

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Charles (Charlie) Burkett 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.

Charlie wrote three letters to the Fund, all in 1940. Charlie was 34 when he enlisted in June 1940 and being older knew more people and wrote about them. After he returned from the Middle East he suffered further ill health and was discharged in June 1941. He then enlisted in the Militia (T23394) and served as member of the guard on King Island until his final discharge in January 1942.

ROBERT C. HENRY
COMMISSIONER
WILLIAM R. DALZIEL
LT. COMMISSIONER

RED SHIELD HUTS - HOSTELS



TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA: 65 Bourke St., Melbourne.
EASTERN AUSTRALIA: 140 Elizabeth St., Sydney.

FOR AUSTRALIAN TROOPS

(Answered
3rd July 1946)

K O

Sgt. L. A. Burkett
TX 3063.

2/9th Field Coy. RAE
Brighton Military Camp

Dear Jack.

Well Jack I should have written this before as I promised, but the boys have been shifted about a bit and meant set. But they are now. So here are the addresses

Sapper	L. A. Burkett	TX 3063.	2/9th Field Coy. RAE
" "	H. J. Farrell	TX 3076	" " "
" "	A. J. Thomson	TX 3064	" " " "
" "	H. H. TANKARD	TX 3065	" " " "
Gunner.	W. H. Fisher.	TX 3072.	16th Field Bty 2/8th Field Army Regt. R.A.A.
Private.	French.	TX 3077	} A.S.C Brighton Military Camp
Private	WALTERS	TX 3075.	

We have settled down now and it is not a bad life a bit. Tuff in patches But it will make men of us if we have it in us. And I think we have. Four of of us got in together we were lucky. I am a blower in the engineers.

ROBERT C. HENRY
COMMISSIONER
WILLIAM R. DALZIEL
LT. COMMISSIONER

TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA: 55 Bourke St., Melbourne.
EASTERN AUSTRALIA: 140 Elizabeth St., Sydney.

RED SHIELD HUTS-HOSTELS



FOR AUSTRALIAN TROOPS

They have told us we will do all our training here and sail from Hobart. The rest of our Div is being made up in Victoria and they are to come here and finish their training with us. They are hurrying us as much as they can. They say about 2 months will see us gone.

They have a wonderful camp here now not a tent left. all huts. 25 to a hut. Entertainment every night they have built a wonderful hall in camp. and the army have a writing and reading room and games room and coffee and cake at 9 PM. all free. The lay out of the camp is wonderful. and we have wonderful officers. They are like fathers to us of the parade ground. pretty stern on it but that's what is needed the harder they are on the parade ground the quicker we will learn. The weather is a bit cold and wet but we can't expect sunshine & roses all the time

ROBERT C. HENRY
COMMISSIONER
WILLIAM R. DALZIEL
LT.-COMMISSIONER

TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA: 69 Bourke St., Melbourne.
EASTERN AUSTRALIA: 146 Elizabeth St., Sydney.

RED SHIELD HUTS-HOSTELS



FOR AUSTRALIAN TROOPS

Sox are our main trouble we get wet a lot and have to keep our feet good and thin sox are no good they supply 2 pair but they are only just sox. They say the first lot were good sox the men got but they are on very poor ones now. The routine is

Reveille at 6.30. bed made and shaved and on

Parade by 7.00 clock. jig jog 3. mile and breakfast at 7.30. 8.30 drill and march

till 12. Dinner 12.30. 1.30 drill and march till 4.30. Lecture till 5. Tea 5.30. and 2 nights a week a 4 mile Route march.

so you can see they intend to make men of us in short time.

Well Jack all this may not interest you but I thought I had better make a letter of it. We all send regard to you and family and also. Comforts Fund.

Cheerio for now.

yours sincerely
Charlie Burkett

Spr. C A. Burkett
TX 3063.
2/9th Field Coy. RAE
Brighton Milt Camp

Dear Jack.

Well Jack I should have written this before as I promised, but the boys have been shifted about a bit and wernt set But they are now so here are the addresses.

Sapper	C.A	Burkett	TX3063	2/9 th Field Coy. R.A.E
" "	H.J	Farrell	TX3076	" " "
" "	A.J	Thompson	TX3064	" " "
" "	A.H	Tankard	TX3065	" " "
Gunner	W.H	Fisher	TX3072	16 th Field Bty 2/8 th Field Army Regiment R.A.A.

Private French TX3077]

Private Walters TX3075] A.S.C Brighton Military Camp

We have settled down now and it is not a bad life a bit tuff in patches But it will make men of us if we have it in us. And I think we have. Four of us got in together we were lucky. I am a Driver in the Engineers.

They have told us we will do all our training here and sail from Hobart. The rest of our Div is being made up in Victoria and they are to come here and finish there training with us. They are hurrying us as mutch as they can. They say about 2 months will see us gone.

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The routine is

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So you can see they intend to make men of us in short time.

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Cheerio for now.

Yours sincerely
Charlie Burkett

TX.3063.
L/Cpl. C.A. Burkett.
7/th.Div. Salvage Unit.
Brighton
Tasmania.

To The President.
King Island War Service Fund.

Dear Sir or Madam

On behalf of the boys from King Island in this camp. I wish to thank the War Service Fund for the parcels we received this month.

Each man who received a parcel wishes the fund to know how much they are appreciated.

They were received in good order and every article in the parcel has its use to us boys in camp. And at all times a parcel from The King Island War Service Fund, will be much looked forward to

We have had small parcels from other funds here. But no parcel can come up to one from old K.I.

Wishing the Fund every success from the boys here.

yours faithfully.

Charlie Burkett

TX. 3063.
L/Cpl. C. A. Burkett
7/th. Div. Salvage Unit.
Brighton
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yours faithfully.
Charlie Burkett

Somewhere in the Middle East

TX3063.

L/Cpl. BURKETT C.A.

7 AUS. DIV. SALVAGE UNIT

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

ABROAD

To The President.

King Island War Service Fund. 15-12-40

Dear Sir (Jack)

The King Island boys in this Unit. Allan Lankard Reg French Pat Farrell Jack Perry and myself. Have much pleasure in being able to let you know we have all received our Xmas parcels in first class order from your fund. We are not going to open them until Xmas day. But by the account of what is in them they will be the main stay in making Xmas dinner a very enjoyable one for us. They will give us the best here they can provide under the circumstances. But that won't be anything out of the ordinary. And the old parcel will be very much in the foreground at dinner time.

We are all extra well, and had a very good trip over here. I can't tell you just where we are or what we are doing. But we are in a very fair Camp

one I reckon bliff Sullivan would know well
and Blink Boden should know it well &
I have heard them speak of the place.

I went last week end and had a look at
the War cemetery at Gaza. It is very nice
and they look after it very well.
Leave isn't so plentiful here. But I am
looking forward to my turn to go to
Jerusalem. They say there are some great
sights to see there.

Pat Farrells address in future will
be the same as Phil & Jacks. He has trans-
ferred to them or at least they claimed him.
They came to see us and my word they took
well. They told us Bode & Hon were in the
camp we are in up to 3 weeks before we landed.
It was stiff missing them by only that short
time.

I will have to ping off now. So
wishing the R.I. W.S.F. every success in the
future for the fine work they are doing
for us chaps

yours. faithfully

Charlie Burkett

Bob Brown

Somewhere in the Middle East
TX 3063
L/Cpl. BURKETT C.A.
7 AUS. DIV. SALVAGE UNIT
AUSTRALIAN. IMPERIAL FORCES
ABROAD
15-12-40

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We are all extra well. and had a very good trip over here. I cant tell you just where we are or what we are doing. But we are in a very fair Camp One I reckon Cliff Sullivan would know well and Blink Soden should know it well to I have heard them speak of the place.

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Pat Farrells address in future will be the same as Phill & Jacks. He has transfered to them or at least they claimed him. They came to see us and my word they look well. They told us Code & Don were in the camp we are in up to 3 weeks before we landed It was stiff missing them by only that short time.

I will have to ring off now. So wishing the K.I.W.S.F. every success in the future for the fine work they are doing for us chaps.

Yours . faithfully
Charlie Burkett