

MARCH 29, 1994

RACHEL JENZEN:

I WAS STATIONED AT MT. MARTHA 2-10-43 TO 9-21-43. I WAS 17 AT THE TIME, HAVING FOUGHT AGAINST THE JAPS ON GUADALCANAL AT AGE 16.

I RECALL MOST OF THE YOUNG AUSSIES WERE AWAY FIGHTING IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND OTHER PLACES, LEAVING AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND QUITE VULNERABLE TO THE JAPS.

WHEN WE ARRIVED IN MELBOURNE AND DISEMBARKED FROM THE U.S.S. HAYES, THE PEOPLE WHO CAME DOWN TO GREET US, WERE HEARD TO SAY, "WHY, THEIR JUST BABIES."

WE WENT BY TRAIN TO FRANKSTON, AND THEN BY TRUCK TO MT. MARTHA - WE WERE QUARANTINE FOR 2 OR 3 WKS. AND THEN WERE GIVEN 30 DAYS LEAVE. 5 OF US WENT BY TRAIN TO BALLARAT.

I REMEMBER BEING SENT TO THE 101ST AUS. HOSP. AT PORT ADELAIDE, WE WERE GUINEA PIGS FOR A LIQUID QUININE TREATMENT. WHILE THERE I BECAME FRIENDLY WITH A LOVELY AND MOST GRACIOUS NURSE "SISTER Mc OR MAC DONALD. I'VE OFTEN THOUGHT ABOUT HER. SHE HAD A WONDERFUL PERSONALITY AND WE WOULD TALK FOR HOURS ABOUT LIFE IN THE STATES. I AM SORRY I DID NOT STAY IN CONTACT WITH HER, BUT AT THAT YOUNG AGE, CORRESPONDANCE IS NOT YOUR FIRST PRIORITY.

I REMEMBER THE 7 MO'S I SPENT IN AUSTRALIA AS IF IT WERE YESTERDAY.

I REMEMBER YOUNG + JACKSON'S -
FLINDER STREET STATION. THE MELBOURNE
HOTEL - STEAK + EGGS. ST. KILDA, THE
COKE BURNING TAXIS, THE WARMTH OF THE
PEOPLE, HOW GRATEFUL THEY WERE FOR US
DEFENDING THE DAMS ON THE CANAL, BUT
MOST OF ALL I REMEMBER THE YOUNG WOMEN,
NOT MUCH DIFFERENT FROM THE GIRLS IN THE
STATES, BUT THEY WERE THERE.

HAD I DIED AND GONE TO HEAVEN
I DON'T THINK IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ANY
BETTER THAN THE 7 MO'S I SPENT IN YOUR
LOVELY COUNTRY. I GUESS AUSTRALIA HAS
CHANGED A LOT, AND NOT FOR THE BETTER,
AS IS THE CASE WITH THE STATES, BUT
THANK GOD FOR THE MEMORIES.

MY WIFE AND I WILL BE MARRIED 50 YRS
THIS AUG. MAYBE ONE DAY WE WILL MAKE
THE TRIP BACK TO MELBOURNE.

IF THIS LETTER STIRS YOUR INTEREST,
PLEASE REPLY -

TAKE CARE AND BE GOOD -

Lewin

P.S. I REMEMBER GOODBYE - GOOD ON YA YANK
FAIR PINKUA - SHIELA - STEAK + EGGS, THEN
COST 1 + 6 - ALSO A FAVORITE WATERING HOLE
THE SARRCEN HEAD (MIGHT NOT BE CORRECT SPELLING.
SARRCEN
SARRCEN)