

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Edward Punshon 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.

Edward wrote three letters to the Fund, all in 1943. His letters are brief but express his appreciation. He was discharged on 23 May 1944 and a parcel sent to him in that month was shared with his former tent mates. Corporal Charles Ibbott (TX8844) wrote a letter to the Fund and explained this was in accord with Edward's directions.

May 1st 1943
TX. 6958

PIE. PUNSHON. E.H.

H Q Coy.
40th H L B

Kustroch

To.

The Secretary,

K L War Service Fund.

I am very pleased to have received
today a Canteen Order from The K L War Service Fund.

I wish to thank the members of the Fund on your behalf
for this very acceptable gift.

With many thanks,

I am,

Yours Faithfully,

E. H. Punshon

W. H. H. H.

14th May 1943
H. H. H. H.

May 1st 1943
TX. 6958
PTE. PUNSHON. E H.
HQ Coy
40th A I B
Australia

To/
The Secretary,
K Is. War Service Funds.

I am very pleased to have received today a Canteen Order from the K Is. War Service Fund.

I wish to thank the members of the Fund on your behalf for this very acceptable gift.

With many thanks,

I am,

Yours Faithfully,

EH. Punshon

3rd Dec 1943

TX.6958.

Pte E.H. Purnshaw
40th Bus Inf Bn
Australia.

To.

The President

King Island War Service Fund.

Dear Sir

I hereby wish to
express my many thanks to all committee
members of the K.I.W.S.F., & yourself, for
the parcel just received.

I greatly appreciate the generosity shown
by sending me such parcels as this.
Wishing your organisation the best
of luck & every success,

I am,
Yours Sincerely
E.H. Purnshaw.

Alley

3rd. Dec 1943
TX.6958.
Pte E H. Punshon
40th Aus Inf Bn
Australia

To
The President
King Island War Service Fund.

Dear Sir,

I hereby wish to express my many thanks to all committee members
of the KIWSF, & yourself, for the parcel just received.

I greatly appreciate the generosity shown by sending me such parcels as this.

Wishing your organisation the best of luck & every success,

I am,

Yours Sincerely

E H. Punshon.



Dec 28th 1943.

Tx 6958.

Clt E.H. Purshon
40th Fus. Inf. Bn.
Australia.

To.
The President of
The R.S.S. & A.I.A.

Dear Sir,

I hereby wish
to thank you & all members of the
above organisation for the Xmas
Greetings Card I have just received
from you, & also my many thanks to
the R.I.W.S.F. for the card & order to
the amount of 5/-.

I am,
Yours Very Sincerely
E.H. Purshon.

Ray

Dec 28th 1943.
TX.6958.
Pte E H. Punshon
40th Aus Inf Bn
Australia.

To/

The President of

The R.S.S & A.I.L.A.

Dear Sir.

I hereby wish to thank you & all members of the
above organisation for the Xmas Greetings Card I have just received from you, & also my
many thanks to the K.I.W.S.F, for the canteen order to the amount of 5/- .

I am,

Yours Very Sincerely

E.H. Punshon.