

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Richard Hooper 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.

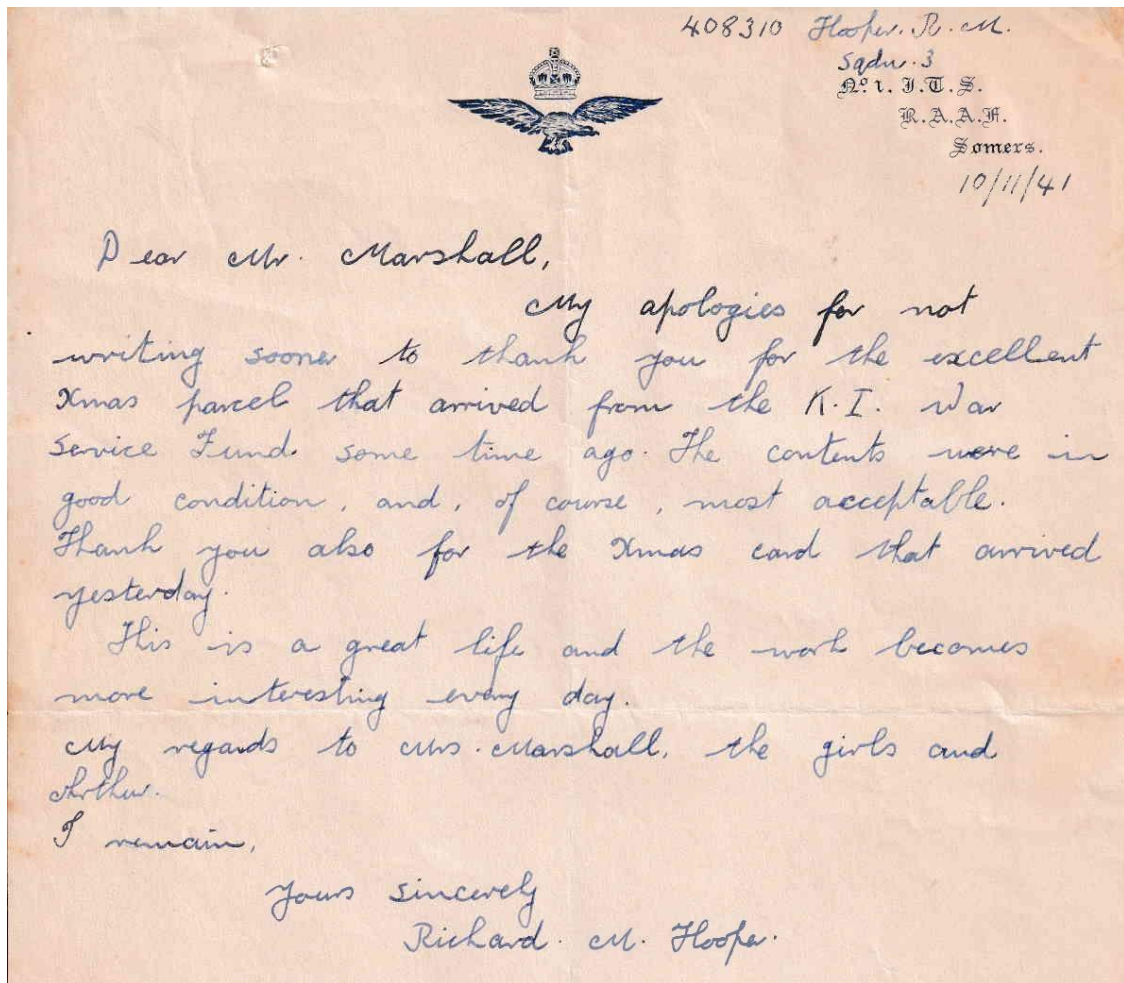
The challenges for a service person during World War 2 to write a letter was to firstly find the inclination (often directly related to their mental condition due to combat), time, paper, a writing implement and a place under cover. Occasionally a letter was typed and the paper ranged from high quality 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.

Richard wrote nine letters to the Fund; commencing in 1941, three in 1942, one in 1943, two each in 1944 and 1945. His letters are succinct but record his progression in the Air Force from an Aircraftman to Flying Officer. In addition, he mentions the postal note of nearly a day's pay, and other items such as socks and boot polish that were included in the Comfort Fund packages. His last letter mentions the use of flying boats to repatriate POWs back to Australia.



408310 Hooper, R.M.
Sqn. 3
No. 1 F.T.S
R.A.A.F.
Somers
10/11/41

Dear Mr. Marshall,

My apologies for not writing sooner to thank you for the excellent Xmas parcel that arrived from the K.I. War Service Fund some time ago. The contents were in good condition, and, of course, most acceptable. Thank you also for the Xmas card that arrived yesterday.

This is a great life and the work becomes more interesting every day.
My regards to Mrs. Marshall, the girls and Arthur.
I remain,

Yours Sincerely
Richard M. Hooper.



408310 L.A.C. HOOPER, R.M.

21 COURSE (P)

NO 1 S.F.T.S.

R.A.A.F. Station

Point Cook

Tuesday 30th June.

Dear Mr Marshall,

Thanks very much for the "Comforts Fund" parcel that reached me yesterday - sox, "nugget" and tobacco are becoming increasingly rare these days, so they were most acceptable.

My training is almost finished now, and I have hopes of going onto operational work in a couple of months time. Am also looking forward to a few days of home leave in the future.

Hoping this finds you and the family in the best of health. I remain,

yours sincerely,

Richard Hooper.

408310 L.A.C. HOOPER, R.M.

21 COURSE (P)

NO 1 S.F.T.S.

R.A.A.F. Station

Point Cook

Tuesday 30th June. [1942]

Dear Mr Marshall,

Thanks very much for the "Comforts Fund" parcel that reached me yesterday - sox, "nugget" and tobacco are becoming increasingly rare these days, so they were most acceptable. My training is almost finished now, and, I have hopes of going onto operational work in a couple of months time. Am also looking forward to a few days of home leave in the future.

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Richard Hooper.



408310 Sgt. Hooper. R.M.
No. 1 A.O.S.

R.A.A.F. Station

~~Point Cook~~
Cootamundra, N.S.W.

1-10-42

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Thanks very much for the "canteen order" which came to hand yesterday - the K.I. War Service Fund certainly treats the local boys well.

I have only just arrived at this station and am beginning to like it here already, and, also look forward to commencing my job as a staff pilot.

The farm land around Coota is looking very green and prosperous at present, but further "out" to the west it is quite dry in some districts, however I would sooner the Island anyday, in spite of this year's rainfall.

I hope this finds you and the family in the best of health; with kind regards,

yours sincerely,
Richard Hooper

408310 Sgt. Hooper. R.M.
No. 1 A.O.S.

R.A.A.F. Station

~~Point Cook~~

Cootamundra N.S.W.

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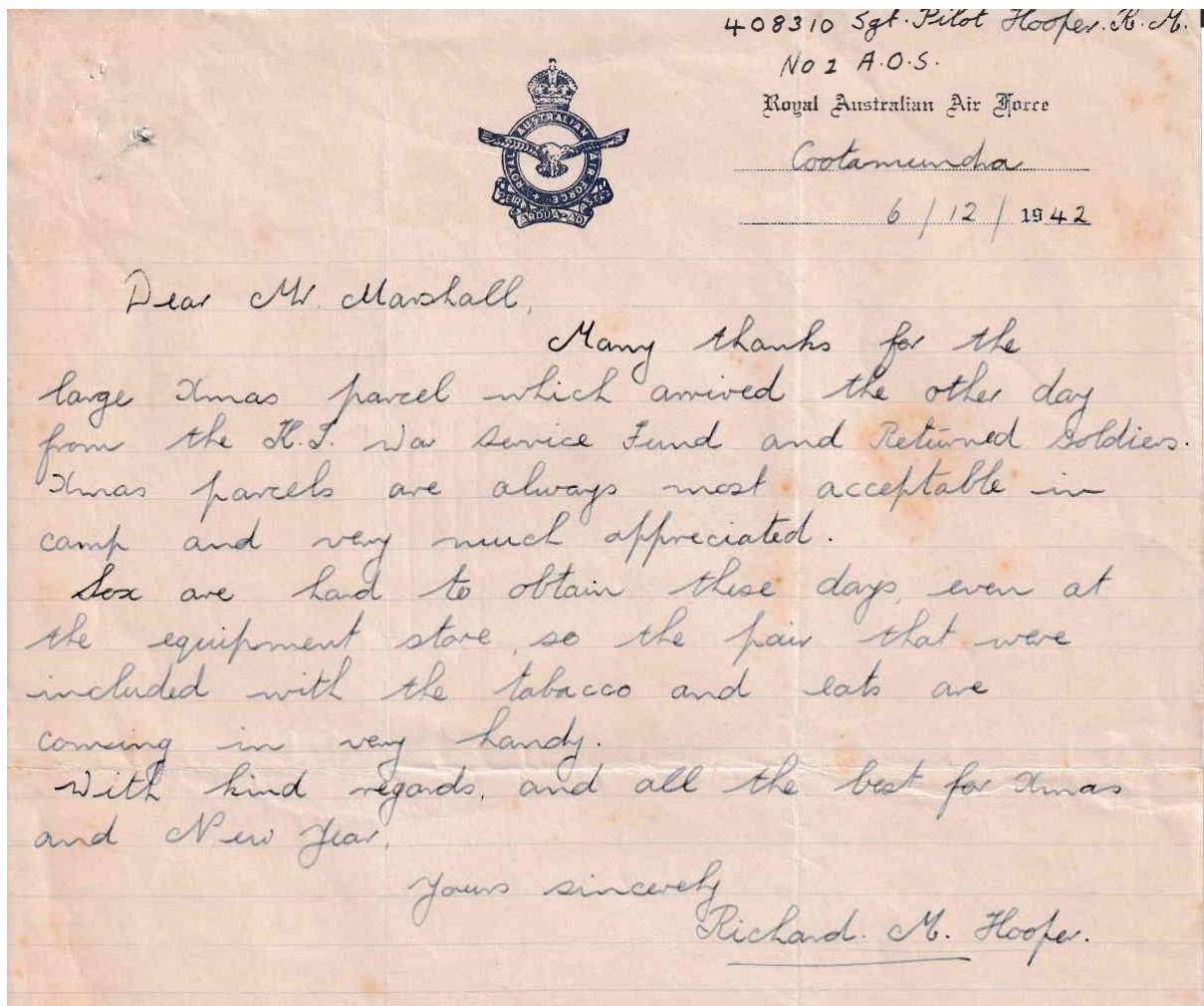
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Yours Sincerely,

Richard Hooper



408310 Sgt. Pilot Hooper. R.M.
No 1 A.O.S.
Royal Australian Air Force
Cootamundra
6/12/1942

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Many thanks for the large Xmas parcel which arrived the other day from the K.I. War Service Fund and Returned Soldiers. Xmas parcels are always most acceptable in camp and very much appreciated.

Sox are hard to obtain these days, even at the equipment store, so the pair that were included with the tobacco and eats are coming in very handy.

With kind regards, and all the best for Xmas and New Year,

Yours sincerely

Richard M. Hooper.

408310 F/S HOOPER. R.
R.A.A.F.
COOTAMUNDRA
8/12/43

Dear Mr Marshall,

Many thanks to the War Service Fund for the parcel which reached here a couple of days ago. It was most acceptable and the contents 'opened up' in the best of condition.

With kind regards and the compliments of the season to you all, I remain,

yours sincerely

Richard Hooper

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R.A.A.F.
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Richard Hooper

408310 F/SGT HOOPER. R.
R.A.A.F.
EVANS HEAD N.S.W.
4/1/44

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Many thanks for the very welcome Canteen Order which I received from the War Service Fund a few days ago.

The "Islanders" in uniform certainly receive many comforts from those at home, and I feel sure that all the other boys appreciate them as much as I do.

All the best for 1944.

Yours sincerely,
Richard.

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R.A.A.F.
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4/1/44

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Yours sincerely,
Richard.

408310 W/O HOOPER. R. M.
GROUP 481, R.A.A.F
DARWIN N.T.

11/12/44

Dear Mr Marshall,

Many thanks
to the R.S.L for the five shilling
P/N which arrived here yesterday;
I appreciate it very much.

I believe the Island is having
a bumper season this year; like
many of the other local boys
I look forward to the end of
this scrap, and being able to
settle down there again.

Best greetings for Xmas and
a prosperous new year to the
family and yourself.

Yours sincerely
Richard

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GROUP 481, R.A.A.F
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Yours sincerely,
Richard

408310 W/O HOOPER. R.M.
GROUP 481 R.A.A.F
DARWIN N.T.

3/1/45

Dear Mr Marshall,

My most
sincere thanks to the "War
Service Fund" for the truly
excellent hamper which I received
a few days ago. All contents
were most acceptable.
All the best for 1945.

Yours sincerely
Richard.

408310 W/O HOOPER R.M.
GROUP 481 R.A.A.F
DARWIN N.T.
3/1/45

Dear Mr Marshall,

My most sincere thanks to the "War Service Fund" for the truly excellent hamper which I received a few days ago. All contents were most acceptable.

All the best for 1945,

Yours sincerely
Richard.



F/O R. M. HOOPER 408310

Royal Australian Air Force

RATHMINES N.S.W.

30/8/1945

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Another most appreciated war service parcel reached me the other day. Many thanks - it is certainly great to receive them. This parcel was dispatched to my Darwin address on the 7th of Feb, the delay in its eventual arrival being due to the fact that I have moved about a good deal in the meantime.

At present I'm engaged on transport work in Catalinas, and look forward to bringing back some of the P.O.W.s from Singapore and the Islands as soon as those places are occupied.

My kind regards to you all, and thanks again for the many parcels and letters. Orders which I have received during the past four years.

Yours sincerely,

Richard

F/O R.M.HOOPER 408310
Royal Australian Air Force
RATHMINES N.S.W.
30/8/1945

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Another most appreciated War Service parcel reached me the other day. Many thanks - it is certainly great to receive them. This parcel was dispatched to my Darwin address on the 7th of Feb, the delay in its eventual arrival being due to the fact that I have moved about a good deal in the meantime.

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Yours sincerely,
Richard