

Evacuation of Dunkirk 1940

Australians digging in at Tobruk 1941



In 1940/41, members of the Club knew that the War would go on for a long time. France had fallen, Great Britain troops were evacuated from Dunkirk and Australian troops in Tobruk were trying everything they could to turn back Rommel.

Popular films at the cinema were Boom Town and The Great Dictator. "A Great Day for the Irish" sung by Judy Garland was extremely popular in Australia.

1940-41 William Albert Draper

It was also the year William Albert Draper became President of the Rotary Club of Bendigo.

During the year, President Draper was able to raise enough money to ensure every toddler in the Toddler's Home received a new pair of shoes. As President Draper commented in the Annual Report: every toddler was properly shod!



During the year, members spoke to school children during Youth Week on the topic: "The Nation's call to Schools." The Essay Competition for students on this topic was popular with every school and winners came along to a Club luncheon to receive their prizes.



The Club also organized a Picture afternoon for all students from Grade 5 and above at the Lyric Theatre.



President Draper encouraged every member to send a card to a Rotarian from one of the bombed areas in Great Britain. Rotarians would express their sympathy, encouragement, and admiration for their spirit in a time of adversity.

When individual members received a reply, members read the letters of reply at a luncheon meeting. Every member realized their efforts to support Rotarians overseas were not in vain from the feedback received.

In the Annual Report, President Draper demonstrated a keen sense of Nationalism. Also, the importance of every member being willing to serve our nation and for the cause for which the nation fights. Consequently, that only victory will ensure Rotary will continue when democratic nations prevail in their fight for freedom from tyranny.

On active service at the time were: J. Barton, A. Bush, M. Jacobs and W. Porteous.

Among the recipients of significant Club funds were: Australian Red Cross Prisoners of War Appeal, Australia Comforts Funds (hampers), YMCA, Club Ward, and Milk for Schools Program.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.—The Board is proud to list among its honorary members the following Rotarians who are on Service: Rotarians M. Jacobs, A.I.F.; A. M. Bush, A.I.F.; W. H. Porteous, R.A.A.F.; and J. Barton, R.A.A.F. To each we offer our congratulations, with an earnest wish for a happy sojourn and a speedy return, and record our appreciation accordingly.