

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

During World War 2, Ambrose Walsh 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.

Ambrose wrote five letters to the fund; two each in 1942 and 1944 and the last in 1945. His letters are brief and express appreciation for the items sent to him. He was discharged from the RAAF on 15 March 1945 and this is reflected in his last letter dated 18 May 1945.



R.A.A.F. Station  
Laverton  
19/10/42.

no 30865  
L.a.C. Walsh A.W.  
no 2 Section  
R.a.a.F.  
Laverton  
Victoria.

Mr Marshall,

Dear Sir I wish to advise you that  
I have recieved the canteen order forwarded  
to me by the King Island war savings fund  
for which I am very gratefull.  
AW. Walsh.

19/10/42.  
no. 30865  
L.a.C. Walsh A.W.  
no 2 Section  
R.a.a.F.  
Laverton  
Victoria.

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AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND

WITH WHICH IS AFFILIATED

R.S.L. War Service Fund, The Salvation Army and Y.M.C.A.

no. 30865

L.A.C. Walsh A.W.

no 2 Section

R.a.a.f.

Laverton.

Victoria

8/12/42.

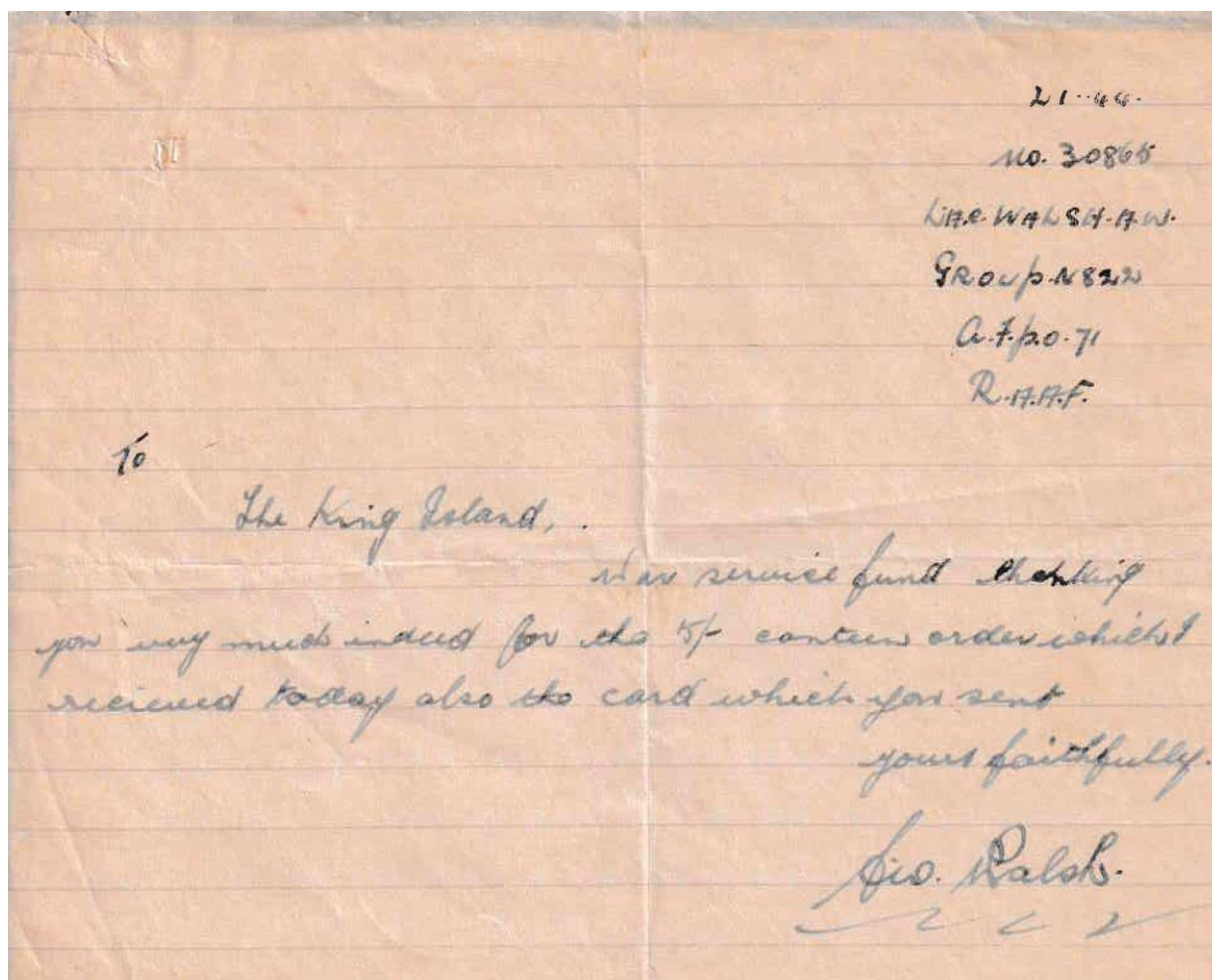
To the King Island War service  
fund wishing to thank  
you very much for the  
parcel which I recieved  
today.

A.W. Walsh.

no. 30865  
L.A.C. Walsh A.W.  
no 2 Section  
R.a.a.f.  
Laverton  
Victoria  
8/12/42.

To the King Island war service fund wishing to thank you very much for the parcel which I recieved today.

A W. Walsh.



21.4.44.

no. 30865

L.A.C. WALSH. A.W.

Group. N822

A.F. p.o. 71

R.A.A.F.

To

The King Island,

War service fund thanking  
you very much indeed for the 5/- canteen order which I  
received today also the card which you sent  
yours faithfully.

A.W. Walsh.

21.44

no. 30865

L.A.C. WALSH. A.W.

Group. N822

A.F. p.o. 71

R.A.A.F.

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The King Island,

War service fund thanking you very much indeed for the 5/- canteen order  
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Yours faithfully.  
A.W. Walsh.





From No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit or Group \_\_\_\_\_

Date 19 Feb, 1944.

USE OFFICIAL ADDRESS ONLY

NO. 30865

LAC. WALSH. A.W.

GRoup N822.

R.A.A.F.

TOWNSVILLE.

To the King Island,

War Service fund thanking  
you very much for the parcel which I recieved  
today & I wish you & your fellow workers every  
success in the future, so once again I thank  
you.

A.W. Walsh.

19 Feb, 1944.

NO.30865

L.a.c. WALSH. A.W.

GRoup N822.

R.A.A.F.

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A.W. Walsh.

18/5/45  
Mr. A. W. Walsh  
c/ Mrs. A. J. Hall  
Private Bag,  
Penguin, Tas.

To the President,

Dear Sir,

I wish to convey my many thanks for the comforts & parcels I received from your R.S.B. Sub-branch while being a member of the service & while I was in New Guinea & I also want to thank the C.W. A. for the comforts I received from them.

I am sure your efforts are appreciated by the boys who receive comforts from your branch as much as I appreciated them myself.

So I wish to send the best of luck to you & your fellow workers for the future & once again I thank you,

Yours Truly,  
Esc. no. 30865

Cpl. Walsh A.W.

18/5/45  
Mr. A W Walsh  
c/- Mrs. A. J. Hall  
Private Bag,  
Penguin. Tas.

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So I wish to send the best of luck to you & your fellow workers for the future & once again I thank you.

Your Truly  
Ex. no. 30865  
Cpl. Walsh A W