

REMARKABLE DISCOVERY OF PEACE MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE
PRESS RELEASE: RORY ELLIS 6th September, 2019

We have all watched the romantic movies that tell the stories of a message in a bottle washed up on shore, after years of bobbing about in the ocean currents, only to find its way into the hands of destiny.

This is a true story of a message in a bottle, and it is far from romantic.

Written in 1940, during a time of chaos and war, could this Light Horseman who fought in the Battle of the Somme, Colin Ellis, have known that his very personal and incredibly powerful message would wind up in the hands of his only Grandson, Rory Ellis, nearly a century on?

And there are no safer hands than that of Australian Musician, Rory Ellis, to convey his Grandfather's message to the world. And what better way than through song, the universal language.

This astonishing story begins in February 1940, when Colin Ellis, in conjunction with Joe Eagles, penned and placed the letter in a whiskey bottle and cemented it into the Church Street Bridge in Melbourne, whilst carrying out repair works on the bridge.

"The Second World War was being fought at the time. The blue-collar worker was also fighting for his rights back at home. This letter echoes so poignantly their thoughts, which are even more relevant today" said Ellis ***"When you read these powerful words, you realise nothing has changed. Today, we still all long for the same thing....almost a century on"***

During repair works on the bridge 71 years later, two workers, Paul Bladowski and Grant Inkster, remarkably discovered the bottle, buried within the concrete. Bladowski, was jackhammering into the bridge and unearthed the long-buried letter.

"I was jackhammering a little higher than shoulder height, when all of the sudden the jackhammer went into a void in the wall about 3 or 4 inches very easily, then I felt glass pieces hitting my chest. At closer inspection there were papers rolled up inside of a whisky bottle!" Bladowski remembered.

Inkster also clearly remembers the amazing discovery, saying the old bottle held more secrets, that would never be revealed.

"In the bottle were two other small documents...a conscription notice which crumbled and basically dissolved as we tried to remove the contents, and the third one was even more fragile" Inkster added. ***"I wish this very cool story we have at hand gives an eternity of inspiration, and I hope some generations (not so far down the track), get to see the old boys' wish of enlightenment, peace on earth and goodwill to mankind."***

The surviving letter took seven years to find Ellis, through word of mouth and mutual associates. He said the letter, written in the midst of war and turmoil, held great meaning to him personally.

"It's quite incredible how they found me. It took some years, and I just wanted to say thank you to all for bringing it home" said Ellis. ***"I hold fond memories of the stories my father told of how Grandfather was a man who believed in fair rights for workers, and would often be found in***

his back yard sharing an ale with The Late Bob Hawke and The Late Arthur Calwell

Ellis said the natural thing for him to do, was to write the song, "The Letter". ***"After 30 years of recording and performing throughout the world, it was my way of sharing my Grandfather's message in the only way I know how....to put his words into a song"*** said the singer/songwriter.

Mr Ellis and Mr Eagles wrote in the 1940 note that they hoped the struggles of the war would be over by the time the letter was found.

"We close this with the hope that the workers are enlightened when this is found and that there is peace on earth and good will to man" the letter said.

IMAGE OF ACTUAL LETTER ATTACHED, INTERPRETED SCRIPT BELOW

8th February, 1940

This bottle was placed here on the above date, by Joe Eagles and Colin Ellis 'Plasterers' who have been repairing the cement work of this bridge since November 1939.

The gauge of material used has been two parts of sand to one of cement. The work was supervised by Mr Williams of the Prahran Council. We both have appreciated his cooperation, and his conditions of employment. The world war is on at present brought about by the capitalist section of the world to maintain a rotten system.

We hope when this bottle is found that the workers of the world will be getting a much more equal share in nature's gifts, and the wealth they produce for the class that prioritise them and thieves. Even to the extent of murdering each other. To protect wealth they do not share in. The capitalists call it war, not murder.

We close this with the hope that the workers are enlightened when this is found and that there is peace on earth and good will to man.

Written by Colin Ellis and Joe Eagles

Feb. 8th 1940

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