



NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

19088  
Sgt. R. T. Street,  
26 Bn. H.Q.  
2 N.Z. Div.,  
M.E.F.

3 Sep. 43.

Received  
24th. Oct. 1943.  
C100.

Dear Mum & Dad,

Here I am again, fit & well. No more letters have arrived since the last lot (the last one being dated 18 July) so I expect I will have to wait a month or so for the next batch. Yesterday I received the last of Edna's mail, her letter being dated 18th. July, also.

Well, last Wed. week I went to Div. H.Q. for the interview regarding P.O.C.T.U. but missed being selected. The reason for not being selected was not given: it never is, but I fancy it was on account of my age which, as you know, is creeping up. However, it



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doesn't worry me in the least. I flake what comes along. Furthermore I will go up next time maybe in a month's time, & I shall hope for better luck. They have taken chaps older than I before.

Well, - the other bit of news in this week's letter is our new - thumbs up - which we put on in the "El Djem" open air theatre here in Camp, on Wednesday night. It was a great success & we had between 4000 & 5000 troops there to see it. The theatre stage & dressing-rooms have been fixed up now in modern style with curtains, lights & sound system to go with the microphones. It is thus possible to be heard by everyone sitting in the



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rows & rows of seats on the side of the hill. I borrowed two frocks from Miss Healy of the Forces Club & took the part of the heroine in the melodrama, also the part of a snorer in another sketch & believe it or not, did an Oriental Dance with Ron (uncast of Nelson) & brought the house down. We hired a very nice wig (boucette) from Gino for the evening & when I was made up, even my best friends didn't know me. Ron & I had practised our number till we had it off I.K. to the music. Well though Ron is fat & big, he is very agile & was N. 3. champion at gymnastics a few years ago. He can't stand a complete



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sovereign & in the air without touching the ground.

Imagine us then. The curtain goes up: mysterious oriental music is played & I come gliding across the stage dressed in white sandals, blue pantalets & filmy net skirt & brasses with sequins' glinting, wig, headband with a snake dangling its head to the front

— & that is all. After 32 bars of oriental rhythm & melody, the tempo changes to a very fast gallop & on to the stage Kou comes bounding, turning two complete turns in the air & making the floor tremble when he lands. Everyone roars. I keep a straight face. Kou is dressed in sandals, red silk panta-



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- looms, bare chest + red  
turban hat kept on with  
an elastic band. We  
change the Oriental dance into  
the "Big Apple" (an American  
dance) - then eight bars  
of a Russian dance &  
finish up with me taking  
a run across the stage &  
a leap - but Rod, instead  
of catching me, bows to the  
audience & I go flying past.  
I turn, as Rod is  
bowing again to the audience,  
gives him a kick in his  
red pantaloons, send him  
flat & placing my foot  
on him, proclaiming my-  
self the winner by shaking  
my hands above my head.

It was more strenuous  
than a game of footy, but  
we got as much fun  
out of it as the onlookers.  
The de. band was there

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too & they played on yesterday before the show. Our chorus of 12 men were dressed in long navy trousers with red stripe down the side, red sashes round the waist & white shirts.

For the finale, the chorus stood in the form of a 'V' & at the appropriate moment, I, dressed in long white frock with head gear, & with 12 stripes of red, white & blue hanging from my waist, walked to the centre of the stage. The 12 chiefs of the choirs march in single file at band & march backwards to form a big red, white & blue fan. Yet at the same time the band changes its march tune to 'God Defend N.Z.' & at the back of the stage the N.Z. flag slowly unfolds till it hangs at full length. It was most



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impressive.

They were given supper after the show & were asked to put it on again sometime. We are fortunate in having such a good pianist & actor among our number, a chap of Clyde Howley. He has had some grease paints & can make you up to look like - well anyone. We spent a lot of time rehearsing, in the afternoons & at nights - but it was worth it.

I seem to have scribbled any awful lot about the old concert but I thought you would be interested in what we do. We had many good numbers, violin pieces, Hawaiian dances & music, of course the melodramas with the baby, heroine, villain & the hero. It went over better even than



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when we did it in Tripoli.  
We may do it just as well in  
home! Who knows!

A week ago, we saw & heard  
four American stage & radio  
stars at our open air theatre  
- El Djem. There was a crowd  
of 7000 there & many went  
at 2 P.M. in order to get  
a seat. One of the artists  
was Larry Adler, the world  
famous mouth-organ or  
harmonica player. You  
often hear his pieces cover  
the radio. Well, he could  
make the mouth-organ talk  
almost, & even played  
one of Liszt's Hungarian  
Rhapsodies on it.  
Two of the artists were women  
- beautifully dressed of course  
but much made up. Their  
singing wasn't much, but  
of course everyone went  
to see them just because





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they came from Hollywood.  
If you saw them in the way-  
Fairs with no make-up, I  
guess they wouldn't impress,  
much!!

Yesterday I was so pleased  
to receive two parcels, one  
from you & one from  
Pamela Magarey. Thank  
you May for thinking of  
me. The two parcels will  
be very useful as we go  
on manoeuvres in a day or  
so & that is the time to  
have a few fins of things in  
the ration box.

The weather is still pretty  
warm, but cooler than a  
month ago. Had a chap  
in Cairo a few days ago I  
hadn't seen for 10 years  
& a teacher from near  
Lebanon. He was feeling the  
heat a bit. I enquired  
about Sandy & learnt where



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he was - or is.

Well, my dear, it is  
time for my shower. So I  
will close. I am 100%  
hope you in person are  
all well too. Sorry the  
writing isn't up to scratch.  
Am sending 40 snags or  
thereabouts in a day or  
so.

Cheerio.

Your loving son,  
Kewai.

X