

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Franklin Littlejohn 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.

Franklin sent a Telegram and also wrote two letters to the Fund in 1943. The Telegram advised he was writing and he followed up with his first letter sent on the same day. Being a Chaplain he had close contact with soldiers and his respect for them is obvious. His final letter written two days after Christmas 1943 details how the Chaplains organised a Service in the Field. He also records the extent that Units went to make Christmas a very special day for the troops.

T.G. 42. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA—POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

Funds may be Quickly, Safely and Economically Transferred by
MONEY ORDER TELEGRAM.
(PLEASE TURN OVER)

TELEGRAM

This Telegram has been received subject to the Post and Telegraph Act and Regulations. The time received at this office is shown at the end of the message.

The date stamp indicates the date of reception and lodgment also, unless an earlier date is shown after the time of lodgment.

Sch. C.2941—9/1940.

Office of Origin.	No. of Words.	Time of Lodgment.	No.
<i>East Brisbane</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10-21 am</i>	<div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: x-small;">CURRIE ISLAND</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: x-small;">1942 MAY 13</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: x-small;">TAS.-AUST.</p> </div>
<p style="font-size: large; margin: 0;"><i>Mr. J. Marshall,</i></p> <p style="font-size: large; margin: 0;"><i>Currie,</i></p> <p style="font-size: large; margin: 0;"><i>King Island.</i></p>			
<p style="font-size: large; margin: 0;"><i>Parcel received extremely grateful Writing</i></p> <p style="font-size: large; margin: 0;"><i>Kindest regards</i></p> <p style="font-size: large; margin: 0; text-align: right;"><i>F. Littlejohn</i></p>			
		<i>11-40 am</i>	

Office of Origin.
East Brisbane

No. of Words.
15

Time of Lodgment.
10-21 am
Mr. J. Marshall,
Currie,
King Island.

Parcel received extremely grateful Writing
Kindest regards
F. Littlejohn

T. X. 6358.

Chaplain. F. Littlejohn
R. H. Q.

2/2. Aust. Hy. a. a. Regt.
A. I. F.

Australia.

25/5/43.

Dear Mr Marshall, may I say how delighted I am to be in receipt of a parcel from the King Island War Service Fund, of which body, I presume, you are still acting as President and Secretary. I am deeply touched by such a kind thought, and am extremely grateful for this gift. Will you please convey my hearty thanks to the members of your Committee, with my compliments? Also the good wishes extended to me are heartily and sincerely reciprocated. Since my arrival in this part of the world, I have been engaged on many and varied missions, and have learned, or rather confirmed a former position opinion, that our own men of the A. I. F. are very solid and lovable people. I could have no greater joy, than that my present position affords, and I am sure that every man who acts as a Chaplain to a Unit, would say the same thing. There is so much that one can do, and I had no idea that so many of our men have such a tremendous respect for all we represent and profess. Therefore, I am happy, and am well aware of the sublime experience of the true joy of service. It is a great help to know that those good folk we have left behind, are thinking of us. With kindest regards to ~~you~~ Mrs Marshall and yourself, and members of your Committee.

I am
Very truly yours,
F. Littlejohn.

T.X.6358.
Chaplain. F. Littlejohn.
R.H.Q.
2/2 Aust Hy. A.A. Regt
A.I.F.
Australia.
25/5/43

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It is a great help to know that those good folk we have left behind, are thinking of us.

With kindest regards to Mrs Marshall yourself, and members of your Committee.

I am,
Very truly Yours,
F. Littlejohn.



AUSTRALIAN
COMFORTS FUND

In Conjunction with
Y.M.C.A.



(Use Official Address Only)

From No. _____ Name T.X. 6358.
Unit or Group _____ Captain Lethbridge F.
R.H.Q.
2/2 Aust Corp A.P. Regt.
A.I.F.
Australia
27/12/43

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Now that Christmas
has come and gone, I find myself
reflecting on those seemingly small
gestures which makes this sacred
season in these conditions a little
more like "the days of yore" at
home.

By no means the least
of these was the card of seasonal
greetings from yourself and the
committee of the King Island War
Service Fund - no. 1 R.S.S.A.I.L.A.

Mail Your Letters A.P.O.

Do Not Mention Military Activities.



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AUSTRALIAN
COMFORTS FUND

In Conjunction with
Y.M.C.A.



(Use Official Address Only)

From No. Name

Unit or Group 2. Date

What gesture could be more timely
and more appreciated than that?

Would you please convey my
gratitude to the members of your
Committee? It is good to know
that you are thinking of us.
Believe me, that means everything
to the man on active service.

Christmas - despite the
disadvantage of distance between us
and our loved ones - was a
grand occasion for us here.

The Chaplains in this Area met and
arranged a United Carol service
at a site about four miles from
here on Christmas Eve. The carols
were played by two military bands and
they were very lustily rendered by a

Mail Your Letters A.P.O.

Do Not Mention Military Activities.



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND



In Conjunction with
Y.M.C.A.

(Use Official Address Only)

From No. _____ Name _____

Unit or Group 3 Date _____

large choir of mixed voices, and
about two thousand troops.

A most impressive service.

On Christmas Day, I had two
communion services on the
beach and a Church Parade in
the mess. These services were very
well attended. Then followed
the dinner. We feasted very
sumptuously on turkey, ham,
Christmas Pudding, and all
other facilities appropriate to the
occasion. We even had a couple
of toasts, so it was almost like home.
A great occasion - very good -
our first festive occasion in the
tropical climes, and I hope the last.
Yours perfectly fit,

Mail Your Letters A.P.O.

Do Not Mention Military Activities.



AUSTRALIAN
COMFORTS FUND

In Conjunction with
Y.M.C.A.



(Use Official Address Only)

From No. _____ Name _____

Unit or Group 42 Date _____

and feeling much better for the
loss of two stone weight. Am
in the best of spirits & am
perfectly happy in "saluteing on".
Again many thanks for
seasonal greetings, similar
sentiments, although belated, are
heartily reciprocated.

My regards to yourself Mrs Marshall
and the members of your committee
Grennam

Very sincerely yours
Franklin Littlejohn

Mail Your Letters A.P.O.

Do Not Mention Military Activities.

T.X.6358.
Chaplain. Littlejohn. F.
R.H.Q.
2/2 Aust Comp. A.A. Regt
A.I.F.
Australia.
27/12/43

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Now that Christmas has come and gone, I find myself reflecting on those seemingly small gestures which makes this sacred season in these conditions a little more like "the days of yore" at home.

By no means the least of these was the card of seasonal greetings from yourself and the Committee of the King Island War Services Fund – no! the R.S.S.A.ILA. What gesture could be more timely and more appreciated than that? Would you please convey my gratitude to the members of your Committee? It is good to know that you are thinking of us. Believe me, that means everything to the man on active service.

Christmas – despite the disadvantage of distance between us and our loved ones – was a grand occasion for us here. We Chaplains in this Area met and arranged a United Carol service at a site about four miles from here, on Christmas Eve. The carols were played by two military bands and they were very lustily rendered by a large choir of mixed voices, and about two thousand troops. A most impressive service! On Christmas Day, I had two Communion services on the beach, and a Church Parade in the Mess. These services were very well attended. Then followed the dinner. We fared very sumptuously on turkey, ham, Christmas Pudding and all other facilities appropriate to the occasion. We even had a couple of toasts; so it was almost like home. A great occasion – very good – our first festive occasion in tropical climes and I hope the last.

I am perfectly fit, and feeling much better for the loss of two stone in weight. Am in the best of spirits, & I am perfectly happy in "soldiering on".

Again many thanks for seasonal greetings, similar sentiments, although belated, are heartily reciprocated.

My regards to yourself, Mrs Marshall and the members of your committee.

I remain,
Very sincerely yours,
Franklin Littlejohn.

