

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

During World War 2, Walter (Jack) Cornelius 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.

Jack wrote nine letters to the Fund; four in 1941, and two each in 1942 and 1943. He mainly thanks the Fund for what has received, but his letters, particularly the ones from 1941, show how regular items were being shipped from King Island. This is an indicator of the scale of the operation done by volunteers, including fund raising. Interesting to note is his salutation to 'Dear old John M' in his letter of October 1942 – they must have known each other. Jack, being in a reserved occupation (mill operator), was discharged on 16 June 1944.

RED SHIELD HUTS AND HOSTELS

FROM: FX1318

No.

NAME Gus Cornelius W.S.  
UNIT 1ST ANTI-TANK REGT.



A. I. F.

ABROAD

5<sup>th</sup> Feb 1941

Remember the loved ones far away,  
And write them a message of cheer to-day.

The Secretary,  
K.I. War Services Fund,  
Gusnie.

Dear Sir,

Have great pleasure in  
waiting to advise you of the safe  
arrival of (3) boxes of your most  
welcome parcels.

Since our arrival in  
the East between Xmas & New Year mail  
from Australia which had accumulated  
here pending our arrival has been  
delivered so that we have been  
actually swamped with mail of every  
description.

Please give my heartiest  
thanks and good wishes to all who contribute  
towards your excellent Fund.

Yours etc.  
W.S. Cornelius

John Howard

PLEASE WRITE ON BOTH SIDES

TX 1318  
Gnr Cornelius W.S.  
1<sup>st</sup> ANTI. TANK REGT.

A.I.F.  
ABROAD  
5<sup>th</sup> Feb 1941

The Secretary  
K.I. War Services Fund,  
Currie.

Sir;

Have great pleasure in writing to advise you of the safe arrival of (3) three of your most welcome parcels.

Since our arrival in the East before Xmas & New Year mail from Australia which had accumulated here pending our arrival has been delivered so that we have been actually swamped with mail of every description.

Please give my heartfelt thanks and good wishes to all who contribute towards your excellent Fund.

Yours etc.

W.S. Cornelius



RED SHIELD HUTS AND HOSTELS

FROM: - 7X 1319

No.

NAME *Cpl Cornelius W.S.*

UNIT

*1st Anti-Tank Regt.*



*A. J. F.*

*Ahead*

*30.3.41*

19\_\_

Remember the loved ones far away,  
And write them a message of cheer to-day.

*The Sec.*

*K.I. War Service Fund.*

*Burnie*

*K. I.*

*Sir,*

Have much pleasure in acknowledging receipt of canteen order for 5/- despatched by you on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>.

Same is much appreciated & I would like to thank you all for your continued good works.  
Yours etc.

*W. Cornelius*

*Cornelius*

PLEASE WRITE ON BOTH SIDES

TX1318  
Cpl Cornelius W.S.  
1<sup>st</sup> Anti-Tank Regt.

A.I.F  
Abroad  
30.3.41

The Sec.

K.I. War Service Fund.

Currie

K.I.

Sir;

Have much pleasure in acknowledging receipt of canteen order for 5/- dispatched by you on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>.

Same is much appreciated & I would like to thank you all for your continued good works.

Yours etc

W.S. Cornelius

11/3/8

Sp. bonelins 22.  
1st Anti-Tank Regt.  
A. S. Ahmed.  
12-5-41

The Sec.

N. I. War Service Fund.

Currie

Dear Sir,

Have great pleasure in  
writing to again thank you for a  
further parcel received last week  
on return from Greece.

Many thanks to yourself  
& your organization

Yours etc

Edmunds

Badams

TX1318  
Cpl Cornelius W.S.  
1<sup>st</sup> Anti-Tank Regt.  
AIF Abroad  
12.5.41

The Sec.

K.I War Service Fund

Currie

Dear Sir;

Have great pleasure is writing again thank you for a further parcel received last week on return from Greece.

Many thanks to yourself & your organization

Yours etc

WS Cornelius



"ANY REFERENCE TO SHIPPING OR TROOP MOVEMENTS WILL RESULT IN THE DELAY OR MUTILATION OF THIS LETTER"

ERNEST J. HAREWOOD, O.B.E.  
LT.-COMMISSIONER

RED SHIELD HUTS-HOSTELS

FROM

No. TX 1318

NAME

Cpl Cornelius W.D.

UNIT

ATT. 1st ANTI-TANK REGT.



TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS:  
Eastern Australia—140 Elizabeth St., Sydney, N.S.W.

FOR AUSTRALIAN TROOPS

Patron:

RT. HON. WM. HUGHES, P.C.

A.I.F. Abroad CAMP

8.6. 1941

In association with the  
LORD MAYOR'S PATRIOTIC & WAR FUND.

The Secretary  
K.I. War Services Fund,  
King Island.  
Dear Sir,

Once again I have pleasure in acknowledging receipt of one of your much appreciated parcels despatched by your fund on March 14<sup>th</sup> 41.

Many thanks to yourself & your associates in this matter as I realise that with the small population of the Island & the growing number of enlistments amongst the boys that a fund of this type needs continual & hard work to enable the despatch of these ever welcome parcels.

Trusting that the Island continues to prosper & that the season has been beneficial to all.

Yours etc  
Jack Cornelius



TX 1318  
Cpl Cornelius W.S.  
ATT. 1<sup>st</sup> ANTI-TANK REGT.

A.I.F. ABROAD  
8.6.1941

The Secretary  
K.I. War Services Fund,  
King Island.

Dear Sir,

Once again I have pleasure in acknowledging receipt of one of your much appreciated parcels despatched by your fund on March 14<sup>th</sup> 41.

Many thanks to yourself and your associates in this matter as I realize that with the small population of the Island & the growing number of enlistments amongst the boys that a fund of this type needs continual & hard work to enable the dispatch of these ever welcome parcels

Trusting that the Island continues to prosper & that the season has been beneficial to all

Yours etc

Jack Cornelius

TX 1315

Cpl bounding NS  
ANTI-TANK Regt.  
No 3. A.A.B.P.O.

A.I.F. Abroad.

5.5.12.

The President.

K.I. War Services Fund.

Bussie

Sir,

Again writing to  
thank your organisation for 3p carton  
and received this week. As usual  
it was most appreciated & duly  
spent on necessities.

Again thanking you  
all

Yours etc.

Jack bounding

A. Bussie

TX1318.  
Cpl. Cornelius W.S.  
1 ANTI-TANK Regt.  
NO 3. A.A.B.P.O.  
A.I.F. Abroad.  
5.5.42.

The President.  
K.I. War Services Fund.  
Currie.

Sir;

Again writing to thank your organisation for 3/- Canteen order  
received this week. As usual it was most appreciated & duly spent on necessities.

Again thanking you all.

Yours etc.

Jack Cornelius



TX 13/8  
W. Thornehill  
112 Ant. Con Depot.  
Tarnworth  
27.10.12.

Dear old John W.

So sorry not to  
have written to acknowledge the  
receipt of the 3/- canteen order  
received last month before this.

However I as usual wish to  
thank the K.I. comforts Fund for  
same.

Reason for the delay has  
been a spell in Hospital with  
appendicitis & tonsillitis so that you  
can readily imagine how little like  
letter writing I have been feeling.

Again thanking you & wishing  
continued success to the organisation  
also regards to Mrs Marshall & Mr  
& Arthur Jones etc.  
Yours etc.  
W. Thornehill  
Jack Cornhill

TX1318  
W.S. Cornelius  
112 Aust Con Depot.  
Tamworth  
27.10.42.

Dear old John M.

So sorry not to have written to acknowledge the receipt of the 3/- canteen order received last month before this.

However I as usual wish to thank the K.I. Comforts Fund for same.

Reason for the delay has been a spell in Hospital with appendicitis & tonsillitis so that you can readily imagine how little like letter writing I have been feeling.

Again thanking you & wishing continued success to the organisation also regards to Mrs. Marshall Sylvia & Arthur

Yours etc.

Jack Cornelius

TX1318  
Lpl Cornelius W.L.  
F.P.O 21.  
A.I.L. Australia  
8/1/43.

Secretary  
H.I. War Services Fund.  
This

Many thanks  
for Xmas parcel despatched Nov.  
Received yesterday in good order  
& condition. Delay in delivery  
due to my having been in  
Hospital & transferring from my  
old unit

Thanks too for the  
wishes expressed on the card from  
the R.S.S. & A.I.L.A.

My heartiest wishes  
for 1943 to both organisations  
Yours etc  
Cornelius

Lee



TX 1318  
Cpl Cornelius WJ.  
F.P.O 21.  
A.I.F. Australia  
8.1.43.

Secretary,  
K.I. War Services Fund,

Sir.

Many thanks for Xmas parcel dispatched Nov.

Received yesterday in good order & condition. Delay in delivery due to my having been in Hospital & transferring from my old unit.

Thanks too for the wishes expressed on the card from the R.S.S. & A.I.L.A.

My heartiest wishes for 1943 to both organisations

Yours etc

J Cornelius

TX1318  
W. G. Gornelies  
ATT 2/2 HQ Regt.  
A.I.F. Australia  
12.13.

Dear John Marshall;  
Again thanks to the  
K.I. War Service Fund for another of  
the ever welcome canteen orders. This  
one posted by you on 18<sup>th</sup> Jan &  
received on 28<sup>th</sup> Jan value 3/-.  
Best wishes to all  
concerned also to Mrs Marshall yourself  
& family

Yours etc  
Jack Gornelies

Shallu

TX1318  
W.J. Cornelius  
ATT 2/2 T A Regt.  
A.I.F Australia  
1.2.43.

Dear John Marshall;

Again thanks to the K.I. War Service Fund for another of the ever welcome canteen orders. This one posted by you on 18<sup>th</sup> Jan & received on 25<sup>th</sup> Jan value 3/-

Best wishes to all concerned also to Mrs Marshall yourself & family

Yours etc  
Jack Cornelius



TX1318  
Cpl W. Boornehins  
L.T.D. R.A.S.  
Sydney  
10 Dec 43.

The Sec,

R.I. Manterville Fund.

Again many thanks  
for parcel received last week. Posted  
by you Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 43 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Anti-Tank Regt  
As I have not been with that unit for  
some months the delay is understandable.  
However it was received intact.

Again thanking your organisation

Yours etc

Jack Boornehins.

P.S

I would like to take this  
opportunity to wish all a  
Merry X-mas and everything  
that is wished for for the  
New Year

J.B.

TX1318  
Cpl W. J. Cornelius  
L.T.D. R.A.S.  
Sydney  
10 Dec 43.

The Sec,  
K.I. War Service Fund.

Again many thanks for parcel received last week. Posted by you  
Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 43. To 2/1 Anti-Tank Regt. As I have not been with that unit for some months  
the delay is understandable However it was received intact.  
Again thanking your organisation

Yours etc  
Jack Cornelius

P.S.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all a Merry Xmas and everything that is  
wished for in the New Year

J.C.