

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Ernest (Norton) Jackson 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.

Norton wrote three letters to the Fund, every December from 1942 through to 1944. His letters are detailed and give a good description of the locations where he is serving, and he was obviously good friends with Jack Marshall. The theft of money would not have been received well within his unit, but it did occur. His concern for beer on the King Island does get a mention, noting that 'Joe' was Joe Dolan who ran the hotel in Currie.



12226
L.A. 6 Jackson & J. 11/12/42
R.A.A.F.
No. 7 C.F.T.S.,
Western Junction

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Just a note to ask you to convey my thanks to the War Service Fund & to the Council Clerk for the Parcel & Pen that I received during the last week. The Pen is a beaut & sort of wipes off any excuse in the future for not writing.

How are all your folks O.K. I hope I saw Arthur when I was home, & he told me you were all fairly well. The place looked fair when I was some quite a recent bit of harvest. Things are very dry here & look like being serious if rain doesn't soon come the crops of Beans & Potatoes about these parts will soon be spoiled.

I saw Bert Mison & his wife yesterday he's going home this week his an leave from up north, & has also had two years service overseas so he certainly has been in it.

Kmas doesn't seem like it use to be. I'd like to have it with the boys back home, I wonder how the Bert situation will be over there it wasn't too good when I left last week, but I hope you can scrap enough for Kmas live, but never the less it is damn near as bad here a chap is not in the race to obtain even one bottle unless he is a good customer & I am a very light boozer so I am in all the trouble in the world trying to get that one for the morning but still I'm a damned good trier all the same.



R. A. A. F.

No. 7 E. F. T. P.,

Western Junction

I spend most of my time here on the station playing 500, we have a pretty decent lot of chaps here although there are a few things go off occasionally for instance someone lifted 80/- off me about three weeks ago but its hard to get away from that sort of thing as well you know with your experience in the last war.

Poor Blue Davies was pretty sick when he was home. I hope his better now sickness is no good at any time more ones when times is due.

Well old Red I'll have to go to work now so will say many thanks &

Cheers for now

I remain your sincere friend

Wishing you & your family a Merry Xmas

Robert Jackson

& a Bright New Year 1917.

42226

L.A.C Jackson E.J N

14/12/42.

R.A.A.F.

No. 7 E.F.T.S.

Western Junction

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How are all your folks O.K I hope I saw Arthur when I was home, & he told me you were all fairly well. The place looked fair when I was home quite a decent bit of harvest. Things are very dry here & look like being serious if rain doesnt soon come he crops of Peas & Flax about these parts will soon be spoiled.

I saw Bert Misson & his wife yesterday he's going home this week he's on leave from up north, & has also had two years service overseas so he certainly has been in it.

Xmas doesn't seem like it use to be, I'd like to have it with the boys back home, I wonder how the Beer situation will be over there it wasn't too good when I left last week, but I hope Joe can scrap enough for Xmas Eve, but never-the-less it is damn near as bad here a chap is not in the race to obtain even one bottle unless he is a good customer & I am a very light boozier so I am in all the trouble in the world trying to get that one for the morning but still Im a damned good tryer all the same.

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Poor Blue Davies was pretty sick when I was home & I hope he's better now sickness is no good at any time more over when Xmas is due.

Well old Pal I'll have to go to work now so will say many thanks &

Cheerio for now

I remain your Sincere Friend

Norton Jackson.

Wishing you & your family a Merry Xmas

& a Bright New Year Norton



From No. 42226 LHC Name Jackson E. J. A.

Unit or Group 127 R.A.H.C. - Hobart, N.S.W.

(Use Official Address only)

Date 10/12/43

Dear Mr. Marshall,

I received a very nice parcel from the King Island War Fund today & would like you to convey my sincere thanks to the Ladies of the Organisation, for it is just how we attacked the tin of Pear's things such a novelty up here.

I have been here about two weeks now & it is not a bad place although the climate is not very good just at present it's much like back home the days are not the same, but it should soon take on more stable change now as this is somewhat unusual so the local folks say. It is so the South Coast & the surroundings are very attractive especially the trip from Sydney down here is beautiful scenery.

I hope to be home some time about Xmas & would like to see you all again although most of my time will be taken up travelling the way the trains are now when I came up here we had a wonderful trip from Melbourne to Albany on the Spirit. What kind of season have you

IN YOUR LETTER DO NOT REFER TO:

The name of your transport or other transports in your convoy . . . dates of sailing . . . ports of call . . . destination, description of troops, or other information which, if intercepted, will be of value to the enemy.



From No. Name

Unit or Group

(Use Official Address only) Date

had this year Mr Marshall I suppose you find things damned busy with labours so scarce. I had a letter from Mum yesterday & she mentioned that she had a fat Turkey for Xmas & started to develop the appetite straight away.

Well Mr Marshall news is rather scarce here, although the town is rather bright & it's very good & I only see the town once a week as most of my activities are confined to camp.

So please tell the ladies if they had of seen the scene when the Parcel arrived they would have enjoyed it as much as we did!

My kindest regards to Mrs Marshall, yourself & family & the best that is possible for Xmas I am

Yours sincere friend
Violet Jackson

IN YOUR LETTER DO NOT REFER TO:

The name of your transport or other transports in your convoy . . . dates of sailing . . . ports of call . . . destination, description of troops, or other information which, if intercepted, will be of value to the enemy.

42226 LAC Jackson E.J N.
127 R.A.A.F. Nowra. N.S.W.
10/12/43

Dear Mr Marshall,

I recieved a very nice parcel from the King Island War Fund today & would like you to convey my Sincere Thanks to the Ladies of the Organisation, you've no idea just how we attacked the tin of Pears they're such a Novelty up here.

I have been here about two weeks now & it's not a bad place although the Climate is not very good just at present it's much like back home two days are not the same, but it should soon take a more stable change now as this is somewhat unusual so the local folks say It's so the South Coast & the surroundings are very attractive especially the trip from Sydney down here it's beautiful Scenery.

I hope to be home some time about Xmas & would like to see you all again although most of my time will be taken up travelling the way the trains are now when I came up here we had a wonderful trip from Melbourne to Albury on the Spirit.

What kind of Season have you had Mr Marshall I suppose you find things damned busy with labour so scarce.

I had a letter from Mum yesterday & she mentioned she had a fat Turkey for Xmas I started to develope the appetite straight away.

Well Mr Marshall news is rather scarce, although the town is rather bright & the Beer very good & I only see the town once a week so most of my activities are confined to Camp.

So please tell the Ladies if they had of seen the scene when the Parcel arrived they would have enjoyed it as much as we did.

My Kindest Regards to Mrs Marshall yourself & family & the Best that is possible for Xmas

I am
Your Sincere Friend
Norton Jackson

42226
L.A.B. Jackson E.H.
Group 853
R.A.A.F.
Pacific
19.12.44

Dear Mr Marshall,

Thank you & all the members
of the Returned Soldiers League, for the Lantienbrodes
& Amas card & most of all for the kind thoughts
& wishes that I know went with it, you know one can
hardly explain just how he feels when these little
things come along to remind you of the friends
that are back home & no doubt a mans best friends,
as we have known each other for such a long time
now since I was a kid, that includes of course the
loop of the Island, may how let me sincerely thank
you all from the bottom of my heart conveys to
all the Members my wishes for a Merry Xmas &
as happy a New Year as we all can make it.
I do hope that Joe has sufficient

But to hold the bugs over Smas? that you all make the best of it, actually we are not so badly off we have a ration of two bottles per week. Of course make the best of it.

It's very hot night now Mr Marshall & a sheep seems to tire out so easily, but never the less I am quite happy to state that I feel well although pretty thin but I don't think anyone gets fat in the Guinea.

I hear from Mother quite often & she usually keeps me supplied with the little doings and there you know just as Mr. W. would but never of course indigests me about the poor situation & little happenings that I used to be right in. Now is Joe & Mrs. Selin just give them my kindest regards will you please, & also tell my faithful friend Richie to have a couple of light eyes for me at Smas.

When I come back again Mr Marshall it depends on how far Mr. W. is under the Smith.

come back to the Island for my leave if she is in Melbourne well I expect I will spend some of it there, but just get on this far an astounding bit of news, you see I am taking unto myself a wife on my return I became engaged just before I left, anyhow its about time as I may have been left on the shelf, she is a lovely girl anyhow so its up to me I reckon I'll make good, (maybe)

I amuse myself in quite a lot of ways up here. Luckily I am able to do a good deal of swimming, but the waters are a bit dangerous, anyhow swimming here keeps a chap fit & that's a very important thing, I made a garden near my tent when I first came here, grew any amount of cucumbers & Tomatoes I still have a good many of the latter, & believe me they are a great asset, we went fishing last Sunday & I caught some beaut fish & they helped the menu along considerably so you see we have it

as well as one could expect it the only thing to do is to make the best of it candidly I don't like the business, but who does? I am not the only one here, we think in terms of months not weeks that helps a lot and in general time just goes by as usual fortunately there is plenty of work a day and its hot & the work flat out most of the time, we wear only our trousers during the day & if the upper portion of the body comes in contact with the metal parts of the aircraft well it just burns that all I have worked inside of them with the temperature 132°F & believe me that bloody hot. Now after all this jargon I will conclude; Hope this finds you & the family well, my very kindest regards to them all & Best Wishes for Xmas & New Year. Thanking you all again,

David H.

Yours Sincerely
Foster

42226
L.A.C. Jackson E.J N
Group 833
R.A.A.F
Pacific
19.12.44

Dear Mr Marshall,

Thank you & all the members of the Return Soldiers League, for the Canteen Order & Xmas card & most of all Pal the kind thoughts and wishes that I know went with it, you know one can hardly explain just how he feels when these little things come along to you remind you of the friends that are back home & no doubt a mans best friends, as we have known each other for such a long time now since I was a kid, that includes of course the boys of the Island, any how let me sincerely thank you all from the bottom of my heart convey to all the Members my Wishes for a Merry Xmas & as Happy a – New Year as we all can make it.

I do hope that Joe has sufficient Beer to hold the boys over Xmas & that you all make the best of it, actually we are not so badly off we have a ration of two bottles per week & of course make the best of it.

Its very hot right now Mr Marshall & a chap seems to tire out so easily, but never the – less I am quite happy to state that I feel well although pretty thin but I don't think anyone gets fat in New Guinea.

I hear from Mother quite often & she usually keeps me supplied with the little doings over there you know just as Mum would but never of course enlightens me about the beer situation & little happenings that I use to be right in. How is Joe & Mrs Dolin just give them my kindest regards will you please, & also tell my faithful friend Birchie to have a couple of light ones for me at Xmas.

When I come back again Mr Marshall it depends a lot on where Mother is whether I will come back to the Island for my Leave if she is in Melbourne well I expect I will spend some of it there, but just get on this for an astounding bit of news, you see I am, taking unto myself a wife on my return I became engaged just before I left, anyhow its about time as I may have been left on the shelf, she is a lovely girl anyhow so its up to me I reckon I'll make good, (maybe)

I amuse myself in quite a lot of ways up here luckily I am able to do a good deal of swimming, but the Rivers are a bit dangerous, anyhow swimming keeps a chap fit & that's a very important thing, I made a garden near my tent when I first came here & grew any amount of Cucumbers and Tomatoes I still have a good many of the latter, & believe me they are great asset, we went fishing last Sunday & I caught some beaut fish & they helped the menu along considerably so you see we have it as well as one could expect it the only thing to do is to make the best of it candidly I don't like New Guinea, but who does? I am not the only one here, we think in terms of months not weeks that helps a lot and in general time just goes by as usual fortunately there is plenty of work & by god its hot I work flat out most of the time, we wear only our trousers during the day & if the upper portion of the body comes in contact with the metal parts of the Aircraft well it just burns that's all I have worked inside of them with the temperature 132° F & believe me that's bloody hot. Now after all this jargon I will conclude; I hope this finds you & the family well, my very kindest Regards to them all & Best Wishes for Xmas & New Year. Thanking you all again,

Yours Sincerely Norton J