripping onto the floor.

How are you hoping these days, Mr Marshall, and how are the others. I hope you are all well. Please give them my regards.

Well, I'm afraid this is all I will be able to tell you, Mr Marshall, so I will close.

Yours sincerely  
Monty Goodman

BY AIR MAIL

AIR MAIL  
LETTER CARD

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS CARD  
WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL



NO 74

TX 6848  
Cpl. J. Whitley  
19th Field Recon Platoon  
Cairns, Queensland  
MR. J. MARSHALL.  
CURRIE  
KING ISLAND  
Via MELBOURNE  
AUSTRALIA.

WHEN FOLDED THE LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE WITH  
THE BLUE BORDER WITHIN WHICH THE ADDRESS ONLY MAY BE WRITTEN.

1944  
JUN 18

This flap may be gummed

30/3/44

F/Lt. A.M. YEOMANS.  
Section C.  
Group 569  
RAAF  
TOWNSVILLE.

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Yours sincerely

Mont Yeomans.



F/LT. A. M. YEOMANS

Group 617

RAAF

CLIFTON

Q'LAND.

21/12/44.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

I wish to thank you Mr. Marshall and the members of the R.I. Sub. branch R. S. L. for your kind wishes, and the Banteln Order which I received only a few days ago. May I extend to you all my best wishes for a very Happy New Year.

Thanking you once again

Yours Sincerely

A. M. Yeoman

F/LT. A.M. YEOMANS  
Group 617  
RAAF  
CLIFTON  
Q'LAND.  
21/12/44.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

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Thanking you once again

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F/Lt. A. M. YEOMANS.  
Group 617  
RAAF  
DARWIN  
8/5/45

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Please convey my sincere thanks to the King Island War Service Fund Committee, Mr. Marshall, for the parcel which I received two days ago. I am glad to say that the parcel was in no way damaged despite the fact that it first went to Clifton & was readdressed from there. I can assure you that the contents were greatly appreciated.

As you can see by the above address I am back in the vicinity of my old haunts again. So far, a month of my tour has gone by but I still have no idea whether I shall complete the whole nine months tour

or be sent down to do a Liberator "shippers" course. In one way I would like to get the tour finished but then again, I'd hate to finish up as a co-pilot after all this time. At the present time though shippers courses seem to be as scarce as the proverbial hen's teeth.

I never seem to strike any of the K.I. chaps in all my moving about — when I was in Darwin before I did see Richard Hooper but he is the only one I've seen.

The European war news today, that the whole of Germany has ~~surrendered~~ <sup>surrendered</sup> unconditionally, is excellent. Now the Japs will really find out that the war they started isn't such a good thing after all. May the end come soon now so we can



all go back to our wives & families.  
I trust you are well, Mr. Marshall  
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convey to them my kindest regards.

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busy or cheerio & all the very best.

I remain  
Yours sincerely  
Mont Yeomans.

BY AIR MAIL

AIR MAIL  
LETTER CARD

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MR. J. MARSHALL

CURRIE

KING ISLAND.  
via Melbourne  
VIC.

WHEN FOLDED THE LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE WITH  
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