

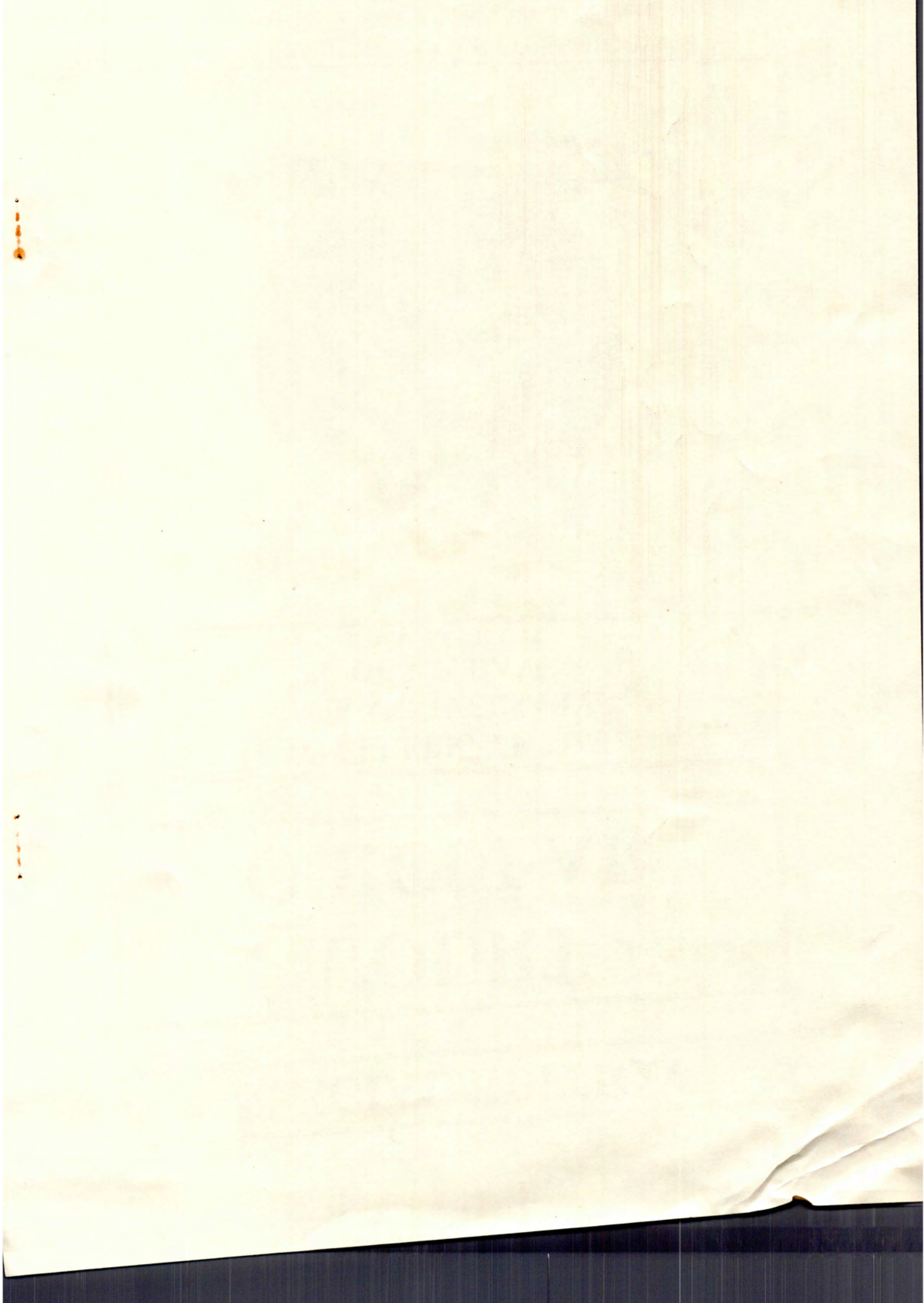
**SPECIAL EDITION**

**COURT  
CIRCULAR**

**TO CELEBRATE THE  
50th ANNIVERSARY  
OF V.P. DAY  
15th AUGUST, 1995**



**ST. LAURENCE COURT (BENDIGO)**  
Upper Road  
Eaglehawk  
Wesley Street  
Kangaroo Flat



# ST. LAURENCE COURT (BENDIGO) THE COURT CIRCULAR

SPECIAL EDITION TO CELEBRATE  
THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF V.P. DAY

I am very pleased with the response of articles for our Special Edition of The Court Circular. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their thoughts and experiences. It has been necessary to precis some of the articles but the message of each one is intact and I'm sure that you will all find this special edition interesting reading.

On V.P. Day, I was only a very small baby (I know a lot of you will find it hard to believe that I was ever a very small baby, bit it is true) and therefore do not recollect any of the events personally. I do, however, remember my Mother and Grandmother talking about the events of that time. Because I can't remember the events personally is probably all the more reason why I have really enjoyed reading the various articles.

Below is a copy of the headline in the Bendigo Advertiser from 16th August, 1945. There are a few things throughout this special issue of the Court Circular that were in that edition of the Advertiser and I say thanks to my Mother-in law, Lou Boys, who has kept the paper stored away for 50 years and was kind enough to lend it to me to make copies for this edition.

Thanks to all who have shared their personal memories with us.

C.R.J. (Bob) Layton,  
Chief Executive Officer

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SPECIAL PACIFIC WAR VICTORY ISSUE

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Sixteen Pages

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BENDIGO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 1945

PRICE 1/6

# END OF THE WORLD WAR Japanese Come To Heel. Allied Conditions Accepted

## SOME THOUGHTS OF OUR RESIDENTS

Mrs Arnold, Unit 156, who lived in Mildura with her family remembers that Mildura was a very young town and War Service took most of the towns men .... especially the young men. Her husband was very angry because he was kept at home as a Land Worker (fruit growing) which was classified as 'essential services.'

Most of the towns women were engaged in picking and packing fruit whilst she and her daughter did all the cooking, washing and ironing for the pickers.

Lake Victoria Air Base was nearby where Spitfires were tested.

Mrs. Arnold remembers that a truck drove all around Mildura on V.P. Day to make the announcement. There were lots of people and lots of noise.

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Mrs. Conn, Unit 105, was in Castlemaine on V.P. Day. When Peace was announced the whistles were blowing in all the factories, the train whistles were blowing and everyone was sounding their car horns. Lots of noise and young people climbing all over the Town Hall.

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Miss Win Hocking, Unit 127, had a brother-in-law who served in New Guinea where he was a P.O.W. for a time. After returning home he suffered severe recurring bouts of Malaria for a long time. Miss Hocking remembers very well her Mothers reaction at the Declaration of Peace - "THANK GOD IT'S OVER"

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Mrs Betty Evans, Unit 153, had an uncle and a cousin who were Prisoners of War ..... one in Changi and the other in Borneo. The whole family held over the celebrations of the Declaration of Peace until they found out that all the family members were alive and well

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Mrs. Stranahan, Unit 131, remembers that her husband and brother-in-law were serving in New Guinea. As she had not heard from them for some time her elation was tinged with anxiety until she knew they were safe.

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Miss Murfin, Unit 142, was rostered to Hospital duties at Epworth and Bethesda Hospitals.

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Keith Tavener of Flat 38, tells us of joining the A.I.F. in 1940 and being sent to the Middle East in 1941. He was attached to 'Lines of Communications - Postal'. After being stationed in Alexandria, Mersa Matruh and Cairo he then served at several stations in Palestine. On his return to Australia Keith was posted to various areas and eventually to Canungra in Queensland where a large Jungle Training Centre was being set up. It was there that he heard about Peace. He said "The news just spread through the Camp. My feelings naturally were of great relief that eventually we would be able to go home and back into civilian life. For me there was also a feeling of sadness and frustration that so many fine young men and women would not be going home. In view of what has happened since wars end, it appears that mankind has not learned about the horrors of war."

Lyle Hambly, Flat 82 tells us :- " My husband and I lived in my fathers house while our new one, restricted to 10 squares during the war, was being built. My father and I were home when the news of the awful bomb was heard. We rejoiced that no more lives would be lost. My younger brother was due to be sent to the Islands on the next shipment, so he was safe in Brisbane. We couldn't realise the freedom from counting ration cards (coupons) - nights in the lookout in Rosiland Park watching for aeroplanes, no more weekly Euchre parties to raise money for canteen orders to send to our local men serving overseas, no more letters to write to them, no more knitting socks and balaclavas. We were just so happy that so many of the young Eaglehawk men would return safely, with the other troops, to resume their lives."

Don Clark, Flat 85, reports :- I commenced Army Training with the 57/60th Infantry Battalion at Camp Site 25A Trawool at Seymour on 16th September, 1941. My two brothers and my brother-in-law were also in the same Infantry Battalion, so when the 'Manpower of Australia' became aware of this I was transferred from the Army to 'Manpower' to produce food for the troops. I remained under their control well after hostilities ceased and was released in 1947. My movements were controlled by 'Manpower' and a permit was required to allow me to help shear the sheep on my neighbours property. On 15th August 1945 I was shearing sheep with my father-in-law and having the wireless turned on heard of the end of the War in the Pacific. We were pleased to hear this announcement, but had a job to do, so kept on shearing. But it was great news as other members of our family would be able to return to their respective homes and be able to start and live a more normal lifestyle in the Community. As most of the men left their home to fight in the War before they were 20 years of age many were still young men, but with the turmoil of War had aged with the terrors of fighting in the deserts and jungles of our world.

On 15th August, 1945, Decima Browning, Flat 62, was working for Matthews Bros., Drapers, of Hargreaves Street, Bendigo. She was employed there while her husband Bert was in the Army. Bert was in Borneo then the jungle of Tarakan where the Japanese had taken over. Letters were often delayed and news scarce ... a very worrying time for all. Decima said, "I was at work when the announcement that Peace had been declared. Our boss, Mr. Albert Matthews, passed the wonderful news on to all the staff. Everyone was excited and relieved. We were all given some time off in the afternoon, walking around and around the main City block, meeting friends, singing and generally celebrating.

To me the news of Peace meant that I would soon have my precious husband home again after being away in the Army for 4 years. Also thinking of others who were feeling as I was, but felt very sad for those who had lost loved ones.

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Mrs O'Tooles, husband and brother-in-law (P.O.W.) were in New Guinea. She was working at the Ansell factory in Melbourne and for a couple of weeks people had been talking of Peace and getting more and more excited. On the 15th whistles blew and everyone stopped work and rushed into the streets. She remembers very well the noise of all the whistles blowing.

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Mrs. Waight, Unit 106, had a brother in the A.I.F. and her husband was an Army Guard at various P.O.W. Camps for displaced persons in Northern Victoria. When hearing of Peace her family went to the Bendigo City central block where it seemed like thousands of people were parading, singing and yelling.

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Mrs. Oldfield, Unit 143, was a ledger-keeper with the Bank of Australasia (now A.N.Z.). They celebrated V.P. Day by leaving the Bank and going around and around the block with a crowd of people. She says, "Imagine doing that today."

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Mrs. Ruby Free, Unit 137. Her husband was missing in action at Singapore and it was not until after V.P. Day that she found that he had died in 1941.

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Mr. Frank Ayton, Unit 167, had a step-brother in New Guinea who was a radio operator and whilst others were in the 'trenches' he was "up top" to tap out messages in Morse Code.

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Alan Skilbeck, Flat 16, reports:- On 15th August, 1945, I was busily engaged in examining some financial statements in the office of the local statutory authority in Mildura of which I was manager. Suddenly there was a loud knock on my office door and the junior girl burst into my office and said, "Great news. Peace has been declared and the war is over." I suddenly felt a great feeling of euphoria and gladness. What a relief. The girl then said, "Can we go out and join the people who are gathering around the band rotunda to celebrate." "Certainly," I said, "Just put away all the valuables and off you go. I will lock the safe and the strong room and see that the office is locked up." The sounds of public revelry started to come through. The Fire Bell, Church Bells and School Bells ringing, car horns blowing and all sorts of musical instruments, singing and shouting.

In my haste to lock up and go and collect my family I slipped on a puddle of water which had been spilt in the back room and I crashed onto the door, my chin connecting hard on the protruding iron door lock nearly knocking me silly. When I came to and looked down I saw blood everywhere. I went in my car to find a Doctors Surgery and after some difficulty I found one still open. The Doctor was about to leave to join the celebrations but took one look and decided to stitch me up first. After inserting several stitches he covered my chin with a large white patch. I looked as if I had just come out of a prize fight.

That night my wife and I attended a big party put on by the R.A.A.F. to recognise the hospitality of the local residents. So in due course we reached the aerodrome and joined the party. And what a party!!!!!!! Relief, joy, gaiety prevailed with my patched up face being the subject of many friendly jibes .... but that was all part of the good fun that prevailed.

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Mrs. Couper, Unit 121, tells us her brother was serving overseas. She remembers the rumours of Peace and sitting glued to the wireless until she heard the news announced. As her husband had suffered in action in the First War he felt that the world might at last learn a lesson.

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Mr. Keith Knight, Unit 163, went into the R.A.A.F. in 1943. He was trained in Melbourne and was then transferred to Tocumool to service the Liberators that flew in the Islands. He was prevented from going overseas due to bad hearing. He was busy servicing planes that day that Peace was declared.

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Mr. Reg Pringle, Unit 247, was in New Guinea in the Commando Task Force as a Captain of C Company, 22nd Battalion. Reg tells us that they knew, from an American Major, two days before Peace was declared that the bombs were to be dropped on the Japanese Cities.

---



—P. Pinder, Photo.  
The owner did not seem to mind when joyous youth crowded on his car during the celebrations in Bendigo.

**M**ANTEL Wireless, 5 valve, wet battery. Good order. Can recommend. £17/10. Fraser, 144 Mitchell St.

**B**EDROOM Suite, 3 modern pcs., rubbed oak. £9/10; 2 pcs. cream enamelled. £7. Fraser, 144 Mitchell St.

**L**OUNGE Suite, 3 pcs., autumn tonings. Very attractive. Only £22/10. Bargain. Fraser, 144 Mitchell St.

**P**OLISHED Oval Walnut Occas. Table. Strong and good appearance. £3/7/6. Fraser, 144 Mitchell St.

This was the shop of the father of our resident, Alex Fraser

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Delicious Ham and Chicken Sausage. Lb. 1/4	Best Rex Saveloys Per doz. 1/8	Best Crumpets (Fresh Daily) Doz. 1/-	Choicest Smoked Fillets. Per lb. 1/9
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Crofts Pure Garden Honey Jar 1/7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	New Season's Currants Per lb. 10d	Crofts Superior Melon Jam. Tin 1-	Mermaid Table Salt 16 oz. pkt. 3d



—P. Pinder, Photo.  
The moment the surrender news came to hand, bands of girls and youths surged through the streets and practically took charge of the city for Bendigo's V.P. celebrations.



# VICTORY!



—P. Pinder, Photo.  
This young digger home on leave achieved a notable victory of his own in Hargreaves Street. Opposition was "only light."

### A BUSY EXCHANGE.

When the great news of peace was announced yesterday telephone lines in Bendigo buzzed with business. Everyone wanted to ring their friends and tell them of the glad tidings and the girls on the Bendigo exchange had the busiest day of their lives. Delays on long-distance calls were inevitable, but on local calls the girls on duty handled the excess traffic expeditiously. Their victory day they will never forget, as they had little time to give thought to anything but continual plugging in to keep the peace conversations of the Bendigo public moving. "It was just like Luna Park in a blaze of light on the switchboard as the calls were registered by the flicking lights. It was the busiest period in the history of the exchange in my memory," said one operator.



—P. Pinder, Photo.  
Shop girls said farewell to work and joined the merry-making. These young people played ring-a-rosy in Williamson Street as a prelude to Bendigo's celebrations.

### Houses and Land for Sale.

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**£1300**—KENNINGTON, 2½ miles city, 1 mile tram. 17½ Acres Freehold. Part cleared, balance timber. Irrigation area. Dams, Race handy. Beautiful Home. 6 rooms, lath and plaster lined. Roller Blinds, Electric Light, Power Points. Nice Bathrooms, Bath, Basin, Stove, Washhouse, Copper, Troughs, Garage, 3 rain water Tanks. Immediate Vacant Possession. Good Terms can be arranged. Make nice poultry property.

**£650**—5-ROOMED W.B. and BRICK DWG., L. and P., E.L., Bath, Copper and Troughs, F.H. Allot., Woodshed, Fruit Trees, etc. Vacant Possession can be obtained later. Owner definite seller. Central position, Hargreaves Street.

**£425**—THREE Splendid Building Allotments. F.H. Title. One Minute Quarry Hill Tram.

**£675**—10 ACRES Splendid Land. 3 acres Water Right. Regulation Dairy, Cow Sheds, and Bails. 5-roomed W.B. Dwelling. VACANT POSSESSION. ½ MILE 'BUS. WHITE HILLS.

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The Real and Lasting Victories are those of Peace and not of War.—Emerson ("Worship").

LET US EVER REMEMBER THOSE BRAVE AND UN-SELFISH MEN AND WOMEN WHO STROVE WITH GLORIOUS COURAGE AND ENDURANCE AND WITH DIVINE GUIDANCE THAT WE MAY ENJOY THAT PEACE.

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Mrs. Tanner, Unit 133, was still living in England during the war years. She tells us of how her Mother looked after her son whilst she drove Ambulances. Her husband was a fighting Soldier. Her memories are of driving through the streets of London not knowing if your own home would still be standing when your shift finished. She was very angry with "Gerry" when her street was hit and her piano ruined .... even though the house still stood. When the war finished there was massive noise in the streets and searchlights in the skies ..... then the quiet .... the quiet after all the time of hearing planes and bombs and air raid sirens. Later the joy of being reunited with her husband.

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Miss Jean Johnson, Unit 250, was working in South Melbourne Post Office on V.P. Day. They all left work and rushed into the City to see what the celebration was all about. There was dancing in the streets and music playing over loud speakers.

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Mrs. Irene Knight, Unit 243, tells us how she and her husband ran the Post Office at Goornong. She said, " There were continuous phone calls and we stayed on duty day and night so that people could speak to their family and friends. Most people were very excited."

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Mrs. Bon Campbell, Unit 233, was living in Delegate, N.S.W. while her husband was in the Air Force. She remembers lots of excitement, phone calls and visiting on the day of Peace.

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Mrs Janet Uhrbrock, Unit 201, was living in Edinburgh, Scotland during the war years. She tells me, "I worked during the war for the war effort as a carpenter and built bomb crates and pre-fab houses for transport to places destroyed by bombs.

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Mrs Glad Steele, Unit 213, lived in Williamstown near an American Base and remembers the aircraft flying overhead and the battleships that were stationed there. She didn't see any of the celebrations at the end of the war.

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Mr. Tom Strauch, Unit 237, said, " I was working at the Bendigo Pottery, which was owned by Mr. Lansell, making Army requirements. When the news came through we dropped tools and rode on our bicycles to Bendigo. Most of the organised celebrations took place the following day."

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Mr. Arthur Whittle, Flat 42 reports, " I was a munitions worker in Fuze Production at Melbourne, Finsbury and Kapunda in Sth Australia and was at Spotswood when Peace came."

"We were anticipating and expecting to receive the news that hostilities would cease and the war was over. We had worked long hours with shift work endeavouring to get the most that we and the machines could give while still maintaining quality. Although expected, it seemed that all of a sudden it did happen ... The War Was Over."

"The noise of the machines ceased as we switched them off. It was so quiet, the relief we felt, then floundering, unsure what to do next. We passed comments to each other and then started heading home to tell our families."

"My bike nearly siezed up, I went so fast." "No, I never got drunk or sang from the roof tops. I spent the afternoon with my family as we pondered with our thoughts of sadness for the people who were killed and injured. All because of the expansion policies of the Axis Powers."

"I thought a lot of my brothers who were denied the opportunity to have a family like I had. People I knew who would never come back."

"I was grateful to the women who worked with me in the workshops, it was a united effort. Many of them had already lost members of their families in the War."

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Kevin Weeks of Unit 240 was in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, when Peace was declared. He was in the 554 Light A/A Regiment. He tells us that they knew the war was over but there was not many celebrations. He was in transport and had to drive a truckload of Japanese soldiers back to their compounds each night.

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Mrs.May Houghton, Unit 232, was the Manager of the Hotel at Bridgewater when the war ended. All the children built a Bonfire and put Hitler in the middle and we celebrated. A cow went beserk because of the fire.

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Mrs Alice Lea, Unit 229, was in hospital after giving birth to twins .... there wasn't much celebrating in the hospital

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Mrs.Flo Gray of Unit 249 was living in Wood Street, Eaglehawk at the end of the war and remembers aeroplanes flying over and lots of people in the streets.

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Mr.Reg Rankins of Flat 21 was a member of 24th Infantry Battalion stationed in Bougainville. His story is as follows :- "On 15th August, 1945 word was received that the Japanese had surrendered. Our Battalion was on and both sides of the Buin Road. My Company was at Hongora River and I , like my mates, had mixed feelings. Firstly feelings of great joy that it was finished ..... then feelings of doubt. How were the Japanese in Tokyo going to let the Japanese in Bouganville know that the war was over. That day a patrol from our Battalion had been ambushed and three killed .... no wonder we were sceptical. But it all turned out O.K. and we were pleased to see the last of the Tropics. I hope and pray we have no more wars.

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Reg Rankins also reports that there were many lighter times during those years ... some good laughs that they of course love to remember. One incident was as follows :-

The Japanese shelled our position at any time night and day but their favourite time was at lunch time. This day they were right on time while everyone was lined up for Army Stew. As soon as the shelling started everybody took off but one chap wasn't going to be handicapped with his 'dixie' and in his panic threw it in the air. It landed on the back of my mates neck .... he didn't wait to investigate and with the rest of us dived into a fox hole. On reaching the hole he told us he had been hit by shrapnel and could feel blood running down the back of his head and neck. In fear and trembling we lit our lantern to examine his head .... result, everyone burst out laughing .... no wound, no blood.... just Army Stew and Gravy.

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Mrs.Irene Lyon, Flat 41, was living in Portland on the day that Peace was declared. Her two eldest children were at school so there was just little Sandy, who was nearly 8 months old, at home. When she heard the Church Bells ringing she realised that the war must have ended. She remembers taking little Sandy out onto the verandah and holding her up to see all the people who were running around. Mrs.Lyon said, " I cried, but they were tears of joy, as I told little Sandy that her Daddy would soon be coming home to see her for the first time. I felt as though a weight had been lifted off my shoulders but I could scarcely believe that those terrible years were over. It was a day of mixed emotions with people laughing and crying on the streets. However amidst all the rejoicing there was sadness and sympathy for those who knew that their loved ones would not be coming home.

*Editors note: For those who don't know, "Little Sandy" is Sandy Quinlivian, a Personal Care Attendant at our Eaglehawk Hostel."*

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