

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, John (Jock) Stuart 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.

Jock wrote three letters to the Fund; the first in 1944 and the last two in 1945. He was 46 years old when he enlisted in the Army in December 1941. Jock was posted to a Garrison Battalion with responsibility for the Army Camp at Conara, in Northern Tasmania. He must have enjoyed life in the Army as he was not discharged until July 1948.

Millford Camp
Conara. Tas.

20/10/1944

Mrs J. E. M. Marshall.

Dear Madam,

just a few lines thanking you
+ your organisation for the comfort's
parcel I just recieved on the 18th inst.
it was quite a surprise to get a parcel
from the Island + please convey my
many thanks to all concerned for
this my first link up with the
island

I have met many K.I. in town from
time to time + one of my latest
ones was Mrs Jack Dwyer who used
to be at the Currie School + now
teaching at Lonbridge. Tas. They are
very well + wished to be rememb
ered to you all. I have a fine

2.

job here In full charge of the big
Camp + have been here for 12 months
+ enjoying every minute of it
plenty of bunnies so do not go
short of a good meal.

I like it here very much as the
people are very fine in this part
of the world in fact I am tired
of going to parties + the like but
never the less I am having a great
time

I am 17 miles from Campbell Town but
back under the foothills where the
snow lies nearly all the year

one passes by the Camp site going to
St Marys by train + that reminds me
I have seen Blinky Doden a few
times + wishes to be remembered

I will now have to draw

3

to a close so that I can catch this
mail

So in closing I send to all your
family my best wishes & trust we
will all meet one another again soon

I remain

Yours Sincerely

Stuart.

T23396.

Cpl Stuart, Jr.

430 Aust. Gen. Bldg.

Wilford Camp.

Conara, Las.

Milford Camp
Conara. Tas.
20/10/1944

Mrs J.E. M. Marshall.

Dear Madam,

Just a few lines thanking you & your organisation for the comforts parcel I just received on the 18th inst it was quite a surprise to get a parcel from the Island & please convey my many thanks to all concerned for this my first link up with the island I have met many K.I. in town from time to time & one of my late ones was Mrs Jack Dwyer who use to be at the Currie School & now teaching at Tunbridge. Tas. they are very well & wish to be remembered to you all. I have a fine job here In full charge of the big camp & have been here for 12 Months & enjoying every minute of it plenty of bunnies so do not go short of a good meal.

I like it here very much as the people are very fine in this part of the world in fact I am tired of going to parties & the like but never the less I am having a great time

I am 17 miles from Campbell Town but back under the foothills where the snow lies nearly all the Year

One passes by the Camp Site going to St Marys by train & that reminds me I have seen Blinky Soden a few times & wishes to be remembered

I will now have to draw to a close so that I can catch the mail

So in closing I send to all your family my best wishes & trust we will all meet one another again Soon

I remain

Yours Sincerely

J Stuart.

T233936.


Cpl Stuart. J.

6/30 Aust. Grn. Btn.

Milford Camp.

Conara. Tas.

Use Official Address Only.



THE SALVATION ARMY
ACF
YMCA
AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

From No.: T23396
 Name: Cpl Stuart J.
 Unit or Group: 6/30 Aust Grn Btn
 Milford Camp, Conara. Tas
 Date: 24/1945

Dear Ladies

Just a few lines to let you know I am well and trust all you kind people are the Same & to once again thank you for the parcel I recieved from you a few days ago, the parcel was well packed & intact on arrival

Thanking you once again

I remain
Yours Faithfully

Jock Stuart

Best of luck to all

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, descriptions of troops, or other information which, if intercepted, will be of value to the enemy.

T23396

Cpl Stuart J.

6/30 Aust Grn Btn

Milford Camp, Conara. Tas

24/1945

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Thanking you once again

I remain

Yours Faithfully

Jock Stuart

Best of luck to all

Milford Camp

12/4/45

Dec.
King Island.
War Service Land.

Sir/Madam

Just a line or two thanking you for parcel
received by me on the 10/4/45 which I appreciated
very much. & your kind thoughts make me wish
I were back ~~amongst~~ again with you all
So please convey to all concerned my very
best wishes & trust to be back on the Island
soon

I remain

Yours faithfully

J. Stuart

T 23396.

Cpl Stuart, J.
6/32 Aust Gen Bldg.
Milford Camp.
Conara, Tasmania.

Milford Camp
12/4/45

Sec.
King Island.
War Service Fund.

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T233936.
Cpl Stuart. J.
6/30 Aust. Grn. Btn.
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