

Horrie the Wog Dog.

There is a small connection to Portarlington; Henry Osland Moody was employed by Howard Smith and Sons. Among other things he managed the bay steamers, and had an office on the pier. James was his son.

Horrie the Wog Dog, the four-legged mascot and campaigner attached to the 2/1st Machine Gun Battalion, seen standing on a fuel can wearing his Corporal's uniform. 'Horrie the Wog Dog' was a white Egyptian terrier cross puppy who was found in the Ikingi Mariut area of the Western Desert by VX13091 Private (Pte) James (Jim) Bell Moody, a despatch rider with 2/1 Machine Gun Battalion.

Pte Moody took him back to his signals platoon but Horrie was soon adopted by the entire battalion. He went on route marches and accompanied the commanding officer on parade. He was promoted to honorary corporal and assigned the service number 'EX1' (No 1 Egyptian soldier).

Horrie travelled in Moody's kitbag when the battalion moved to Greece. His acute hearing meant that he could give the men early warning of approaching German aircraft. Evacuated to Crete on the 'Costa Rica', Horrie survived the sinking of the ship and narrowly escaped being crushed between two life boats. On Crete, he acted as a messenger dog delivering messages to outlying patrols. During the evacuation of Crete Horrie was wounded by shrapnel. In Palestine he suffered from the effects of severe cold and snow during winter and this coat was made for him to keep him warm.

In February 1942, Pte Moody had Horrie checked by a vet in Tel Aviv where he was given a clean bill of health. Soon after the battalion returned to Australia and Pte Moody adapted his pack, complete with breathing holes, so that Horrie could be carried concealed within. Pte Moody also trained the dog to travel quietly when he was inside the pack. On the troop ship returning home, Pte Moody or one of his friends stayed with Horrie at all times ready to quickly conceal him. Other animals had been discovered on the ship and had been destroyed in accordance with rigid quarantine regulations.

Horrie was smuggled off the ship in Adelaide and sent to live with Pte Moody's father in Melbourne while Pte Moody went on to serve in New Guinea. Pte Moody was discharged in February 1945 and Horrie went to live in Sydney with him. When the Kennel Club wanted to raise funds to support the Red Cross, Moody offered Horrie as an attraction. This soon came to the attention of Australian quarantine officials who were determined to make an example of the illegal import of a dog, ordering Moody to surrender Horrie for destruction. A dog was destroyed on 12 March 1945. Public outrage followed and a wreath was laid on Anzac Day at the Sydney Cenotaph for many years in Horrie's memory.

Nearly sixty years later the true story of Horrie's fate was established, confirmed by two of Jim Moody's children and by one of his fellow soldier mates who served in the signal platoon. In the week before Horrie had to be surrendered Pte Moody searched dog pounds for a look alike dog. Having located one, he purchased it for five shillings and surrendered this substitute 'Horrie' instead. The real 'Horrie' was sent to live out his life near Corryong in Northern Victoria, where he is said to have sired many puppies. This photograph was taken shortly before the 2/1 Machine Gun Battalion moved north up through the Lebanon Valley during the Syrian Campaign in 1941.

Today a sculpture commemorates Horrie the Wog Dog in Corryong, Victoria.