

From: "Eric Lindsay" <ericlindsay@ericlindsay.freemove.co.uk>
Date: 15 December 2003 11:00:06 PM
To: "Simon Pryor" <simon@pryorknowledge.com.au>
Subject: Re: G'day

Hi Simon, nice to hear from you, you bastard,

Nope, can't open the attachment. It's because I've got a stone age computer, with everything but the wind up handle at the side. Never mind we'll see it when Steve comes back. I'm sure between us we can sort him out with the addresses he needs. Still have not managed to read Nancy's story either as the 'beast' will not let me open the disc. I think the 21st century is calling !!.....calling my old computer to self-destruct and be replaced.

I'm glad Nancy is pleased with her Mum's watch. Better she has it and passes it on, than it sits in a drawer in Wormit and gathers dust. We inherited Grandpa's stuff by default as we were living with him at the time.

I'm just back up from Wormit after the fortnightly weekend check on the place and viewing a couple of listed sales in Perth at the same time and was intrigued to get your letter with the history of 'the other watch'.

It took me a while, but I managed to get hold of Roy & he had no knowledge of the story either. Our Dad never talked about his time in the war to us. It was never a subject of discussion in the house to our knowledge. We knew he had been involved and that he was a sergeant in the army and there was annual correspondence with a friend in Norway (Peter Dahl) from his war days but any questions we had were always glossed over and no detail ever revealed. We knew he was recruited into the special forces and dropped into Norway but did not realise it was his brigadier uncle Fred Lindsay that had recruited him.

He was captured by the Norwegian resistance and thought to be a German spy. At the same time as he was captured, Peter Dahl (a Norwegian seconded to the British Special Forces, and on the same Mission/Drop as Dad) was also captured, but by a different group of Norwegian resistance. They were interrogated independently Peter Dahl was able to convince them fairly easily that he was Norwegian and working with the British. The group asked Peter Dahl if he could account for or identify another 'prisoner' calling himself Bruce Lindsay. They were still going to shoot Dad until Peter told them that he wore his wedding ring on his right hand index finger, and that is what saved his life.

Even that story was only revealed to us after Dad died. As I say, he would never talk about his time in the war.

We always associated the watch with Grandpa as we never saw him without his waistcoat, weekday or weekend, and the watch chain was evident as part of his attire. At no time was there a mention of it coming from a Dunkirk beach to Dad and then to Grandpa. It's just amazing

Anyway the outcome of all this is that we would still like you to keep the watch. We always thought it belonged to Grandpa and associated it only with him for the 15/16 years (for me) and 18/19 years (for Roy) that we stayed in Suda when Grandpa was alive.

The story is fascinating, but in the end it did not really belong to our Dad either,

more 'spoils of war'

I think the more interesting thing out of all of this is the story of where the watch began in our family in conjunction with where you began in relation to the family and your hunt to find the rest of us. I think you are the best person to have the watch as the story 'in total' is amazing. We never really own anything we are just the keepers of things until they pass on to someone else.

For the watch and the provenance trail for the next owner I think it is important that the detail that we know of its and your history go with it to the next owner. Maybe in another few hundred years or so someone will write a book or make a film about just that trail, seen through the eyes of the watch.

I don't think we will ever know who the earlier owner was that lost their life or maybe just lost their watch, on the beach at Dunkirk.

If it was left with us it would never see the light of day, but sit in a drawer and gather dust as neither Roy or I are waistcoat wearers, and that type of watch needs a waistcoat. We would be more than pleased if you would keep hold of it for the next leg of it's journey.

Don't send it back you bastard.

All the best to you and yours

Eric

-----Original Message-----

From: Simon Pryor <simon@pryorknowledge.com.au>

To: Eric Lindsay <ericlindsay@ericlindsay.freemove.co.uk>

Cc: Roy Lindsay <roy.lindsay@carlsbergtetley.co.uk>

Date: 13 December 2003 03:57

Subject: G'day

Eric,

How the hell are you, you bastard?!

I hope you can read the attachment. I will be sending it and a heap of photos back to you via young Steve upon his return on 22 December. I will be sending similar stuff for all the rest of the clan as well, so if you can help Steve with addresses and the like I would appreciate it.

I have been speaking with Nancy. She is delighted to see and have her mother's watch. I had it cleaned and got a key for it and it works fine.

It was the other watch I wanted to discuss with you. I have had it serviced (last done in 1963) and the watchmaker was full of admiration for an excellent example of the Rolexes of the nineteen twenties. It keeps good time and it has been a pleasure to wear it out now and then. The watchmaker was horrified with this. He wanted me

to lock it away and only bring it out for gentle handling on special occasions. I think he was trying to tell me that it was a very valuable piece. But that is not why you and Roy gave it to me. (At least during the cooler months) I have been making sure that 'waistcoat man' is alive and well.

Nancy told me about the watch's history, along with other stories about your father, Bruce Lindsay. You probably know the stories; behind enemy lines in Norway and so on. If not, you should get Nancy to tell them to you.

She told me that Bruce was in a tank full of soldiers heading towards Dunkirk for evacuation. They came up over the hill above the beach. British forces assumed it was an enemy tank and shelled it. There was a direct hit and just about everyone was killed. Bruce told Nancy that there were so many soldiers in the tank that their bodies protected him as he fell back to the ground after the blast. He grabbed the watch (which had not been his up to that point) on his way out of the tank and down to the beach. There, he rowed many evacuees out to waiting tenders (Nancy says four or five times) before leaving Dunkirk himself.

Upon his return and before being recruited into the Special Forces by his brigadier uncle, Fred Lindsay, Bruce gave the watch to his father who wore it to work - just as you said you remembered. So I don't think it is just a George Lindsay watch. I think it is a part of your father's life story as well. As such, it really ought return to you and Roy for safe keeping. I was moved beyond belief when you and Roy presented the watch to me. It just meant so much to me. But it really is a watch that tells a story about your father and events that no doubt shaped the relationships you and Roy had with him. I tend to think that means that the most appropriate home for it is still Wormit.

The safest way to get it back to the two of you is via Steve. So please let me know what you want me to do.

Cheers,

Simon

Simon Pryor
Pryor Knowledge
39 Barkly Street
East Brunswick Victoria 3057

Tel: +61 3 9388 8254

Fax: +61 3 9388 8266

Mob: 0418 556 912

E-mail: simon@pryorkknowledge.com.au

Web: <http://www.pryorkknowledge.com.au>