

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

During World War 2, Francis (Frank) Milsom 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.

Frank wrote five letters to the Fund from 1942 to October 1944, just prior to his discharge in December 1944. His letters are brief but record his various locations and parcels still arriving, despite going to previous addresses.



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND (Victorian Division)  
BALLARAT BRANCH

BALLARAT A.C.F. HOSTEL,  
2 Lyons Street South,  
Ballarat

30<sup>th</sup> June 42.

VX73706  
Pte. F. J. Milsom  
R.T.W. Area 5.  
Victoria Park.  
Ballarat  
Vic.

The Secretary  
King Island War Service Fund

Many thanks for parcel of  
comforts just received. They are appreciated  
very much. This place (though very nice) is  
cold in winter.

I remain

Yours sincerely  
Pte. F. J. Milsom.

30<sup>th</sup> June 42.

VX73706

Pte: F.J. Milsom  
RT.W. Area 5.  
Victoria Park.  
Ballarat  
Vic:

The Secretary

King Island War Service Fund

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Yours sincerely

Pte. F.J. Milsom.



VX 73706

bfn. Milson S.J.

2 L. of b. w/ shops.

A. E. M. E. A. J. J.

21 St. Mary 43.

No. 11 b. A. L. of b. Sub Area.  
Australia.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Many thanks,

for the Bantien Order which  
came to hand today.

I think it must have arrived  
before us, the last time, +  
therefore, was returned.

Some time back, I received a  
parcel from the H. J. Comforts Fund  
which had been posted to my  
then, Ballarat address. It  
finally caught up with me, + was  
little the worse for wear.

I am doing fine, + I hope you are  
the same. I also wish you could  
share this mostly beautiful  
weather down there.

yours sincerely  
Frank.

VX73706

Cfn. Milsom F.J.

2 L. of C. W/Shops.

A.E.M.E. A.I.F.

No.11 C.A. L of C. Sub Area  
Australia

21<sup>st</sup> May 43.

Dear Mr. Marshall.

Many thanks for the Canteen Order which came to hand today.

I think it must have arrived before us, the last time, & therefore, was returned.

Some time back, I received a parcel from the K.I. Comforts Fund which had been posted to my then, Ballarat address. It finally caught up with me, & was little the worse for wear.

I am doing fine, and I hope you are the same. I also wish you could share this mostly, beautiful weather down there.

Yours sincerely  
Frank.





AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND  
(Victorian Division)

With which is Affiliated  
R.S.L. WAR SERVICE FUND, THE SALVATION ARMY,  
AND Y.M.C.A.

VX73706

bfn: Nilson F. J.

No. 2 (Aust) M. J. W/Shops.

A. C. M. E. A. J. E.

No. 11 b. A. L. of b. Sub: Area,  
Alice Springs.

Dear Mr. Marshal,

I have to  
acknowledge the receipt of another  
parcel from the R. S. L. War Service  
Fund. Please thank the  
committee on my behalf as it is  
much appreciated.

My leave comes due in Jan:  
so I am hoping to see you soon  
after that date. Hoping you are  
all well, I remain

Yours sincerely  
F. J. Nilson.

WJH

VX73706

Cfn: Milsom F.J.

No. 2 (Aust) M.T.W/Shops.

A.E.M.E. A.I.F.

No. 11 C.A.L. of C. Sub: Area,  
Alice Springs.

[Dec 1943]

Dear Mr. Marshal,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of another parcel from the K.I. War Service Fund. Please thank the committee on my behalf as it is much appreciated.

My leave comes due on Jan: so I am hoping to see you soon after that date. Hoping you are all well, I remain

Yours sincerely

F.J. Milsom.



AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

(Victorian Division)

With which is Affiliated

R.S.L. WAR SERVICE FUND, THE SALVATION ARMY,  
AND Y.M.C.A.

VX73706

Wm. Melsom F.G.

No. 2 (Aust.) M.T. Wf Shops.

A. E. O. E. A. G. E.

No. 11 L. A. L. of C. Saboteur

Alice Springs.

2nd Jan 44.

The President.

R. S. L. & A. G. L. A.

Dear Sir,

Many thanks

for the Xmas & New Year greetings.

Also the Lantien Order.

It is good to be reminded that we  
are not forgotten by the neighbors at  
home.

I hope that your Xmas & New Year  
was pleasant too.

I remain,

yours sincerely

Frank.

VX 73706  
Cfn. Milsom F.J.  
No. 2 ( Aust) M.T.W/ Shops  
A.E.M.E. A.I.F.  
No. 11 C.A. L of C. Sub Area  
Alice Springs.  
9<sup>th</sup> Jan 44.




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

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for the Xmas & New Year greetings.  
Also the Canteen Order.  
It's good to be reminded that we are not forgotten by the neighbors at home.  
I hope that your Xmas & New Year was pleasant too.

I remain  
Yours sincerely  
Frank



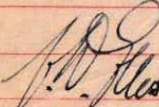




From No..... Name.....  
 Unit or Group..... Date *16<sup>th</sup> Oct. 44*  
 USE OFFICIAL ADDRESS ONLY

*VX73706*  
*Cfn: Milsom F.J.*  
*No. 2 (Aust) M.T.W./Shops.*  
*A.E.M.E.*  
*Alice Springs.*

*Mr. President*  
*King Island War Service Fund.*

*Dear Sirs,*  
*Please accept my sincere thanks*  
*for comfort's parcel received from you. It arrived in*  
*good condition + is very much appreciated. Wishing you all*  
*well, I remain*  
*yours sincerely,*  
*F.J. Milsom.*



16<sup>th</sup> Oct. 44.

VX73706

Cfn: Milsom F.J.

No. 2 (Aust) M.T.W./Shops.

A.E.M.E.

Alice Springs.

Mr. President

King Island War Service Fund.

Dear Sirs,

Please accept my sincere thanks for comfort's parcel received from you. It arrived in good condition & is very much appreciated. Wishing you all well, I remain

Yours sincerely,

F.J. Milsom.