#### 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.

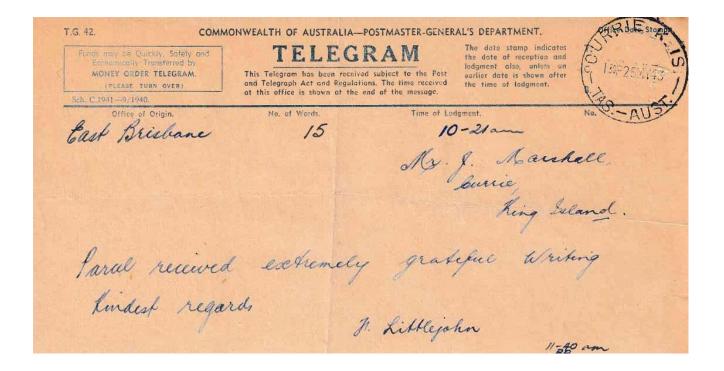
The challenges for a service person during World War 2 to write a letter was to firstly find the inclination (often directly related to their mental condition due to combat), time, paper, a writing implement and a place under cover. Occasionally a letter was typed and the paper ranged from high quality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



Office of Origin. East Brisbane No. of Words.

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

King Island.

Parcel received extremely grateful Writing Kindest regards

F. Littlejohn

T.X. 6358. Coplain of textition 2/2. Aust. My. a.a. Rego australia 25/5/43. pear mo marshall, may Jean how delighted down to be in receipt of a placel from the thing Island was leaved the body, I skewne, for one still acting as President and ferretay four the such a such a find thought, and am extremely grateful for this gift. Will you please convey my hearty thouks to the members of your committee, with my compliments! also the good wishes extended to me one heartily and sincerely reciprocated the world, Thous been engaged on many and varied missions, and have learned, or juster confirmed a former postion opinion, that our own were of the A.I.F are very solid and lovable people. I could have no greater joy that that my fresent position and Lam sine that every man as a Shaplain to a Unit, Iwould say the one could over the to so much that a one could do over her forest temendous to mendous respect for all we represent and profess. Therefore, Down happy, and ow well aware of the subtime experience of the tone joy of service. It is a great help to know that those good folk we have left behind, one thinking of us with kindest regoods to your omnittee. Jam tout your Committee. & 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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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 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 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.



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## AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND In Conjunction with Y.M.C.A.



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### AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND In Conjunction with Y.M.C.A.

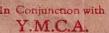


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T.X.6358.
Chaplain. Littlejohn. F.
R.H.Q.
2/2 Aust Comp. A.A. Regt
A.I.F.
Australia.
27/12/43

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.