

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

During World War 2, Francis (Jim) 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.

Jim wrote three letters to the Fund in 1941, 1943 and 1945. His letters mainly express his appreciation for the items the Fund has sent to him.

Mess 3  
 HMAS Adelaide  
 C/o GPO  
 10/9/41

Dear Mr Marshall

I'm writing to thank you very much for the parcel, which I received yesterday. No doubt the K.I. comfort funds are doing a great job. How is John I hope he is quite well. I think you told me he was a gunner I'm going through for a gunner myself.

I expect the weather is getting quite good on the island now.

Well Mr Marshall there isn't very much to write about. So thanking you once again, & sending my best respects to Mrs Marshall yourself & family

I remain  
 yours sincerely Jim Jackson

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Mess #  
H. M. S. Zimberon  
C/o G.P.O.

26th 12th H3.

Dear Mrs Marshall

This will not be a very lengthy letter, but a few lines of sincere thanks for the very fine parcel which I received a few days ago, from the T. S. Comfort Fund.

It is said that the conduct of our lives is the only proof of the sincerity of our hearts, and the work you and your fellow helpers are doing, for we in the services, leaves no doubt as to the ~~sincerity~~ sincerity of you people. So Mrs Marshall it is with a deep sense of gratitude, and pleasure I say thank you. It is deeply appreciated. I can assure you it is a great thing for us to know that we are not forgotten by the old folks at home.

As for myself Mrs Marshall, all I can say is, that I am enjoying the best of health, and am getting along fine. Although I must say I am looking forward to the day when this is all over, and I can be back again with my mother and friends.

I sincerely hope this finds you all quite well Mrs Marshall. Please remember me to Mr Marshall & the family and thanking you once again. I'll say cheerio with all my kind regards.

Yours Sincerely  
Jimi Jackson.

Mess 4  
HMAS. Quiberon  
C/o G.P.O.  
26<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 43.

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Yours Sincerely

Jim Jackson.



Wess 4

to Mr R S Kimberon

to British Fleet Mail.

6th 8th 49.

Dear Mr Marshall

I have just received a parcel from the R.I. comfort funds, and am writing to ask you to please thank them very kindly on my behalf. Really it couldn't have arrived at a better time. I must say that it is nice to know that one is thought of by those back home.

How are you Mr Marshall I hope this finds you and all your folks quite well as it leaves me. Of course we are pretty busy as there's tons to do, but when the results are so good, it certainly is worth-while.

We were with the big ships a while ago, when they done a bombardment on Japan. I can tell you it was a good show.

Well friend there is not very much to write about. So will say cheerio with all my kind regards, and thanking you once again.

Yours sincerely  
Jimi Jackson.

Mess 4

HMAS Quiberon  
C/o British Fleet Mail.  
6<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 45.

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